Syllabus MIND BODY MOVEMENT: Yoga and Pilates

U31 221 Monday 5:30 – 7:30pm

Instructor: Susan Volkan

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DESCRIPTION

This course combines Hatha Yoga, Pilates Method mat exercises and some specialty forms of yoga with the goal of improving postural alignment, balance, strength and range of motion as well as motor respiratory coordination and psychological well being.

Students will be guided through beginning level yoga breathing practices (Pranayama), yoga postures (Asanas) and Pilates Method mat exercises. Intermediate level postures and exercises will be added as the class progresses.

An emphasis will be placed on practicing safely with optimal postural alignment, joint stabilization and breathing technique. The instructor will offer modifications that address specific issues relating to posture, range of motion, weakness and injury.

Coursework will include a short written assignment and oral presentation on a research topic related to yoga, Pilates or another Somatic discipline.

MATERIALS:

Required Props: Yoga Mat and Yoga Strap

Optional Props: yoga blanket or towel, yoga block – a block is highly recommended if you have cannot comfortably fold forward with your hands on the ground. Please purchase a mat intended for yoga, also known as a “sticky mat”. A slick, spongy Pilates’s mat is not appropriate for this class, as it will not provide support and traction during standing yoga postures. That said, a thicker yoga mat or yoga/Pilates hybrid mat will offer more comfort during Pilates exercises, some people might even prefer to layer two yoga mats. Attire: Footless dancewear or fitted athletic-wear is preferred; please avoid overly baggy styles that obscure body alignment. Our exercises will be performed in bare feet.

RESEARCH PROJECT

Research a mind body topic of your choice. Pick a topic that you find interesting and make it specific; it is usually better to avoid broad topics like “Pilates and Postural Imbalances” or “The Health Effects of Yoga”, however, more focused topics such as "Pilates for Scoliosis" or “Cultural Appropriation and Yoga”, or “The Yoga Principle of Ahimsa” would be fine. If you pick a topic that addresses a topic in medicine or exercise science, please be aware that there is an abundance of both junk science and quality, peer reviewed studies related to mind-body exercise, please pick your sources carefully. The instructor will post a list of potential topics but feel free to use your creativity and explore other options. You will present your findings to the class in the form of a short
oral presentation, a lecture-demonstration, a mini class, or a creative project (for example, one student wrote and performed a “Yoga For Tennis” rap) AND email the instructor a 3 – 4 page paper on your topic including a list of your sources. Most presentations should be in the 5 – 10 minute range; if you have a longer presentation in mind or if your project includes leading the class in a practice, please coordinate with the instructor so that the class plan can be adjusted accordingly.

GRADING:

This class is offered as “Pass/Fail” or for a letter grade; grade option changes must be made through WEBSTAC. You must receive a grade of “C” or above to receive “PASS” or “CREDIT.” Students admitted to the Certificate in Somatic Studies must take this class for a letter grade.

Research Paper 25%   Class Participation 25%   Practical Evaluation 50%

Throughout the semester, your practice will be evaluated with an eye toward individual progress, attention to alignment, breath coordination and demonstration of body awareness (this includes an awareness of your own abilities and limitations, when to modify and when to increase the challenge).

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND CLASSROOM PROTOCOL:

You are allowed 2 free absences throughout the semester; I suggest you reserve them for real illness or emergency. Each absence beyond the initial two will reduce your grade by 10 points. A total of five absences (three beyond your two free absences) will result in failure of the course. You are responsible for keeping track of your absences. One make-up session will be offered at the end of the semester. You may also make up by attending my Pilates course that meets TTH 6:00 – 7:15 pm or another U College Somatics course. If you have a serious illness or injury or an unexpected major life event, I will work with you to make up for absences. Please be on your mat and ready to practice at the appointed start time. *University College classes begin promptly at the scheduled time; there is no 10-minute passing period as there is for day classes. Deactivate cell phones and other devices before class. Late entrances, disruptive behaviors, texting or using devices during class will negatively affect the classroom participation portion of your grade.*

INSTRUCTOR’S NOTE

Certain postures and exercises may not be appropriate for individuals with chronic physical conditions or injuries – please alert the instructor if you have such a condition or if you become injured.

INSTRUCTOR OFFICE HOURS

The instructor is available by appointment before or after class this class or the TTH Intro to Pilates class that meets from 6:00 – 7:15pm in this same room.