

**PESP 032**  
**D. KNEE**

**TAI CHI CHUAN**  
**Mon, Wed 9:35 - 11:00 AM**

**SPR '04**  
**122 PFC**

Office: 100B Adams Hall Tel: x 5072

Office hour: Mon 11:00 - 11:45 AM, Wed 11:00 -11:15 AM, and by appt.

TAI CHI CHUAN is an ancient Chinese exercise that promotes health, flexibility and balance. This graceful, slow-moving dance-like form is based on Taoist notions of the complementarity of Yin and Yang, and the wisdom of being in harmony with nature. Learning and performing the exercise helps relieve stress and increase circulation in a safe, pleasant and meditative fashion. We become aware of our breathing, our balance, and our energy field and its healthful circulation.

Tai Chi has become an important and popular technique of preventative medicine, especially in China, the U.S., and more recently, Europe. The course's main purpose is to make this oriental treasure available to our students as a life-long health-sustaining and enhancing exercise.

We will study the 1st part of the Yang family Tai Chi Chuan short form, related warm-ups, Chi Kung, and 2-person exercises. In order for the Tai Chi form to "sink into your bones", you should practice it daily, if only for 10 minutes. We will also read about (optional) and discuss the history of Tai Chi and its relation to other Chinese martial arts as well as to Taoism and Buddhism.

DRESS in comfortable, loose-fitting clothing. Wear white-soled sneakers, tai chi or kung fu shoes, or go shoeless.

ATTENDANCE is extremely important. 4 absences lowers your grade by 7 points, 5 absences lowers your grade by 14 points, 6 by 20 points, and **7 absences fails the course**. Arriving late or leaving early counts as a fractional absence, e.g. coming to class after 10 AM counts as 1/2 an absence. **Absence and lateness are not excused**, so be sure not to squander your 3 "free" absences. Athletes must give the instructor a copy of their game trip schedule with class days clearly indicated.

This course is normally graded on a P/D + /D/F basis, but a letter grade for the course can be had instead. NOTIFY THE INSTRUCTOR THAT YOU'RE CONSIDERING A LETTER GRADE BY **MARCH 19th**, after you've discussed your performance on the Midterm with him.

Aside from the effects of excessive absence &/or lateness mentioned above, your grade is determined mainly by a Midterm (the week of **March 10th**) & a Final (**April 30th - May 7th**). These are evaluations of your Warm Ups, Prep & Chi Kung

exercises, Tai Chi form, 2-person exercises, your understanding of the class discussions of Tai Chi history and theory, and your participation in class:

- Warm Up & prep 10%
- Form Evaluation 40%
- Tai Chi History and Theory 20%
- 2- Person Exercises 20%.
- Class Participation 10%

If you have any documented disability-related concerns that may have an impact upon your performance in this course, please meet with me within the first two weeks of the term, so that we can work out the appropriate accommodations. Accommodations are provided on an individualized basis after needs, circumstances and documentation have been evaluated by the appropriate office on campus. For more information and submission of documentation of your disability, contact Dr. Karin Spencer in 202 Davison Hall at 516-463-6770 (for physical &/or psychological disabilities) or Linda DeMotta at 202 Roosevelt Hal at 516-463-5840 (for learning disabilities &/or ADHD). All disability-related information will be kept confidential.

Our class will view VIDEOS of Lawrence Galante's and Wm. C. C. Chen's Tai Chi forms, and various other martial artists, in room 204 of the Health Dome on **March 24th**. Chen's and Galante's videos can also be viewed by you at the media center- for Chen's video refer to "Video 95: Body Mechanics of Tai Chi Chuan, Yang Style Short Form", tape# V-5070, for Galante's, refer to "Yang Style Tai Chi", tape# V-97.

### **WARM UP EXERCISES**

1. Horse stance, belly & torso breathing.
2. Arm flops.
3. 3 neck ex., head roll.
4. 3 shoulder ex.
5. Forearm & wrist stretch.
6. Hip circles.
7. Knee/ankle circles.
8. Temple stance bow.

9. 3 spine stretches: spiral, side, forward/back.
10. Front thigh stretch.
11. Balance & leg swings.

### **STANCES**

1. Horse stance (Wu Ji).
2. Forward stance, Rear stance.
3. Cat stance.
4. Temple stance.
5. Pigeon-toed stance.

### **HAND POSTURES**

1. Fair lady
2. Hook.
3. Fist.

### **CHI KUNG (QI GONG)**

1. Sea creature falls asleep and wakes up.
2. 8 Standing-Like-a-Tree meditations.

### **TAI CHI PREPARATORY EXERCISES**

1. Tai Chi ball.
2. Arm flops in forward/back stance.
3. Tai Chi walk.
4. Change direction.

5. Paint the wall.
6. Play guitar right and left.

RECOMMENDED TEXT: *Tai Chi - The Supreme Ultimate*, Lawrence Galante, Samuel Weiser, Publishers. The text may be purchased or the material is also available on e-reserve using course pesp032 and password pesp32 (use lower case), or in hard copy at the library.

The material discussed in class and appearing in our text includes:

- \* The history of Tai Chi Chuan
- \* An overview of Taoism and Buddhism as they relate to Tai Chi
- \* The principles of performing the Tai Chi form
- \* Tai Chi as a martial art and as an exercise for health
- \* The Tai Chi lineage tree

Reading Assignments and class discussion:

1. Feb 5 : P.7- 18, Preface, Forward, Intro, Origin & History.
2. Feb 12 : P.19- 27, Soft and Hard Schools, the Classics.
3. Feb 26 : P.28- 38, Philosophy.
4. Mar 5 : P.39- 46, Spirituality.
5. Mar 19 : P.47- 51, Tai Chi & other Eastern Systems;  
Optional: P. 52- 58, Tai Chi & Western Psych., & the Occult.
6. Mar 26 : P.59- 78, Tai Chi & Health.
7. Apr 2 : P.79- 88, Self-Defense, Dynamics of Tai Chi.
8. Apr 9: P.88- 118, 195, 208, Solo Form-Section I, Conclusion.

PEOPLE, TERMS, CONCEPTS & THEMES raised during the 8 class discussion sessions listed above:

1. Lawrence Galante, William C. C. Chen, T. T. Liang, Chang San Feng, Tai Chi Classics, Yin & Yang, qi (chi), tan tien, health & self-defense, root, push hands, neutralize/yield, Yang Cheng Fu, longevity, becoming an immortal, Buddha, Bodhidharma (Ta Mo), Shao-lin Temple, martial arts, Kung Fu, Wu Shu, animal forms.
2. Tai Chi lineage tree, Wu Tang mountains, Tai Chi families, Cheng Man Ch'ing, short & long forms, secrecy, preventative medicine, hard (external) vs. soft (internal), Ba Gua, Xing Yi, 5 elements, Kuo Lin Ying.
3. Taoism, Lao Tzu, Tao Te Ching / The Way and its Power (or Virtue), Wu Wei/ non-action, Tai Chi symbol, duality, I Ching/ The Book of Changes, oracle, 8 trigrams, 64 hexagrams, Confucius, Carl Jung.

4. The Principles of Tai Chi: Relaxation, Emptiness & Fullness, Slowness & Evenness, Balance, Rooting & Sinking, Coordination & Centering, Breathing, Concentration; Meditation : sitting, standing, moving.
5. Yoga, prana = chi, Hinduism, chakras, Zen/Ch'an Buddhism, koan, hara = tan tien.
6. Classical Chinese medicine, Meridians, Wu Hing/ 5 elements, Yellow Emperor's Internal Medicine Classic, chi balance and flow, Avedic medicine of India, diagnosis: pulses, tongue, question patient; treatments: Accupuncture, Accupressure, Moxibustion, Herbs, Massage, Diet, Exercise (Chi Kung/ Qi Gong); sexual yoga/ Tantra.
7. Returning energy, no double-weighting, sticking, invest in loss. Curriculum of Tai Chi study: Solo Form (short form, long form), Corrections or Refinement, Applications, Push Hands, Walking Push Hands, Ta Lu, Weapons Forms (sword, staff, big knife, ...), The 2 Person Form, Boxing, Free Style.
8. Pictures of the solo form. Applying Tai Chi to life.

### **YANG SHORT FORM**

1. Preparation- transition to horse stance.
2. Beginning- sea creature wakes up & falls asleep again.
3. Ward Off With Left Hand- turn right & form ball, step front , grasp sparrow's tail, ward off left.
4. Ward Off With Right Hand- turn left as you form ball, step right, ward off right.
5. Roll Away- turn to corner, roll back, turn left with palms up.
6. Press- arms float up, shift right and press.
7. Push- withdraw & separate, push.
8. Single Whip- shift back, turn left, turn right as you shift right and form beak (hook) and scoop, turn left as hook reaches out, step left. Arm whips.
9. Lifting the Hands (Play Guitar Right)- shift forward, pivot right and open arms, close into right temple stance with play guitar.

10. Shoulder Strike- swing both arms in a downward arc along your left side and draw in your right leg (Pull). Step forward as your left arm rises to rear, shift forward as left arm bends & right arms bows out.

11. White Crane Spreads its Wings- pivot left, spread wings in cat stance.

12. Cross Over the Knee and Step (Brush Knee & Push)- arms circle, step left, brush knee & push.

13. Playing the Guitar ( Left)- raise right leg in follow-through, step back & open arms, close into play guitar left.

14. Cross Over the Knee and Step (Brush Knee & Push)- arms circle, step left, brush knee & push.

15. & 58. Step Up, Deflect (Parry), Intercept and Punch- shift back as right fist lowers toward groin, T stance with right foot, shift right but turn left, parry right as left foot comes forward and left hand chops, (step &) shift forward and punch.

59. (Our 16.) Withdraw and Push- substitute left hand.

60. (Our 17.) Crossing Hands- shift back, turn front pivoting on left heel & fanning out the arms, wrists meet as right foot completes horse stance, arms lower and separate.

These moves are presented above as they are named and numbered in the William Chen book. The sequence, however, is the original Cheng Man Ch'ing short form as shown in the Galante book.

## **2-PERSON EXERCISES (PUSH HANDS)**

1. The mirror exercise.

2. A & B shift between forward and backward stances facing each other without touching.

3. A pushes at B's 4 corners, B neutralizes. In horse & forward stances.

4. 1-hand push hands, 2 directions (oval, substitution).

5. A & B alternate with withdraw, separate and push.

6. B yields to A's push, interposing her arm or controlling elbow (and returns

push).

7. A pushes with 2 hands in quick succession, B yields twice.
8. A pushes across to B's opposite shoulder, B yields & controls A's elbow and returns push, A neutralizes, substitutes and pushes with 2 hands.
9. A & B alternate pushing and yielding ---> free form.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR MIDTERM AND [FINAL]**

1. Form through posture #8 (Single Whip) [all 17].
2. People, Terms, Concepts and Themes through #4 [all 8].
3. All warm ups, stances & hand postures, and Tai Chi preparatory exercises.
4. Standing-Like-a-Tree meditation through #4 [all 8].
5. Push Hands exercises through #6 [all 9].

Notes:

1. Students requesting a letter grade may be asked to demonstrate their forms solo for closer scrutiny.
2. Students wishing 'extra credit' may submit a 4-6 page essay that includes a summary of 4 or more of the text readings in their own words, and some thoughts regarding Tai Chi in their lives. This assignment is entirely optional. The due date is **April 28th**.
3. P/D + /D/F means just that - there are 4 possible outcomes.

### **More Criteria for Judging the Doing of the Form**

Know the complete choreography

Position of the feet

Yin/Yang: correct weighting of the feet

Posture

Shoulders, elbows relaxed & low

Precision, clarity, evenness

Relaxation, balance & root

Fall asleep/ wake up

Stances: Horse, Forward, Back, Cat, Temple, Pigeon-toed

Hand postures: Fair lady's hands, hook, fist

Avoid twisting or leaning.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- 1) William C.C. Chen, "Body Dynamics of Tai Chi Chuan",
- 2) John Blofeld, "The Secret and Sublime",
- 3) T. T. Liang, "Tai Chi Chuan for Health and Self-Defense",
- 4) Lao Tzu, "Tao Te Ching",
- 5) Holmes Welch, "The Parting of the Way",
- 6) Web Sites: Galante: [www.holistic-arts.com](http://www.holistic-arts.com)  
Chen: [www.williamccchen.com](http://www.williamccchen.com)
- 7) Forest Hills Tai Chi Chuan Assn e-mail: [TaiBox@aol.com](mailto:TaiBox@aol.com)