



University of Miami / South Miami Taekwondo General Scope and Welcome Letter

Welcome to the UM Taekwondo program provided by South Miami Taekwondo. I am Master Jeff Wade, 6th Dan Chief Instructor. My contact information is at the end of this page and I welcome students to contact me at any time if you have any concerns or questions.

The purpose of martial arts study is often mistaken. At first glance, an observer might assume the class is about kicking, punching, fighting, self-defense etc. But the true purpose of martial arts is much more meaningful. A true martial artist uses the process of learning and refining these fascinating, often-complicated physical abilities as a catalyst for becoming a better person. The fierce battlefield of the Samurai of feudal Japan is long gone, but the battlefield of everyday life is alive and kicking (pun definitely intended). It did not take the warriors of the ancient orient long to figure out that the intense training involved in mastery of the martial arts also honed the spirit of these warriors and enabled them to handle the affairs of living life with the same skill at which they had learned to take it in battle.

It is difficult to capture exactly how this happens. I can tell you that we emphasize the virtues of respect, discipline, courtesy, humility and benevolence. In our culture, these words are often foggy, nebulous concepts. At South Miami Taekwondo, anyone with a colored belt can stop and explain the meaning of these words to you along with examples of how we use them both in and outside class.

As far as the physical techniques are concerned, the kicks, punches, rolls, throws and self-defense techniques we study are not staged, simplified or sugar coated. They are the real things. At belt testing, students are required to demonstrate the effectiveness of their skills by doing forms, breaking boards and by free sparring with their classmates. Until you have lined up on a piece of solid wood with the intent of putting a part of your body through it, or faced down an opponent of your own size and rank who is as nervous about fighting as you are, it is impossible to understand the spiritual benefits of these practices. I can tell you that my own daughter has kicked me in the head during free sparring (at the age of 12, and no I did not let her or expect it!). She has also put her delicate little hand through a piece of concrete (at the age of 15) and emerged from the rubble with a triumphant "YESSSSS!" I can also tell you that this makes her and me both feel a lot better about her increasingly active social life, including her dating... but please don't remind me....

So, given the fact that the hands and feet of the martial arts practitioner are indeed on their way to becoming weapons quite capable of doing such things, the importance of mastering the spiritual virtues that accompany them is obvious. I hate to quote "Spiderman," but it's the perfect summation of the concept: "With great power comes great responsibility."

Please keep this "General Scope" in mind as you read over the syllabus. Regardless of the technique or level of study, the ideas on this page are the true concepts on which we are working.

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University of Miami / South Miami Taekwondo Syllabus

In the beginning, most of the students will be beginners and will all be working on the same techniques for the most part. As the semesters and hopefully years go by, there will emerge from the group "senior belts" who have been studying longer than the others. The beginners and senior belts will all work together, playing off one another, using one another, learning teaching and communication skills and refining techniques as their individual levels dictate. The syllabus is thus divided by rank rather than by timeline.

Beginner Levels

White belt: Newcomers will wear a uniform with no belt until they earn their white belt by learning the fundamental rules of class and "Basic I," the first form. Kicks at this level are typically front kicks and crescent kicks. Hand techniques at this level are typically the downblock and punch.

Yellow belt: Add form Basic II. At this level, the student should have the ability to break a piece of wood suited to their size and weight. Side kicks and roundhouses are generally added to the kick vocabulary. High block and alternate stances will be added to the hand techniques.

Orange Belt: Add form Basic III. Hook kicks are added to the foot techniques and outside blocks are added to the hand techniques.

Intermediate Levels

Green belt: Add forms Pyoungan I, Palgwe I and Palgwe II. Spins and turns should be added to kicks as well as hand techniques. Free sparring will be much more involved.

Purple belt: Add forms Pyoungan II, Palgwe III and Palgwe IV. Jumps are added to kicks and palm heel and elbow strikes are added to hand techniques. More advanced teaching and communication skills are addressed at this level as well. Breaking a piece of wood should be comfortable and even enjoyable.

Blue belt: Add forms Pyoungan III and Palgwe V. Hand and foot techniques are honed, seeking increased speed, balance, and power. Blue belts are expected to be able to lead exercises and teach small groups of lower belts.

Advanced Levels

Red Belt I: Add forms Pyoungan IV and Palgwe VI. The first level of "fire, passion, love, intensity." That is the color red. Forms and techniques should take on super-intensity. Sparring should be scary to watch at this level, especially when taking on an older black belt with whom they can "let loose." Red belts sometimes choose to break concrete at tests.

Red Belt II: Add forms Pyoungan V and Palgwe VII. More intensity in all technique, more control of the mind and body. Leading class should be second nature. Other students should look up to red belts.

Red Belt III: Add form Palgwe VIII. At this level, we are preparing for black belt. There should be such a comfort level with "going hard" that the student begins to "chill out," discovering the value and joy in teaching children and lower ranks. Although the physical technique should be strong enough to penetrate wood or concrete, it should be controlled enough to spar a small child safely at full speed. With maximum, consistent training time, it will have taken right at three years to achieve this level. Black belt is next, and by that time we'll know each other personally. Black belt is a whole new beginning...



University of Miami / South Miami Taekwondo Testing, uniforms, etc.

Uniforms: Uniforms are required. Students will need to come by the dojo to pick it up for the purpose of sizing and fitting. Our address is 4542-B SW 75th Ave, Miami FL 33155. Testing for the white belt must also be done at the dojo during any class time (see the website for our schedule). **While picking up the uniform or testing for white belt, you may attend class that day, all day if you like, free of charge or obligation. You may do this in two trips to receive the maximum number of free classes, or you may do all this in one trip, assuming the student is prepared to test for white belt, of course.** Visiting the dojo for your uniform and white belt is a great icebreaker, significantly reducing stress for the first formal test, which is always held there.

Equipment: UM provides class gear for those who are dabbling in Taekwondo. Serious students may choose to purchase their own gear, which we of course we offer at the dojo, *free of sales tax and shipping*. You may also acquire gear on your own, as long as it is safe and bears no competing logos or offensive language.

Testing: We hold a formal Taekwondo test every other month at my dojang, South Miami Taekwondo. The address is 4542-B SW 75th Ave, Miami FL 33155. Tests are most always the last Saturday of every even month (Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec). Tests always begin at 10:00 a.m. *sharp*. The testing fee is \$40 for all ranks under black belt. **TESTS ARE NOT OPTIONAL!** Testing and promotion are teaching tools. It also makes sure that students of certain skill levels are designated by the proper belt. If you progress to a certain level, you must test. If a student does not show up for a test, they must do a makeup test at the dojo or in rare cases during class. Makeup tests are always harder, absent of the benefit of experiencing the formal test, and they are \$50 instead of \$40. Attending the formal test is highly recommended. Anyone may of course refuse to test. But continuing in the program requires that students test when it's time.

Bowing and other customs: Bowing is the same as a handshake, a thank you, or a "you're welcome" in the Asian culture. Everyone bows to everyone else, not just junior belts to senior belts. It is in no way a sign of worship or subservience. We insist on the use of sir and ma'am when anyone of any rank addresses anyone else of any rank. This is to keep things sharp, respectful and alert. The title of "master" in martial arts is earned after 9 + years of hard, dedicated work. It implies that one has "mastered" certain concepts and skills in an art. It is not a title of assumed deity (in fact, a master's job is to serve humbly). It is the equivalent of titles like "Doctor" for a PhD graduate or "Reverend" for an ordained minister. When in class, if you take more than three steps, you should run. This makes the most of your time and everyone else's. We always joke that if you save a few minutes each class, by the end of the semester you'll have had at least one free class!

Joining the Dojo: University of Miami students receive a significant tuition discount should they choose to join the main dojo. Although prices are SUBJECT TO CHANGE, at this point the discount is 50%. Retail is \$139, UM students pay only \$70. You may keep this price even after you graduate, provided you never miss a month.

Website: MiamiTKD.com. Here you can watch *videos of our forms*, find our hours of operation, membership pricing, pay for testing, order gear, etc.

Good luck with your training and God Bless.

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