

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**Physical Activity for Lifetime Wellness**

**RECR 181-DL 1,DL2 Meditation: Introduction**  
**1Credit, Fall 2024**

**T/R 3:00-4:15 (DL)**

**DL 1-August 26, 2024 – October 13, 2024**

**DL 2- October 21-December 9. 2024**

**Faculty**

**Name:** Yvonne M. Parrotte, M.Ed., C-IAYT, RYT 500

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Office Location:** Zoom

**Email Address:** yparrott@gmu.edu

**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

NONE

**University Catalog Course Description**

Introduces students to philosophical foundations of meditation. Guides in the practice of meditation and its application to daily mental focus and concentration.

**Course Overview**

Introduction to Meditation will provide an opportunity to understand the philosophical, neurochemical and practical aspects of meditation, including its origins, uses and benefits. The emphasis will be on learning through experience, both with in-class exercises and home practice. Topics covered will range from development of concentration to compassion practice and self-understanding, including the associated positive brain changes documented in scientific research.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using a synchronous format via Canvas Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal and Zoom. You will log in to the Canvas course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available prior to class time on 26 Aug 3pm and 21 Oct 3 pm. Class meets every Tuesday and Thursday.

- To access your course in Canvas: <https://canvas.gmu.edu/login/canvas>.

Under no circumstances may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

## **Learning Outcomes**

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Define meditation and its benefits.
2. State the need for and importance of centering and breathing practices.
3. Develop proficiency in the practice of four types of pranayama.
4. Demonstrate techniques of progressive relaxation.
5. Demonstrate a sitting pose, including proper alignment.
6. Identify the 5-stage meditation process and demonstrate a working knowledge of refining focus and awareness.
7. Describe benefits of systematic relaxation and meditation.
8. Build their own practice.

## **Professional Standards**

*Not Applicable*

## **Required Texts**

*None*

## **Course Performance Evaluation**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor.

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Final Paper/ Reflection - 15 points

- Students will turn in a short reflective paper discussing topics from class in relation to their meditation practice. Paper will reflect upon bringing meditation concepts into a “real life” mindset. Students are encouraged to write down reflective experiences from the meditation homework.

Final Exam - 15 points

- A written final exam and/or oral presentation reflecting on the student’s understanding of meditation topics and formal practices presented in class. Topics and experiential practice will be thoroughly reviewed and discussed in class.

- **Other Requirements**

Attendance 70%

Because this is largely an experiential course, regular attendance is very important.

Attendance and participation is mandatory for this class. Students will be excused from class with a note from a health care provider. The note must be presented immediately upon return to the class. The note may also be emailed to the instructor. Emails and texts do not excuse an absence but are helpful in planning the class session.

- **Grading**

The course will be graded on a 100 point scale comprised of 70 points for attendance and participation, 15 points for written assignment and 15 points for the final project

**Grading Scale by %**

A =94-100	B+ =88-89	C+ = 78-79	D = 60-69
A-=90-93	B = 84-89	C = 74-77	F = 0-59
	B-= 80-83	C- = 70-73	

**Use of Generative AI**

Use of Generative AI tools should be used following the fundamental principles of Mason’s Academic Standards. This includes being honest about the use of these tools for submitted work and including citations when using the work of others, whether individual people or Generative AI tools.

**Professional Dispositions (CEHD Student Guide)**

Throughout study in the College of Education and Human Development, students are expected to demonstrate behaviors that reflect the positive dispositions of a professional. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/current-students/cehd-student-guide>.

**Class Schedule**

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Readings/Assignment Due</i>
<b>1</b>  <i>Complete Breath Intro</i>	<i>Opening Discussion: Introduction/ overview of course objectives. Items needed for practice. What is Meditation? What it is not. The ultimate “Superpower”, modern villains, origins, “goal” and advice for practice. Formal practices: Breath awareness. Complete/ 3 part breath.</i>	<b>Tan, Intro and Ch 1. Ricard, Part I, Part II Piver, Ch 2, 3.</b>
<b>2</b>  <i>Alternate Nostril Variation</i>	<i>Opening Discussion: Pillars/preparation for meditation. Why is Meditation difficult? Why do we suffer? The good news/virtuous cycle. Formal Practice: Continuing with the breath and “refreshing concentration,” seated asana, alternate nostril variation.</i>	<b>Tan, Ch 2, Ricard, Part III, pg. 36, (driving force, pg. 46 (causes) and pg. 53. Piver, Ch 9,10.</b>
<b>3</b>  <i>Ujjayi Breath</i>	<i>Opening Discussion: Mindfulness/Present Moment Awareness. Obstacles and Antidotes, Types of Meditation, Formal Practice: “Mind Bullies and Soap Bubbles</i>	<b>Ricard, Part II, Part III, pg. 54 (types) and pg. 61 (Four Foundations of Mindfulness) Piver, Ch. 5., Ch 14.</b>

<i>Week</i>		<i>Topics</i>	<i>Readings/Assignment Due</i>
		<i>Nature as an anchor, Connecting with the Elements, Informal Practice: Walking Meditation. Ujjayi (Ocean) Breath</i>	
<b>4</b> <i>Alternate Nostril Traditional Ujjayi Review</i>		<i>Opening Discussion: Listening anew. Benefits of Meditation and Yoga Nidra; a look at the science. Formal Practice: Loving Kindness Meditation, Progressive Relaxation (Yoga Nidra) and Pranayama Alternate Nostril and Ujjayi review</i>	<i>Tan, Ch 1. Ricard Part I Piver, Ch 1</i>
<b>5</b> <i>Bhramari Breath</i>		<i>Opening Discussion: The science of stress. Working with Anxiety and Depression. Formal Practice: Calm Abiding Meditation, Compassion, Alternate Nostril Pranayama with Mudra. Bhramari Pranayama. Joseph Goldstein Calm Abiding (Anxiety) Seb Gratitude (Depression)</i>	<i>Tan, Ch 3, 5. Ricard, Part III, pg. 81</i>
<b>6</b>		<i>Opening Discussion: What is Awareness, Presence, Attention, Concentration and Thought? Tools for developing concentration: Mantra, Mudra, and Sound. Formal Practice: Sound Meditation</i>	<i>Tan, Ch 4, 6. Piver, Ch 15</i>
<b>7</b>		<i>Review. Final paper and extra credit due. Meditation and everyday life. Final Exam Presentations.</i>	<i>Ricard, Part III, pg. 135. Final exam week: assignment/presentations. All written papers due by midnight on final day of class.</i>

### **CEHD Commitments**

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to fostering collaboration and community, promoting justice and equity, and advancing research-informed practice. Students are expected to adhere to, and contribute to, these commitments, the CEHD Mission, and Core Values of George Mason University. More information can be found here:

<https://cehd.gmu.edu/about/culture/>

### **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

#### *Policies*

- Students must adhere to Mason’s Academic Standards (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>.
- Questions or concerns regarding use of your LMS should be directed to:
  - Blackboard Learn: <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>
  - Canvas: <https://its.gmu.edu/service/canvas/>
- For information on student support resources on campus, see:
  - TimelyCare: <https://caps.gmu.edu/timelycare-services/>
  - Writing Center: <https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development’s Student Success Resources, please visit: <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.

### **Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

