

**PHED 119: Introduction to Mindfulness  
Course Syllabus**

**Fall 2020**

**Units: 2.0**

**Instructor:** Amanda Gilbert

**Email:** amandag5@usc.edu

**Office Hours:** TU 12:00-1:00pm. By appointment – email to schedule.

**Sections:** TU/TH 1:00-1:50pm 50031, TU/TH 2:00-2:50pm 50033

**Room:** All mindfulness courses will be held online this semester.

**Course Description:** Situated in the mind-body branch of the USC Physical Education Program, this experiential course is an introduction to mindfulness. Through it, students will learn the principles of practice, develop their own meditation practice, and apply principles to daily life. They will learn strategies to skillfully work with thoughts, emotions, and sensations, while developing their capacity to enhance mind-body awareness of present-moment experience. They will study theory and research in the field of mindfulness and the emerging science that shows promising, beneficial effects for physical and mental health and well-being. This course is designed for beginners and is also suitable for those with experience who want to refine their practice. Classes consist of a combination of lecture, practice, and discussion.

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Synthesize theory, practice, and research in mindfulness and apply understanding to individual practice.
2. Develop and sustain personal meditation practice.
3. Investigate mind-body awareness and connection and apply principles to enhance capacity for presence, connection, openness, and curiosity in experiences.
4. Describe and apply mindfulness principles to skillfully cultivate focus and concentration, including as they relate to working with emotions, thoughts, and sensations.
5. Describe and apply mindfulness principles as they relate to self-regulation in navigating difficult emotions and thoughts, including stress and anxiety.
6. Identify and apply techniques to skillfully cultivate emotions of well-being, such as kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity.
7. Apply mindful awareness in daily life, including as it relates to:
  - a. clarity in decision making and problem solving to skillfully respond, rather than react, to complex situations.
  - b. interpersonal relationships and relational mindfulness practices of active listening and mindful communication.
  - c. navigating change, time management, and exploring what it means to have a conscious and purposeful relationship with technology.

### **Physical Education Department Objectives:**

1. Students will understand the importance of sound health and fitness principles as they relate to better health and will be able to:
  - Recognize the physical and mental benefits of increased activity
  - Understand anatomy and basic biomechanical principles and terminology
2. Student will be exposed to a variety of activities providing them the opportunity to:
  - Apply learned fundamental skills
  - Participate in a motivating and nurturing environment resulting in a greater sense of well-being and resilience
  - Participate in active learning to stimulate continued inquiry about physical education, health, and fitness
3. Students will demonstrate proficiency through knowledge and acquired skills enabling them to:
  - Create a safe, progressive, methodical, and efficient activity-based plan to enhance improvement and minimize risk of injury
  - Develop an appreciation of physical activity as a lifetime pursuit and a means to better health

### **Course Reading:**

- Mindfulness Workbook - posted on Blackboard (<https://blackboard.usc.edu>)
- Mindfulness Articles/Excerpts - posted on Blackboard (<https://blackboard.usc.edu>)
- Free Choice Mindfulness Book Groups. Options include:
  1. *A Path with Heart* Jack Kornfield
  2. *Insight Meditation: The Practice of Freedom* Joseph Goldstein
  3. *Mindfulness in Plain English* Bhante Gunaratana (free online [PDF](#) available)
  4. *Peace is Every Step* Thich Nhat Hanh
  5. *The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion* Chris Germer
  6. *True Refuge* Tara Brach
  7. *The Inner Work of Racial Justice* Rhonda Magee

**Communication:** I encourage students to reach out by email and will try to respond as soon as possible, and within 48 hours. I will check Slack once a day Monday – Friday, and on Sunday’s when a Module Reflection Form is due.

**Reflection and Evaluation:** Reflection is an integral part of the learning and teaching process. As such, you will complete a series of reflections on your practice through the course. We will also complete mid- and end-of-course evaluations for the course so that it can best serve the needs of students. Please feel free to also communicate feedback to me through the semester in person or by email.

**Online Etiquette:** Your presence and engagement are as important online as in a physical classroom. *Please plan to have screens on when possible and be on time to class.* Once class has begun, it may take time to be admitted if meditation is in progress. Mute when not speaking to minimize background noise.

**Grades:** The impact of your practice will be felt in how much effort, time, and awareness you choose to invest in it. Grades are based on your willingness to show up for your personal and class practice and are based on your approach to the following criteria:

1. Presence: time and awareness to show up for your practice
2. Effort: diligence and precision with which you practice
3. Curiosity: growth through a nonjudgmental approach
4. Kindness: choosing gentleness and patience over harshness towards body, mind, and practice

All work is due on the assigned date and is to be typed and submitted to Blackboard. Format: Double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1” margins, MLA format. Due dates under course outline.

- **60 Points:** Attend class and participate in sessions. 4 points for each week. It is the responsibility of each student to accurately sign in. Participation is an essential component of this course and serves to deepen student inquiry and reflection of the course material. Students need to be present in class to earn participation points. There will be an absence make-up opportunity in weeks 8-10.
- **20 Points Each (100 points total): 5 Module Reflection Forms (for each of the 5 Modules). (Due August 30, September 13, September 27, October 11, November 1).** They include:
  - Daily personal meditation practice log. 5-10 minutes per day recommended time Modules 1, 2 (weeks 1-4); 10-15 minutes per day Modules 3, 4 (weeks 5-8); 15-25+ minutes/day Module 5 (weeks 9-15). Or, you may increase depth by a self-chosen amount of minutes each week. You are welcome to use an app, guided meditations, or break up the time through the day.
  - Rubric Criteria: 8-10 points for meditation practice (presence, effort); 2 points for each of the written responses (thorough, reflective).
  - Workbook prompts. Choose 1-2 questions from the end of each module to answer.
  - Class reflection prompts. Submit a reflection from class each module. Can be retyped or submitted as a picture included in your document.
  - Book reflection. Select a mindfulness book to read to deepen your understanding of the field. Recommended books listed in Course Reading above. Book group selections will be made in Module 1. Up to 4 people in each group; can have multiple groups of same book. Book reflection included in Module 4 reflection form (week 8).
  - Outside meditation class. Attend a meditation class outside ours. Include reflection in Module 5 (week 11) form.
- **40 Points. Mindfulness in Daily Life Group Strategy and Presentation. (Due November 2-5)**
  1. Choose an area/topic in mindfulness you're interested in exploring with a group by Week 5. Areas of daily life can include relationships and communication,

mindful eating, self-care and self-compassion, mindful technology use, mindful learning, mindful decision making, or social justice.

2. Choose a mindfulness strategy to apply to an area of daily life you'd like to try out regularly for 5 weeks (daily or minimum 3x week). While groups will choose a shared topic to explore as a community, they may all employ different strategies within it. You are welcome to explore apps that track progress or enhance your experience.
3. Organize a group in-class 15-20-minute per group presentation on your mindfulness topic and strategy. Include the research behind it (from credible, evidence-based sources), reflections on how your strategy went, recommendations, or next steps. Presentations must be visually displayed (ie. Video, PowerPoint, Prezy, etc.), cooperative with each group member speaking, and interactive in nature (the class participates in the particular technique). All citations must be properly noted in MLA format.

Rubric Criteria: 8 points for each of the following:

- Content: clearly and concisely convey thoughtful ideas and examples
  - Application: Understanding and application of mindfulness principles
  - Voice: volume, clarity, emotion
  - Stance: body language, eye contact, presence
  - Style: effort, creativity, organization, applicability, interactivity, collaboration
- **75 Points. Online Exam (Due October 30, Noon).** Based on content from workbook, free choice book group, class content, and discussions.
  - **25 Points. Meditation Final Reflection (Due on Date of Scheduled Final).** Rubric Criteria: 5 points for each: Thorough, reflective, creative, understands and applies principles of practice.

**Grading Scale:** There are 300 total points possible. The overall grading scale is as follows  
 A 282 / A- 270 / B+ 265 / B 260 / B- 255 / C+ 250 / C 245 / C- 240 / D 235

### Course Outline: Introduction to Mindfulness

Date	Topic
Week 1 <b>Module 1: Principles</b> <i>Week of 8/17</i>	Focus: What is mindfulness?; Principles of mindfulness Mindfulness and identity <b>Begin daily meditation practice (5-10 minutes/day)</b>  Reading: Free choice book Ch. 1; choose book groups Workbook Module 1: 1.0, 1.1
Week 2 <i>Week of 8/24</i>	Focus: Emerging science of mindfulness Anchor/object of focus: breath, body, sound; effort and concentration STOP technique: Stop. Take a Breath. Observe. Proceed*  <b>Due Sunday, August 30: Module 1 Reflection Form</b> (includes book selection and mindfulness article) Reading: Free choice book Ch. 2, Module 1 Excerpt

	Workbook Module 1: 1.2, 1.3
<p>Week 3  <b>Module 2: The Body</b>  <i>Week of 8/31</i></p>	<p>Focus: Mind-body awareness and connection  Working with body sensations: body scan*; posture  Conscious breathing  <b>Share an article about mindfulness or meditation</b></p> <p>Reading: Free choice book Ch. 3  Workbook Module 2: 2.0, 2.1</p>
<p>Week 4  <i>Week of 9/7  (9/7 Holiday)</i></p>	<p>Focus: Standing meditation, walking, and mindful movement; mindful eating</p> <p><b>Due Sunday, September 13: Module 2 Reflection Form</b> (includes daily life area selection)  Reading: Free choice book Ch. 4 (or halfway), Module 2 excerpt  Workbook Module 2: 2.2, 2.3</p>
<p>Week 5  <b>Module 3: The Heart</b>  <i>Week of 9/14</i></p>	<p>Focus: Working with emotions: noticing and processing  RAIN technique: Recognize, Allow, Investigate, Nonidentification  Choose mindfulness in daily life groups</p> <p><b>Deepen daily meditation practice (10-15 minutes/day)</b>  Reading: Free choice book Ch. 5  Workbook Module 3: 3.0, 3.1</p>
<p>Week 6  <i>Week of 9/21</i></p>	<p>Focus: Cultivating emotions of well-being: kindness, compassion, joy, equanimity*  Working with difficult emotions</p> <p><b>Due Sunday, September 27: Module 3 Reflection Form</b> (includes midsemester evaluation)  Reading: Free choice book Ch. 6, Module 3 excerpt  Workbook Module 3: 3.2, 3.3</p>
<p>Week 7  <b>Module 4: The Mind</b>  <i>Week of 9/28</i></p>	<p>Focus: Working with thoughts: observation and visualization techniques  Working with uncertainty</p> <p>Reading: Free choice book Ch. 7  Workbook Module 4: 4.0, 4.1</p>
<p>Week 8  <i>Week of 10/5</i></p>	<p>Focus: Resilience and post-traumatic growth; working with anxiety*; mindfulness and mental health</p> <p><b>Due Sunday, October 11: Module 4 Reflection Form</b> (includes book reflection)  Reading: Free choice book Ch. 8 (or finish), Module 4 excerpt  Workbook Module 4: 4.2, 4.3</p>
<p>Week 9  <b>Module 5: Daily Life</b></p>	<p>Focus: Mindful communication; relational mindfulness/active listening and speaking; mindfulness in a cultural context  Forgiveness; Gratitude letters</p>

<i>Week of 10/12</i>	<b>Deepen daily meditation practice 15-25 minutes/day</b> Workbook Module 5: 5.0
Week 10 <i>Week of 10/19</i>	Focus: Mindfulness in decision-making*; mindfulness and consent; balancing time and priorities; technology Workbook Module 5: 5.1, 5.3
Week 11 <i>Week of 10/26</i>	Focus: Coping with change, loss, and impermanence <b>Due October 28-30: Online Exam (Window: Tuesday 5:00-Thursday Noon)</b> <b>Due Sunday, November 1: Module 5 Reflection Form</b> (includes outside meditation class) Reading: Module 5 excerpt Workbook Module: 5: 5.2, 5.4
Week 12 <i>Week of 11/2</i>	<b>Due November 2-5: Presentations (in class online)</b>
Week 13 <i>Week of 11/9</i>	Closing and next steps* End-of-Semester Evaluation
Finals	<b>Due: On Date of Scheduled Final: Final Reflection</b> <a href="https://classes.usc.edu/term-20201/finals/">https://classes.usc.edu/term-20201/finals/</a>

### Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

#### Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

#### Support Systems:

*Student Counseling Services (SCS)* – (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

[engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling)

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline* – 1 (800) 273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. [www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) – (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call*  
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. [engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp](http://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp)

*Sexual Assault Resource Center*

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: [sarc.usc.edu](http://sarc.usc.edu)

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086*

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. [equity.usc.edu](http://equity.usc.edu)

*Bias Assessment Response and Support*

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support)

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs*

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. [dsp.usc.edu](http://dsp.usc.edu)

*Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710*

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. [studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa](http://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa)

*Diversity at USC*

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. [diversity.usc.edu](http://diversity.usc.edu)

*USC Emergency Information*

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible. [emergency.usc.edu](http://emergency.usc.edu)

*USC Department of Public Safety – UPC: (213) 740-4321 – HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24-hour emergency or to report a crime.* Provides overall safety to USC community. [dps.usc.edu](http://dps.usc.edu)