



## **Letter of Intent**

The primary mission of this school is to elevate the profession of yoga in our community, both locally and globally. We believe in high standards of education and strong adherence to integrity and authenticity. We are motivated by a strong desire to make the wisdom of yoga accessible to all, creating an inclusive and judgment-free environment. The trainers in this organization leverage their extensive background as instructors to guide students on a transformative journey of self-exploration and continuous growth, guided by an owner with a strong commitment to excellence in teaching.

We firmly believe that a solid foundation in personal yoga practice is essential for becoming an effective yoga teacher and include a strong emphasis on personal practice in all of our training programs. Our founder and our most experienced trainers are yoga therapists with extensive experience in the practice and teaching of yoga. With their guidance at the head of the organization, we ensure that our trainings are accessible and adaptable, allowing each student to have a personal and transformational journey as they learn, both as practitioners and as aspiring teachers. Our mission as trainers extends beyond imparting the fundamentals of guiding yoga sessions. We are dedicated to nurturing in our students a genuine appreciation for the diverse realm of yoga, as well as a deep respect for each individual practitioner.

In crafting our curriculum, we draw upon our unique experiences and interests, encompassing a variety of yoga styles. Our approach is deeply influenced by the principles of ashtanga vinyasa yoga, viniyoga, and tantric yoga. We integrate elements from these traditions to introduce students to the rich tapestry of yoga's history and heritage that unites us all. Our 200-hour training is not confined to a single style or lineage; rather, it serves as a platform for students to explore a wide spectrum of practices, fostering inclusivity and aiding them in discovering the practice that resonates most with them.

We view the 200-hour training as a pivotal step in establishing a personal practice and embarking on the profound personal transformation from student to teacher. This foundation ensures that new teachers prioritize their own well-being while authentically imparting knowledge. Adaptations and versatile tools are integral components of our program, as we believe that teachers should be equipped to guide a diverse array of students. Upholding our roles as yoga teachers, we adhere to the guidelines and ethical standards set by Yoga Alliance. We foster a love of continued learning in our programs, as it is evident that advanced training and continuous education are essential for teachers to maintain their skills and continue to grow as leaders. We view our advanced training program as essential for individuals who would like to seek a career in teaching yoga, believing that holistic success as a yoga teacher requires specialized training and support.

Our 200-hour course structure aligns with our high expectations for yoga professionals. The training encompasses informative lectures, interactive discussions, practical exercises, practice teaching, and assignments that require the synthesis of multiple skills. A substantial portion of the program is dedicated to hands-on teaching experience, with valuable feedback provided by trainers and peers. We recognize that a combination of classroom engagement, public class involvement, personal practice, and written tasks fosters a well-rounded learning experience, drawing insights from various viewpoints.

Certification is contingent upon a thorough evaluation, emphasizing our commitment to maintaining rigorous standards. A written examination and individual consultations with trainers are incorporated into the program, ensuring that each student receives personalized support and guidance.

Our dedication to training yoga instructors is fueled by passion and a profound sense of purpose. We embrace our role with a deep sense of responsibility, and our commitment to delivering top-notch education remains unwavering. As proponents of lifelong learning, we understand the importance of humility in teaching, acknowledging that both mentors and students offer valuable lessons.

Lauren Mason

Lead Teacher Trainer, Yoga Therapist, Founder  
Elevate Wellness Institute

## **Learning and Curriculum Objectives: Techniques, Training, and Practice**

- Students will understand the full practice of yoga as outlined in the 8-limbed path and taught by master teachers in the lineages of Power Yoga, Viniyoga, and other modern hatha flow yoga. They will understand how key elements of yoga (asana, pranayama, and meditation) can be practiced safely and effectively, shared by a multitude of practitioners and styles.
- Students will understand fundamental yoga asana postures and how each can be practiced safely and effectively. Students will also understand these postures in such a way that they will be able to sequence them effectively according to their functions and benefits.
- Students will learn alignment and practice principles that can be used in all asana and all styles of yoga. Students will learn how to safely arrange the body in asana based on anatomy, with an understanding of individual differences and needs. Students will also learn how good alignment can be found through introspection and sensing within the body.
- Students will learn how to use surya namaskara as a foundational sequence for practice, including all of its variations and modifications.

- Students will understand how to modify asana and reasons for doing so according to individual differences and intentions within practice.
- Students will understand the practice of pranayama and its benefits. They will learn key techniques such as Ujjayi, Nadi Shodhana, and Kapalabhati pranayama and understand when to use these techniques and when to modify them. Students will also learn about key elements of pranayama practice, such as parts of the breath, breath ratios, breath threshold, and be able to apply this knowledge meaningfully in their practice and teaching.
- Students will understand how to prepare the body for a successful pranayama practice and understand the importance of practicing the key elements of yoga (asana, pranayama, and meditation) in proper sequence with considerations of adaptation and safety. Students will understand that while these elements can be practiced separately, the most profound and powerful experiences come from practicing them in sequence with intention.
- Students will understand meditation in the yogic tradition, and the various ways we can meditate, including visualization, yoga nidra, mantra, mudra, and meditation that combines various techniques. Students will understand the reasons for meditation and the effects that meditation can have on the whole human system.
- Students will learn various models for mapping the human system, including the subtle body. Students will understand the holistic way in which yoga practitioners see and experience the human system and how to influence it. Key models such as the panchamaya (kosha) model and the chakra model will be studied in detail, along with key elements of these models, such as the nadis and vayus.
- Students will understand the historical and philosophical context of the above mentioned holistic view of the human system, including the subtle body. Students will learn about both historical and modern practices which can influence the human system holistically, including yoga, sound therapy, and other modalities. It will be made clear to students that they are not learning about these modalities within this training, but that

there are many ways in which the subtle body can and have been influenced over time, of which yoga practices are but some.

### **Learning and Curriculum Objectives: Anatomy and Physiology**

- Students will understand that, while yogis may view the body as more than physical, it is key to understand our physical structure and functioning so that we might be the best practitioners and teachers possible. Students will learn the scientific explanations behind various effects of yoga practice, but also be taught an appreciation for practices outside of these explanations. The appreciation of modern knowledge and research in our program will be paired with a holistic view of the human experience and an acknowledgement that some things need not have a rational explanation to be valuable.
- Students will understand the basic anatomy of the human body from a physical perspective, including the major structures of the skeletal, muscular, nervous, digestive, respiratory, cardiovascular, and endocrine systems. Furthermore, they will understand the functions of these systems as is understood by modern science.
- Students will have a functional understanding of how yoga affects the various systems of the body, including the effects of movement, the body's relationship to gravity, and how intention and energy can affect the physical body. Students will understand how yoga can be used as a complete physical exercise, adhering to modern fitness guidelines, and the scientific basis for this assertion. Students will also understand how yoga might need to be supplemented with other forms of exercise if practitioners are not

meeting these fitness guidelines completely with their yoga practice. Many lectures and discussions will include how to practice yoga appropriately for one's body and circumstances and how various practices affect the body depending on the practitioner's approach and intent.

- Students will have a good understanding of how to protect the body in yoga practice, especially the joints of the body. Students will study joint structure and function, as well as biomechanics and physics of force distribution in the human body. Students will learn the best way to activate, stabilize, and release appropriately to get the best physical benefits out of yoga without causing strain or injury.
- Students will understand the unique differences of each person who practices yoga. By studying structure and concepts such as tension and compression, students will learn about individual differences and how to account for them to help practitioners have the best possible experience within yoga practice.

### **Learning and Curriculum Objectives: Yoga Humanities**

- Students will gain a foundational understanding of the history and philosophy of yoga, including the evolution of yoga philosophy and practice over time. Through this knowledge, students will understand their place in the larger yoga community and lineage and understand the tradition that they belong to.
- Students will learn about our approach to yoga practice and teaching, which is not limited to a singular lineage, but draws knowledge and wisdom from many teachers and sources to enable students of all abilities, backgrounds, and experiences to practice and benefit from yoga.
- Students will learn about key moments in yoga history and the texts that arose out of these moments, including the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Epics (Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita, and Ramayana), the Yoga Sutras, the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, and influential modern adaptations and translations of these works.
- Students will understand the vast philosophy of yoga and the different views within it, such as dualist and non-dualist ideas, what the goal of yoga should be, and the best way for these goals to be attained, according to different philosophies.
- Students will be able to apply philosophical ideas meaningfully to their practice and lives. Students will be given ample opportunity to discuss ideas, ask questions, and apply what they are learning in multiple contexts. Students will practice listening to

others and learn about the importance of collaboration and discussion within the yoga community for both practitioners and teachers.

- Students will understand how the philosophies of yoga can help us as students and teachers live and work ethically. There will be ample opportunity to discuss with peers and teachers the importance of following ethical guidelines and what those guidelines are. Real-life examples and opportunities to apply ethical philosophy will be included throughout the training, and students will be asked to enter into discussion and engage in personal reflection on ethical philosophy within the context of the yoga profession.

### **Learning and Curriculum Objectives: Professional Essentials**

- Our entire training program is founded on the belief that this is a profession to be taken seriously. Those who wish to teach yoga will be holding space for people going through every situation a human can experience, and we hold great responsibility to be professional, competent, and safe in our teaching, language, and practices. When we hold ourselves to a high standard of professionalism and care, we in turn receive respect from our students and the community. As yoga teachers, we are not only responsible to ourselves and our students, but also to the community and how it is perceived by outsiders.
- The first essential role of yoga teachers at the 200-hour level is to teach group classes that are safe and effective for a diverse group of students. Students in our training program will learn how to create their own sequences and classes that meet this standard.
- Students will understand that a 200-hour training is considered essential for any yoga teacher, but is purely foundational for anyone who wants to consider themselves a professional yoga teacher or a teacher of any
- Students will learn safe and effective sequencing based on the concepts of purvanga, pratikriya, and vinyasa krama. Students will understand that good sequences prepare a student's body to safely navigate the most complex postures in a sequence and mitigate any stress put on the body during the sequence. Students will also understand that a

sequence and a lifelong yoga practice should bring appropriate stress to the body by meeting the student where they are and progressing appropriately based on that student's individual needs.

- Students will learn how to structure and pace classes in a way that is effective for diverse groups and allows each student to make the best choices for themselves within a yoga practice.
- Students will understand how to effectively communicate directions and options for students within a yoga practice. They will learn key instructional cues for proper alignment, activation, stability, transitions, and choices while encouraging introspection and empowerment in their students.
- Students will learn how to adapt their language and teaching to a variety of environments and understand what creates a safe learning space for students. Students will understand the different ways in which people learn and how to account for these different learning styles in a group environment.
- Students will understand that their main role as a teacher is to hold space for their students to do the work that is needed in their own practices and lives. They will understand the importance of presenting themselves professionally and confidently in addition to being compassionate and welcoming.
- Students will learn key skills for teaching a group of people, including projection, body language, and tone. Students will understand that while teaching authentically is key to connecting with students and their personality is a major part of who they are as a teacher, there are ways in which it is useful to view teaching as a "performance" and adapt their voice and comportment to create the effect they desire with their teaching.
- Students will understand what it means to be a registered with Yoga Alliance, including the professional and ethical guidelines they agree to when registering. They will understand the importance of being a part of this professional organization and the role that Yoga Alliance plays within the yoga community.

- Students will understand their responsibilities as a teacher extend to being a consistent practitioner of yoga and lifelong learner. They will understand not only the basic continuing education requirements needed to maintain their registration, but also the importance of continual growth and practice for their personal and professional lives. They will understand where to go for good education and red flags to look out for in online and printed material as well as teachers and trainings.
- Students will understand what is needed to work as a professional in the yoga field, including legal and logistical needs as well as skills needed to work as an independent contractor. Students will learn from teachers who have worked as full-time professional yoga teachers about what it means to run your own business as a sole proprietor while working within the yoga community, and how to do so effectively and ethically.
- Students will demonstrate their understanding and competence across all learning areas through a variety of assessments. Throughout training, students will engage in practice planning and teaching to demonstrate their understanding of teaching skills. They will complete several written assignments to prove their understanding of key knowledge within yoga practice, including a written final exam. They will complete a final project in which they will plan and teach a 20-minute class sequence based on an assigned posture or theme. They will submit documentation of their planning process and practice teaching the sequence within classroom hours and receive feedback from a peer before teaching their sequence in full to the entire training group to receive feedback from their faculty teachers.
- Students will engage in ongoing mentoring with faculty, including two 1-hour private meetings in which they will receive feedback and have the opportunity to ask questions on training content and their personal yoga practice. Ongoing feedback will also be given in written form for all assignments, and students are strongly encouraged to email with their faculty teachers to address any questions throughout training. Online course modules have a chat feature which students and faculty use to address questions and comments to encourage discussion similar to what students would experience during live training interaction.

