

Yoga

Department: Mobility and Fitness

Priority:

An elective class with strong rehabilitation potential and with multiple cross-over activities into core classes.

Overall purpose of class:

To help students blend and recreate the mind, body and spirit connection that may have been severed by acquired disability.

Number of classes held per week:

Classes are held twice a week, however some yoga movements and breathing are routinely incorporated into other classes.

Optimum class time:

Anytime except right after lunch.

Instructor requirements:

Instructor needs to have at a very minimum 200 hundred hour Yoga Certification and experience in yoga therapy with adults with moderate to severe disabling conditions.

Number of students:

For a sitting yoga class, 20 students without an assistant

For a class that involves standing 10-12 students is the maximum that can be safely taught.

Student ability range and limitations:

This class can accommodate a wide range of physical disabilities and levels of weakness and paralysis. The critical requirement is that the student have sufficient cognitive skills to follow instructions and a definite ability to focus.

Space and Equipment requirements:

- Blank walls (mirrors are distracting and wall space is needed to facilitate certain postures).
- Mats
- Folding chairs
- Source of music
- Belts and straps plus other yoga props like blocks are useful but optional.

Student Needs to be met from the perspective of the instructor:

Since yoga addresses a whole body-mind-spirit connection, instructors goals for students in these classes are broad and encompassing. Students who complete the class will show improvement in:

- Flexibility
- Balance
- Coordination
- Strength
- Mental concentration

Typical Student Goals that lead to placement in the class:

- Students in this community generally know the benefits of yoga a student goal of taking an adaptive yoga class is not unusual.
- Students also have stated goals of learning relaxation skills and stress reduction.
- Stress reduction and relaxation are often caregiver goals for his/her loved one.

Suggested Lessons and Activities:

Curriculum for yoga classes has to grow out of the instructors own practice and experience. Teaching a yoga class encompasses a great deal more than can be offered to students with a set or list of exercises or postures. Style, type and school of yoga will determine class structure even if long-term student goals are the same.

For adaptations especially, students become teachers as they both learn to modify postures to adapt to individual limitations.

Good to have a long-term goal for the class that is worked for during the course of a school term. Examples of goals might be:

Students will have the ability to sit quietly without reacting to internal distraction for 3 minutes. (often, the biggest challenge for our students).

Maintain balance for 30 seconds.

Chair balance for arm strength for a moment.