

North Country Aikido at Clarkson

New Member Orientation



Chief Instructor: Leslie Russek Sensei, 5th Dan.

Additional information available at: <https://lin-web.clarkson.edu/clubs/aikidocu/>

Class Schedule, as of 9/2/23 (subject to change, especially in the summer)

- Saturday, 4:15-5:45 pm. Clarkson University Fitness Center. Basics class.
- Sunday, 4-5 pm. Clarkson University Fitness Center. Weapons class.
- Wednesday, 6:15-7:30 pm. Off-campus. General class.
- Friday, 6:15-7:30 pm. Off-campus. General class.

Registration

1. Read and sign the registration/waiver form.
2. At this time, there are no dues to practice. No one affiliated with this club gets paid.
3. Individuals who are not Clarkson students/staff must have legitimate access to the Clarkson Fitness Center, either a Fitness Center membership or an Aikido-only pass to train at the Clarkson Fitness Center. For liability reasons, this is an absolute requirement.
4. You must be covered by health insurance to practice. Neither the club nor the University are responsible for treatment of any injuries sustained during these classes.
5. North Country Aikido is affiliated with the international organization: Aikido Schools of Ueshiba (ASU). If you choose to test for rank, you must become an ASU member, which costs \$45/yr (\$25/yr for current students). You do not need to be an ASU member to practice with us.

Commitment to Practice

To make progress in Aikido, students need to train regularly. Instructors and senior students put a great deal of energy into helping and teaching beginners. In return, beginners should show respect for this effort by training regularly. Beginners may come to the weapons class, but must attend at least 2 out of 3 weapons classes otherwise they will not be able to track with the group.

Safety Issues

- **Safety is the primary concern, at all times.** If your practice partner, a senior student, or the Instructor asks you to practice more slowly, more carefully, or with less force, you should comply. Students who do not train safely may be told to leave class. Participation in this class implies that you accept this condition of training.
- You may also ask your partner to practice more slowly, more carefully, or with less force, if you feel this is necessary for safety. You need to train within your safe limits.
- If you have a pre-existing injury or medical condition that requires special care, inform the teacher before class. You may wish to mark injuries with duct tape so your practice partners are aware and can be particularly careful. Your senior students or the instructor may be able to offer suggestions regarding how to protect injuries.

- Although we make every effort to prevent injuries, if you think you may have gotten hurt during practice, inform the teacher as soon as possible. Take care of minor injuries, so that they do not become more severe.
- It is important that you learn to fall and roll safely. Your senpai (senior students) can show you how, and can offer feedback. However, it is your responsibility to practice diligently until you can fall and roll safely. Formal classes do not always have time to address each student's individual needs, so you may want to ask for help before class or during break.
- Keep your fingernails and toenails short to avoid scratching yourself or others.
- Do not wear any jewelry on the mat; if a piece of jewelry cannot be removed, please cover it with sports tape or a band-aid. This is for your safety and the safety of your practice partners.
- If you are scratched or begin to bleed during class, please leave the mat and cover your wound. If you have left blood on the mat, please clean it up. The gym has cleaning solutions available.
- Part of aikido is being aware of your surroundings, including other people training around you. Try to avoid collisions.
- If you have trained in another martial art, remember that you are now training in aikido so that you can learn aikido. Do not use any other martial arts techniques on the aikido mat; it can be dangerous.
- Recklessness or rough-housing on the mat is dangerous and will not be tolerated.
- Aikido training builds upon basic skills that are practiced at the beginning of class. Students who arrive late may therefore lack those basic skills. It is important to begin class with the full group. Beginners who arrive more than 5 minutes late will not be allowed to train on that day.

General Guidelines

- Keep talking to a minimum on the mat. While our dojo is rather casual, beginning students need to focus on what they are doing and should not chat during class.
- Martial arts are traditionally learned through observation. Watch demonstrations carefully; if you are training with someone more experienced than you, observe how your partner does the technique. While you can ask questions, try to keep talking to a minimum. Focus on the technique being taught and do not digress into "But what if I did this instead?" questions during class.
- Senior students are 'senpai' and junior students 'kohai'. Kohai should be respectful towards their senpai. Martial arts are not a forum for negotiation.
- We practice techniques in sets of 4. The more junior student usually attacks first. This allows the junior student to see and feel the technique and to expedite practice. Students of equal experience can alternate.
- If an odd number of students are training, there will be one group of 3. The person waiting to work in should sit in a safe location at the edge of the mat; this person attacks first when they rotate in.
- If you want to watch the Instructor as he or she assists you and your partner or another practice pair, sit in seiza (kneeling) in a place out of the way of others who continue to practice.
- Participants in the Aikido classes must follow all Fitness Center regulations. This includes having a change of shoes if you wish to wear shoes during weapons classes when the mats are not used.

If you have questions, feel free to contact Leslie Russek at Lrussek@clarkson.edu