

**York University
Faculty of Health
School of Kinesiology and Health Science
Course Outline**

Body as Weapon: Survey of Martial Arts & Combat Training (HH KINE 4375M 3.0)

Term: Winter 2019

Course Director: Antonio Santilli

Time: Mon and Wed 2:30pm - 4:00 pm Founders College 104

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Your greatest weapon is in your enemy's mind. -- Buddha

To subdue an enemy without fighting is the greatest of skills. -- Sun Tzu

Course Description: Through experiential learning this course explores one of Kinesiology's prime roots: self-defense using the body as weapon. How much is this acquired knowledge body skill or instinctual behaviour? We perceive humans as deficient compared with other predators, but the vast, ancient, and sophisticated systems of martial arts from around the world reveals formidable capacities and extraordinary skill sets acquired through lifelong training and effort under master-teachers in all cultures. How were these fighting moves discovered, developed, systematized, taught, and tested over generations in every culture? How do we account for different systems?

Do martial arts and combat training share the same path to create warriors? How do traditional martial arts compare with street fighting, military combat training, or MMA? Is sport the 'little brother of war'? Violence among humans encourages quest for victory using body expertise. For example, practitioners study human anatomy in pursuit of instantly responsive physiology for hurting and for recovery. In this class we also discuss the body as serving as the ultimate protection of personal security - a potential guardian of peace - essential for optimal health for persons and communities.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. To understand the relationship of the martial arts and combative training to the study of Kinesiology and to understand the role the aforementioned have had on the development of Kinesiology as an area of study.**
- 2. To investigate, understand and explain traditions, meanings, evidence and contexts: body as weapon**
- 3. To recognize the complex nature of the combative systems and their interplay with society**
- 4. To comprehend and study cultural issues and historical forms impacting martial practices**
- 5. To analyze and synthesize measurable effects of martial arts practices in personal/social lives**
- 6. To test popular assumptions and professional biases regarding combatives as 'sport'**
- 7. To identify experiences of individuals, groups, cultures and traditions associated with the martial arts**

Course Organization: Two weekly 1 ½ hour classes: group work, lectures, demonstrations, required readings, weekly response papers+ occasional stimulating written exercises, field work.

Required Reading:

Lt. Col. D. Grossman, *On Combat: The Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and Peace* (2004)

Gavin de Becker, *The Gift of Fear: And Other Survival Signals That Protect Us from Violence* (1999)

Suggested Reading:

Jonathan Gottschall. *The Professor in the Cage: Why Men Fight and Why We Like To Watch* (2015)

Jeffery K. Mann, *When Buddhists attack: The Curious relationship between Zen and the Martial Arts* (2012)

Evaluation:

Assignment #1: “From the full well, we can drink our fill from all sides”. This statement makes reference to a Tibetan Cultural Axiom. Using class discussions, elaborate on this concept as it applies to the martial arts. **2-3pp 15% January 30.**

Assignment #2: Interview. Seek out a person who has survived engagement in a possibly lethal encounter in military or civilian contexts for their reflections on that experience. Refer to any relevance of de Becker’s lessons or Grossman’s insights. **5-6 pp 30% Feb 27**

Assignment #3: Field Report/ Research. Observe or participate in a martial arts/combat class of any kind (but not one where you are training now). Interview the chief instructor and senior students for their appraisal of the impact this martial art has had on them personally. Also, research the origin and development of the martial art you’ve chosen and consider its core values, benefits, and limitations from a Kinesiologist’s frame of reference. Write up your findings with a summary conclusion relating fieldwork and research to our readings and experiential learning in this subject. **5-6 pp 35% March 27**

Assignment #4: Ongoing Weekly Response Papers [Class Participation]: Consider your experiences and chief learnings in class and comment on any effect these have had on the relationship you have with your own body. These will be read by myself and then returned all together in the second-last class. These responses to classes and/or texts are assessed for expressiveness, care, and quantity. **1-2pp 5% Due weekly at the beginning of Monday classes starting January 14** (Jan 15, 21, Feb 4, 11, Mar 4,11,18).

Assignment #5: Synthesis Project. Distil the chief learning of this course for you into a short 1 page report **1p write up 5% due at beginning of class on April 3.**

Practical Test: Performance of WuXing. Over the course of the term you will learn a Chinese two person fist set called the WuXing. On one of the last two days of class you and a partner will be given five minutes to demonstrate your level of proficiency with the WuXing. **10% April 1 or 3**

Be informed on **university policy** around scholarship, grades, penalties, and student rights. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense; do your own work. **Check for Senate Policy on Academic Honesty** and other York sites on Access/Disability services is provided by York.

- ✓ All **assignments** are due **in class** on the due date, unless documented exceptions are arranged with the course director. If you petition a grade, write your reasons in a one-page appeal.
- ✓ **Format Instructions:** Separate title page, numbered pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-pt. one inch margins; do not exceed the maximum allowed length. **Weekly Response Papers will be typed.**

Jan 7 Intro Class: Introduction, Requirements, and Expectations

Jan 9/14: What are the Martial Arts? ITV: Martial Arts, The Real Story. First response paper due in class (Jan 15).

Jan 16/21: Discuss: Consider the relationship between fighting and life.

- Early forms of human movement... influences on development of the body as a weapon; historical perspective on combat, combat sport and martial disciplines.
- How are 'The Martial Arts' related to Kinesiology?
- Combat archetypes : The warrior, The combat athlete, The Warrior Sage

Jan 23/28: Discuss: Does might make right?

- Historical perspective: Combat

Jan 30/feb 4: Discuss: How does fighting lead to a 'true awareness of reality'

- Historical perspective: Martial Disciplines

Assignment #1 Due

Feb 6/11/13: Discuss: Compare and contrast Combat sports vs. 'traditional sports'?

- Historical Perspective: Combat Sports

Feb 18/20: Reading Week—no classes

Feb 24/27: Discuss: What does your gut tell you? Do you trust it?

- Discuss de Becker Presence of Danger/Survival Signals/Vital Predictions—Chs 1-6
- Discuss de Becker Persistence/Hazards/Gift of Fear Chs. 7-15

Assignment #2 Due

Mar 4/6: Discuss: What level of violence are you capable of? Could you hurt or kill someone if you had to?

- Discuss Grossman Section One: Physiology of Combat

Mar 11/13:

- Grossman Section One, continued
- Discuss Grossman Section Two: Perceptual Distortions

Mar 18/20: Discuss: Are you a sheep, sheep dog or a wolf?

- Discuss Grossman Section Three: Call to Combat/ Discuss Grossman Section Four: Price Paid

Mar 25/27:

- Is it worth it? Soft body, Deadly Intent
 - o Body as a weapon vs. Body as a target

Return response paper files to students, Assignment #3 Due

Apr 1/3: Practical Exams

Assignment #5 Due