**INST 2500**

**Mindfulness Practices**

**Course Description and Learning Objectives**

This course provides an introduction to mindfulness practices to facilitate greater engagement with life and coping with stress. Mindfulness involves bringing intentional non-judgmental awareness to what is happening in the present moment. Based on the highly successful Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program, this course is highly experiential and uses a seminar-like format designed for college students to explore applications of mindfulness in mind-body awareness, mindful eating, communication skills and stress management.

By the end of this course, my goal is for all students to be able to:

1. participate in and demonstrate formal mindfulness practices

2. apply mindfulness to a variety of everyday situations

3. discuss how mindfulness practices enhance health and well-being and reduce stress

**Instructor information**

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**Assessement of Learning**

**1. attendance, class participation & discussion (100%)**

Each class will include an invitation to be present and focus attention using a variety of mindfulness practices. Attendance, participation in discussion and confidentiality are highly valued. Thank you for coming to class on time, practicing formally and informally throughout the week, completing assignments for class, and for sharing, in confidence, your experience with others during class discussion.

Please wear loose, comfortable clothing, arrive on time and stay for the entire class. Please turn *off* all electronic devices and do not access or use them during class. Thank you for this practice of attention, with intention, to class activities. If there is interest, there will be an optional and/or make up mindfulness retreat on a Sunday morning in April.

Thank you for your email or text to let me know, in advance when possible, if you choose to miss a Tuesday class meeting.

**2. reflective papers**

Reflective paper assignments will be posted in Collab Assignments. Two brief, reflective papers will be due on March 29 and May 3.

**Evaluation of Learning - Grading**

This is a credit/no credit course. Successful completion (CR) of the course is dependent on:

* + - * course attendance (minimum 12 classes)
      * engaged class participation via formal practice and class discussion
* two brief reflective papers, not graded but required to earn course credit

**Learning Resources**

Collab – Resources, Assignments

It is suggested that you purchase your own zafu (cushion) or meditation bench

***suggested reading***:

Bauer-Wu, S. (2011). Leaves falling gently: Living fully with serious and life-limiting illness through mindfulness, compassion, and connectedness. New Harbinger: Oakland, CA.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (2012). Mindfulness for beginners: Reclaiming the present moment—and your life. Sounds True: Boulder, CO.

Monteiro, L., and Musten, F. (2013). Mindfulness Starts Here: an Eight Week Guide to Skillful Living. Friesen Press: Victoria, B.S.

**Course Schedule – tentative**

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|  | **class topic** | **reading, homework HW after this class** |
| Jan 26 | Introductions  Course overview  Body scan | in Collab: Seven Attitudes, Body Scan  **HW: 1. daily 20 min body scan** |
| Feb 2 | Practice in everyday life: create new habits  Mindful eating  Body scan and breathing | in Collab: Mindful eating, Everyday mindfulness  **HW: 1. daily 20 min body scan**  **2. eat one mindful meal** |
| Feb 9 | Tuning in to the body  Yoga: mindful movement | in Collab: Yoga  **HW: 1. daily 20 min alternate yoga and body scan**  **2. eat one mindful meal**  **3. Pleasant moment calendar** |
| Feb 16 | Listening and looking: pleasant moments  Sitting meditation-yoga-sitting meditation | in Collab: Sitting meditation  **HW: 1. daily 20 min alternate body scan, yoga**  **2. daily 5 min sitting meditation awareness of breath**  **3.unpleasnt moment calendar** |
| Feb 23 | Sitting meditation  Reacting and responding : unpleasant moments  How the mind works I | **HW: 1. daily 10 min sitting practice**  **2. yoga or body scan every other day**  **3. stressful moments calendar** |
| Mar 1 | Yoga  How the mind works II  Chronic stress and mindfulness  Sitting meditation | **HW: 1. daily 15 min sitting practice**  **2. notice and track ‘stuckness’, ruts and triggers (ways that don’t serve you, rigidity)** |
| Mar 8 | Spring Break – enjoy! |  |
| Mar 15 | Yoga; sitting meditation  Emotions: **STOP**  Walking meditation | in Collab: walking meditation  **HW: 1. daily 15 min sitting meditation**  **2. alternate yoga, walking, body scan**  **3. STOP at least once each day**  **4. difficult communications calendar** |
| Mar 22 | Sitting meditation  Mindful communication: speaking authentically and listening intentionally | **HW: 1. daily 20 min sitting, yoga, body scan, or walking meditation**  **2. practice mindful communication once with someone you like and someone whom you feel challenged by – notice the differences**  **3. STOP once each day**  **4. bring awareness to food and chemicals you consume this upcoming week** |
| Mar 29 | Sitting meditation  Mindful consumption of food and chemicals | **reflective paper #1 due**  **HW: 1. daily 20 min sitting, yoga, body scan, or walking meditation**  **2. bring awareness to information and messages you consume this upcoming week** |
| Apr 5 | Sitting meditation  Mindful consumption of information | **HW: 1. daily 20 min sitting, yoga, body scan, or walking meditation**  **2. bring awareness to messages you send this upcoming week** |
| Apr 12 | Mindful messaging: verbal and nonverbal  Lovingkindness meditation | **HW: 1. daily 20 min sitting, yoga, body scan, or walking meditation**  **2. brief lovingkindness practice every day**  **3. *wage peace*: do at least 3 acts of sincere kindness, including one to a stranger, when you have nothing to gain from doing them** |
| Apr 19 | Yoga  Tools for grounding, being awake  Sound meditation | **HW: 1. daily 20 min sitting, yoga, body scan, or walking meditation**  **2. brief lovingkindness practice every day** |
| Apr 26 | Sitting meditation  Life maintenance: The Master in the Art of Living  Mindful eating revisited  Gratitude or forgiveness meditation | in Collab: The Master in the Art of Living  **HW: 1. daily 20 min sitting, yoga, body scan, or walking meditation**  **2. brief lovingkindness or gratitude practice every day** |
| May 3 | Making the practice your own  Life maintenance: all day every day | **reflective paper #2 due** |