

York University - School of Kinesiology and Health Science

**PKIN 0400 0.00 TAI-CHI I – COURSE OUTLINE
FW 2023 - 2024**

INSTRUCTOR: Helen Wu, 342 Bethune College

EMAIL: helenxwu@sympatico.ca

CELL: 416-919-7652. **WEB:** www.helenwutaichi.com

CLASS LOCATION: Studio 4, Tait McKenzie Building

CLASS TIMES: Summer I: M/W; Section: A-9:30AM; B-10:30AM; C-11:30AM;

REFERENCE VIDEOS: In order to help students practicing, please access the YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJ2kKUIUq6BVeEJW_xjHV-g; then go to **Play list**, you will see course number: PKIN0400

COURSE DESCRIPTION (See video 1: Introduction)

This course comprises practical and theoretical study of Chinese traditional Tai-Chi techniques with a therapeutic Chi-Kung healing meditation for health and well-being. Tai-Chi is often referred to as meditation in motion and encourages the flow of energy throughout the body. Practice in Tai-Chi regulates and improves the functioning of the neuromuscular, circulatory, respiratory and digestive systems, metabolism and the endocrine system. Modern research supports the fact that regular practice moderates the effects of aging and boosts the immune system. By the end of the PKIN Tai-Chi training, students will learn to how to reduce stress in their daily life, to improve body circulation, and to benefit their physical and mental well-being.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this course is to assist students in transforming disciplined Tai-Chi training into internal strength. It is necessary to begin with external training and then to reach inward. Students will be able to have a positive and enjoyable experience in learning. They will also gain skills to maximize internal strength and to gain optimal health and deep satisfaction with life. The specific objectives of the course are that students will be able to:

- Building Strong Foundations. Achieving mind/body health, and for establishing a balance of attention between the external world and the inner life.
- Transforming Disciplined Training into Internal Strength
- Learn and the therapeutic Chi-Kung postures and basic Tai-Chi techniques
- Study basic self-defence applications of the Tai-Chi Fan

TEXT / READINGS

Required text: *Helen Wu, Chi-Kung, Tai-Chi and Fan: A Step-by-Step Training Course*. Publisher: Helen Wu, Toronto, ON, 2013. Please see instructor.

Reading Sections: Pages 22 - 114; 172 - 181; 228 - 233

OUTLINE

- History and philosophy of Chinese traditional Chi-Kung, Tai-Chi and Tai-Chi weapons
- The essentials of Chi-Kung and Tai-Chi; health benefits; healing and avoiding injury
- Tai-Chi and Therapeutic Chi-Kung techniques and training methods
- Two-person Tai-Chi Fan applications

PRACTICAL SKILLS

1. Warm-up

It is extremely important to learn effective warm-up techniques. Tai-Chi can seem so effortless that some people imagine warming up is unnecessary. This is not the case. In fact, the legs require a lot of strength training, and all motions involve a certain amount of muscle tension.

- **Stretching:** Leg stretching on the bar; squatting stretch; and shoulder stretching
- **Kicking:** Front Kicking and Slap Kicking
- **Therapeutic Chi-Kung:** The Chi-Kung exercises presented here were designed by Dr. Zi-Ping Wang, and systematized by Dr. Cheng-De Wu. It was published in 1958. The system is based on ancient Chi-Kung exercises, but also incorporates Dr. Zi-Ping Wang's decades of clinical experience. The therapeutic methods are time-proven: not only can their origins be traced back centuries, but the system in its modern form has benefited hundreds of thousands of practitioners all over the world in the more than half a century since it was introduced. No case of adverse effects has ever been reported. The design of the series of 24 postures follows the human spine and the command system of the body – the nervous system – through the neck, then the back and through the limbs. These exercises can be used for relief of neck, shoulder and back pain, and for the rehabilitation of chronic illnesses such as arthritis, heart disease, diabetes, Parkinson's and Parkinson's-related syndromes.

2. Workout

a) Tai-Chi Foundational Training

Body Posture: When practising Tai-Chi, the body should be relaxed and the head held up, as though suspended on a string. It is important to keep the shoulders relaxed and to drop the elbows. Bending, stretching, and the opening and closing of joints should feel natural and unstrained. Generally, the eyes will follow the hands.

Breathing Techniques: Breathe naturally and evenly, but don't force deep breathing. When the abdomen is relaxed, Chi will flow naturally to the Dan-Tien, where it can be activated.

Hand Forms: Fist, palm and hook hand. **Stances:** Opening stance; Bow stance; Horse stance; Semi-horse stance; Empty stance; Falling down stance; Crossed-knee stance; One-leg-standing stance; T-step

b) Four of the Most Important Tai-Chi Techniques

The one of the great achievements in the development of Tai-Chi Chuan was the harmonizing of combat training methods with Taoist principles. The resulting form enhanced the flow of vital energies through the body, and represented an efficient and powerful set of fighting techniques based upon flexibility and supreme mind/body coordination and control.

Exercises: Ward Off, Roll Back, Squeeze and Push

c) Two-Person Tai-Chi Fan Applications

In the 1960s, a Chinese martial artist, Professor Ju-Rong Wang essentially fashioned an entire system for training with the Fan. The Fan forms provide internal and external training for all ages and levels of practitioners. These forms are designed to enhance internal energy and optimize health, but they include powerful self-defence applications as well. Note that many of the techniques can be applied to any similar-sized object, and are thus ideal for self-defence in a modern urban context.

3. Cool-down

Before finishing your training, students will learn relaxation techniques (Chinese traditional self-acupressure). You will learn to relax the whole body; and these exercises can also help the circulation of blood and will reduce resistance to blood flow. The use of these exercises will improve heart functionality and help to promote the establishment of microcirculation.

EVALUATION

1. Elements of Final Grade

Theory Exam 20%

At the end of the session, there will be an exam of open book questions about Tai-Chi and Chi-Kung.

Practical Skills 65%

Your final assessment will be conducted in small groups. Your Tai-Chi performance will be judged on the basis of: posture & technique; breathing & pace; knowledge of the routines.

Attendance 15%

Two absences will be allowed in this term. But 3% will be deducted from the “Attendance” component of your final grade for each class missed.

2. Percent: (Please note that there are no A+, B+ and C+ grades for all PKIN courses.)

A: Exceptional & Excellent (80 - 100%);

B: Very Good & Good (70 - 79%)

C: Competent & Passing (60 - 69%)

F: Failing (Below 60%)

PASS / FAIL OPTION

Some students may like to see either Pass or Fail, rather than a grade on their transcript. For students who wish to take a PKIN course on a Pass/Fail basis, they must let me know before the end of the term.

PIKN PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENT

To receive credit for a practicum course, a student must attend and actively participate in a minimum of 80 percent of classes for the course. When full participation is not possible, accommodation agreements may be reached with the student. The following absences are allowed:

24-hour course, 2 hours per week over 12 weeks: Students are allowed 4 absences.

24-hour course, 4 hours per week over 6 weeks: Students are allowed 2 absences (S1 & S2 Term).

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Clothing should be comfortable and loose. Please wear exercise pants, not shorts or skirts. Shoes must have shoelaces. Pay close attention to details. If you do not understand how to perform a movement or technique, ask the instructor for clarification before you attempt it. No gum. You could choke on it. If you feel pain, discomfort or distress, stop immediately. (Cell phones should be off throughout the class.)

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you would like to make an appointment, it is best to phone me at 416-919-7652.

Office Hours & Location:

Mon./Wed.: 8:00AM – 12:00PM at Studio 4 A/B;

IMPORTANT NOTE:

What you should know if you no longer want to take this course: You should take your name away from the course name list in the registry system **Fall: no later than Nov. 18 / 2023; Winter: no later than Mar. 11 / 2024**, to avoid getting an automatic “Fail grade” from the computer system.

If you didn't take your name away from the system, then you would have to go back to the office to fix your grade. That would not only waste your time, but would also give unnecessary trouble to the office staff. Thank you very much for your co-operation.