

Three Rivers Community College
574 New London Turnpike, Norwich, CT 06360
HPE K136 TM5 CRN (5WkMd1),13345 Tai Chi
Spring 2016 Syllabus

Tuesday & Thursday 2:30 – 3:45 p.m.
Studio in F111-2

Instructor Information

Instructor: Barbara Chan, MS, BA
USA Wushu Kungfu Federation Certified Tai Chi Instructor and Chinese Martial Arts
Judge
Taijiquan 4th Duan (Tai Chi Black Belt 4th Degree)

Communication with Your Instructor: Contact your instructor via e-mail at bchan1@prodigy.net or bchan@trcc.comnet.edu.

Course Description

Tai Chi was originally a form of internal Chinese martial art practiced for both its defense training and health benefits. Tai Chi today has become a modified exercise using all the techniques as a means to attain healing qualities rather than combative awareness. Unlike some exercises that can be learned simply from following diagrams, Tai Chi is a fluid movement that requires very deliberate and precise movements. It is therefore best to find an instructor who is qualified to demonstrate the Tai Chi movements and techniques. In this course, the same Tai Chi theory and movements created in ancient China and now practiced all over the world as a healing and relaxation exercise will be taught by Ms. Barbara Chan, a U.S.A. Wushu Kungfu Federation-certified Tai Chi instructor with a Tai Chi 4th Degree Black Belt. Ms. Chan is also a nationally certified Chinese martial arts judge.

Tai Chi routines require the practitioners to be tranquil and calm, emphasizing slow and soft movements. Because particular mental focus is placed on the movement and breathing during the exercise, it is, therefore, often referred to as "moving meditation." This meditation in motion has recently been gaining popularity as a way to relieve pain, develop balance and enhance relaxation. Focused and rhythmic breathing emphasizes a relaxed body and encourages strong blood circulation. The slow and fluid movements practiced in Tai Chi improve the body's alignment, posture, strength, flexibility, coordination, balance, and stamina. Tai Chi provides practitioners with an overall toning and strengthening of specific muscles.

This course covers two sections of learning: a series of Chi Kung (Qigong) exercises and a simplified Tai Chi (Taiji) routine. Chi Kung is a breathing exercise on which Tai Chi is based. This breathing exercise is practiced in coordination with a set of pressure point stimulating movements, and is commonly used to prepare students for the more complicated Tai Chi moves. Since the basics will be taught in this course, students do not need to have prior knowledge of Chi Kung or Tai Chi to take this course. A different set of Chi Kung exercise and/or a different Tai Chi routine will be taught each time this course is offered. Therefore, this course can be repeated by those students who wish to obtain a more in-depth learning experience in the Tai Chi art form.

Objectives

With the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- relate and discuss the general principles and benefits of practicing Tai Chi
- exercise the proper way of breathing used in practicing Tai Chi

- use breathing effectively to enhance general well-being
- implement self-massage exercise to prevent common ailments and pressure point stimulating exercise to regulate blood flow
- practice Tai Chi to enhance balance and promote relaxation
- do a set of Chi Kung exercise on their own
- do a Tai Chi routine on their own
- identify each movement with its corresponding English name
- exercise proper protocol to greet and thank the instructor in Chinese

Course Content

1. Greeting the instructor at the beginning of each class in Chinese.
2. Routine warm-up and stretching exercise at the beginning of each class to prepare the body so as to prevent from injury during exercise.
3. Practice of Tai Chi breathing through Chi Kung exercises.
4. Practice moving meditation through Chi Kung exercises and through Tai Chi routines.
5. Practice of body alignment and posture through Tai Chi movements to reduce stress on the spine.
6. Practice of weight transfer and joint flexing to improve balance, flexibility and coordination through Tai Chi.
7. Practice of a “position sense” through Tai Chi to prevent accidents from falling.
8. Practice of using the spine as a pivot point to improve posture and reduce back pain.
9. Practice using the “inner stillness” to maintain a clear mind and focus and to release stress.
10. Cool-down exercise after practicing Chi Kung and/or Tai Chi.
11. Thanking the instructor at the end of each class in Chinese.

Text and Other Required Materials

No textbook is required for this course. The instructor will distribute handouts of notes for the forms and routines she teaches.

Comfortable loose garments and a pair of soft-sole canvas shoes or sneakers are ideal for practicing Chi Kung and Tai Chi in. Students must not do the exercise bare-foot. No mat is needed for practicing Tai Chi.

Teaching Methods

1. Review: All moves taught in previous class(es) will be reviewed before new ones are taught to ensure that students have learned the moves correctly.
2. Demonstrations: The instructor will demonstrate each new move to be taught first, highlighting important points for each move.
3. Teaching: The instructor will teach hand and leg movements separately, and then combine both. Students will follow the instructor’s moves, imitating as closely as possible and at the same time applying the ideas of important points highlighted by the instructor.
4. Repetition: All old and new moves are repeated during each class to ensure that students have learned the moves so they can practice at home by themselves.
5. Evaluation Method: The instructor will observe each student’s performance during class, and a test will be conducted at the end of the course to ensure comprehension.

Student Preparation:

Appropriate Mental Readiness: Students should come to class with a peaceful, happy and positive attitude. Be polite and kind to one another.

Appropriate Attire: Students should wear comfortable clothing that does not limit movements, soft-sole canvas shoes or sneakers, and definitely no bare feet.

Protocol: Be punctual. Greet your instructor at the beginning of each class, and thank her at the end of the class. If for any reason you are late for the class, do a little stretching on your own before catching up with the class without disturbing your fellow classmates. Space may be tight in the studio, so please be considerate and mindful of your fellow classmates. However, each student is responsible for locating himself/herself at a spot where he/she is visible to the instructor and vice versa.

Course Expectations:

Practice: It is of utmost importance that all students practice at home as often as they can, but especially on the same day after the class. If a student cannot practice on the same day, he/she should at least try to practice the moves mentally. This way one will not forget the new moves and thus will not hinder practice for a whole week until the next class. It will be a waste of an entire week without practice. This may also affect the progress of the entire class having to go over the old moves again plainly because a few students have not practiced during the week. Remember: practice makes perfect. Practicing the forms is the only required homework for this course.

If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to learn the missed moves from a fellow classmate. Your instructor is not obliged to provide you a private lesson to teach you the missed moves. However, you may schedule a time with your instructor for extra help with those moves after you have learned them from your fellow classmate.

Test: There will be no written test for this course. But in order to evaluate students' performance and their understanding for this course, the instructor will conduct a test at the end of the semester. For the test, each student is expected to be able to perform the forms independently and individually, or in small groups, as the instructor sees fit. When asked, students are expected to know the English name for each move.

Attendance and Participation Policy: Students wishing to withdraw from this class must go to the Registrar's Office and fill out the proper withdrawal form by September 3, 2015 for partial tuition refund. Not following proper withdrawal procedures will result in receiving a failing grade for the course. All students are encouraged to attend ALL classes scheduled and **must participate in the physical exercise** in class, unless the instructor's permission is sought before each class begins. Attendance will be taken by the instructor each time the class meets. As this is a credit course, students must treat this course as all other academic credit courses. If, for a justifiable reason, a student knows he/she cannot come to class on a certain day, advance notice to the instructor is required. Supporting documents (e.g., doctor's note) must be submitted in order for an absence to be excused. If a student misses more than 3 classes, he/she will receive an "F" for the course. Discipline is one of the important elements to be learned in the study of Tai Chi. Learning is achieved largely through participation in class, so it is very important to practice the discipline that all Tai Chi practitioners are expected to cultivate.

Disabilities Policy: If you have a question regarding a disability that may affect your progress in this course, please contact one of the college's Disability Service Providers as soon as possible. Chris Scarborough (860-892-5751/Room A-119) generally works with students who have Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder, or Asperger's Syndrome (Chris's position is part-time). Kathleen Gray (860-885-2328/Room A-119) generally works with students who have physical, visual, hearing, medical, mobility, or psychiatric disabilities. Please note that an instructor **cannot** provide disability academic adjustments until a student provides the necessary paperwork from the college's Office of Disability Services to the instructor. Also, academic adjustments take effect when the instructor receives the paperwork from a student; academic adjustments are not provided retroactively.

On-line Learning Portfolio: All students are required to maintain an online learning portfolio in Digication that uses the college template. Through this electronic tool students will have the opportunity to monitor their own growth in college-wide learning. The student will keep his/her learning portfolio and may continue to use the Digication account after graduation. A Three Rivers General Education Assessment Team will select and review random works to improve the college experience for all. Student work reviewed for assessment purposes will not include names and all student work will remain private and anonymous for college improvement purposes. Students will have the ability to integrate learning from the classroom, college, and life in general, which will provide additional learning opportunities. If desired, students will have the option to create multiple portfolios.

Grading Policy

All students will receive a letter grade for the exam at the end of the semester, basing on their class participation and their ability to perform the form taught in the semester independently.

Weekly Schedule

Week	Materials/Topics	Activities
1 1/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tai Chi History - Course Syllabus - Greetings - Warm-up Exercise - Chi Kung (Qigong) Exercise for General Well-being: forms 1 - 3 - Chi Kung Closing Exercise - Greetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A brief history and a discussion of how Tai Chi is developed and practiced, and its benefits - Explanation of the course syllabus and grading policies - Learn how to greet and thank the instructor in Chinese - Explanation and practice of warm-up exercise - Learn Chi Kung (Qigong) Exercise for General Well-being forms 1 - 3 - Learn Chi Kung Closing Exercise - Learn how to thank the instructor in Chinese
1/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greetings and Warm-up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin class by greeting the instructor in Chinese - Do warm-up exercise

Week	Materials/Topics	Activities	
4	2/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greetings and Warm-up - Practice of Chi Kung (Qigong) Exercise for General Well-being - Basic Tai Chi steps - Review of 12-Form Tai Chi: Forms 1 - 8 - 12-Form Tai Chi: Forms 9 -10 - Practice of Forms 1 - 10 - Cool-down exercise - Greetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin class by greeting the instructor in Chinese - Do warm-up exercise - Practice Chi Kung (Qigong) Exercise for General Well-being - Practice basic Tai Chi steps - Review 12-Form Tai Chi forms 1 - 8 - Learn 12-Form Tai Chi forms 9 and 10 - Practice forms 1 - 10 - Do Cool-down exercise - Thank the instructor in Chinese
	2/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greetings and Warm-up - Practice of Chi Kung (Qigong) Exercise for General Well-being - Basic Tai Chi steps - Review of 12-Form Tai Chi: Forms 1 - 10 - 12-Form Tai Chi: Forms 11-12 - Practice of Forms 1 - 12 - Cool-down exercise - Greetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin class by greeting the instructor in Chinese - Do warm-up exercise - Practice Chi Kung (Qigong) Exercise for General Well-being - Practice basic Tai Chi steps - Review 12-Form Tai Chi forms 1 - 10 - Learn 12-Form Tai Chi forms 11 and 12 - Practice forms 1 - 12 - Do Cool-down exercise - Thank the instructor in Chinese
5	2/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greetings and Warm-up - Practice of Chi Kung (Qigong) - Chi Kung Closing Exercise for General being - Basic Tai Chi steps - Practice of 12-Form Tai Chi - Cool-down exercise - Greetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin class by greeting the instructor in Chinese - Do warm-up exercise - Practice Chi Kung (Qigong) Exercise for General Well-being - Practice basic Tai Chi steps - Practice 12-Form Tai Chi - Do Cool-down exercise - Thank the instructor in Chinese
	2/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greetings and Warm-up - Practice of 12-Form Tai Chi - Final Exam: Individual/ Small Group Performance - Cool-down exercise - Greetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin class by greeting the instructor in Chinese - Do warm-up exercise - Practice 12-Form Tai Chi - Take Final Exam: Individual or Small-Group Presentation - Do Cool-down exercise - Thank the instructor in Chinese

Note: 1. Tai Chi Chuan (or Taijiquan in its Chinese phonetic spelling) has been simplified as “Tai Chi” in this document, because this is its commonly known name in the U.S.A.

2. Chi Kung (or Qigong in its Chinese phonetic spelling) is a breathing exercise which is the foundation for practicing Tai Chi to cultivate qi (internal energy). The name “Chi Kung” is used in this document because this is its commonly known name in the U.S.A.