STUDENT HANDBOOK

WHAT IS GOOD AMERICAN BOJUTSU?

Good American Bojutsu is a martial arts program that offers the modern, Americanized, and ranked form of Bojutsu, incorporating a variety of styles including traditional Okinawan Kobudo, Chinese Wushu, and English Quarterstaff styles. Bojutsu means "art of the staff" in Japanese. Various Japanese terms are incorporated into American Bojutsu because Japan is the unofficial birth place of organized staff training.
Good American Bojutsu is officially recognized by the Global Martial Arts Association, and its curriculum matches that of its parent art, Ultimate Bo. Ultimate Bo was developed by Sensei Michael Hodge and introduced in 2007 through Black Belt at Home, a distance learning program for martial arts. Shortly after, in 2008, Ultimate Bo was launched through the Global Martial Arts University, where it spread throughout the world and has been practiced by thousands.

Training in Good American Bojutsu is centered around practicing with a head-height, thin, cylindrical, usually wooden, object, called a staff (in English), or bo (in Japanese). Training can be summarized in two major categories: traditional and combat. Traditional training is centered on power and control, and most techniques are performed with well-defined start and end positions as well as specific executions. The majority of traditional training is found in traditional techniques, combinations, and katas. Combat training is much more loosely defined and emphasizes concepts such as timing, distance, and application. Combat training consists of primarily sparring and one-steps, as well as realistic self-defense.

All that is needed to practice Bojutsu is a bo-like object and the will to train, so grab a staff and let's get training.

RANK ADVANCEMENT

Rank in Good American Bojutsu is denoted by belts. Students start as white belts, then earn their yellow, green, blue, brown, red, and black belts. New belts are earned through testings, events where students demonstrate their knowledge of the curriculum. Testings are held every three months. In order to test, a student must:

- Train a certain number of hours at their current rank:
  - White Belts: 30 hours
  - Yellow Belts: 36 hours
  - Green Belts: 42 hours
  - Blue Belts: 48 hours
  - Brown Belts: 54 hours
  - Red Belts: 60 hours
- Train at least 1 hour outside of class per week (progress tracked by training log)
- Attend a minimum number of Good Bojutsu Classes in their current quarter
- Earn their traditional bo and combat bo stripes
- Complete any required assignments

Hour requirements can be met by taking classes, participating in private lessons, and training outside of class (verified by training logs). Traditional bo and combat bo stripes are earned by passing stripe tests held in normal Good Bojutsu classes, where the student demonstrates either the new traditional techniques or the new combat techniques they have learned for their rank.

TRAINING LOG PROCEDURES

The training log will be used to track your practice outside of class. Each week, your instructor will tell you what you need to practice. At the end of the week have your parent/guardian sign the log to verify your training. One hour of training outside of class is required each week, but more is highly encouraged. Training logs are to be turned in and signed off by an instructor every Tuesday.

As far as how to train outside of class, the main focus is to achieve repetition. Your instructor will prescribe training in certain areas not because you need to learn them, but because you need to repeatedly practice them in order to be proficient. As a famous martial artist has said and many others have thought:

> "Don't practice a technique until you can perform it correctly, practice until you can't perform that technique incorrectly."

It is possible to cheat on your training log, so please be honest. Integrity is one of the, if not the, most important characteristics a martial artist can possess. It is the highest form of self-discipline that gives a person of integrity the ability and will to do what is right even if no one else is watching and there are no apparent negative consequences if he or she chooses to do the wrong thing. So use integrity with this training log. You can absolutely write down times that you didn't train and then get your parent to sign, but that doesn't change the fact that you didn't train. You've only cheated yourself. The training log is simply a tool meant to help you reach the standards required by the Good American Bojutsu program and the Global Martial Arts Association, and when you lie on your log, you only slow yourself in meeting those standards. If you don't meet those standards, you will fail your test.

YELLOW BELT CURRICULUM

HOURS REQUIRED
30 Hours

CLASSES REQUIRED
20 Classes

STRIPES
Traditional & Combat

ASSIGNMENT
None

TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

- Grips/Holding the Bo
- Stances (kata stances)
- Overhead Front Strike
- 4-Point Combo
- Front Thrust
- Reverse Thrust
- Uppercut
- Overhead Rib/Knee Strike
- Angle Block
- Push Block

KATA

- Bo Kata 1

COMBAT

- Normal Grip/Guard/Stance
- Blocks
- Angle Strikes 1-8
- Combat One Step 1: Descending strike
  - High Block
  - Clear
  - Descending strike
- Combat One Step 2: Midline horizontal strike
  - Live side middle block
  - Heel horizontal strike to head
- Combat One Step 3: Uppercut (ascending strike)
  - Low block
  - Clear to dominant side, uppercut

GREEN BELT CURRICULUM

HOURS REQUIRED
36 Hours

CLASSES REQUIRED
20 Classes

STRIPES
Traditional & Combat

ASSIGNMENT
None

TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

- Sweep
- Bo Back Fist
- Down Thrust
- Baseball Bat Strike
- Double Figure 8 OHFS
- Double-Double

KATA

- Bo Kata 2

COMBAT

- Normal Grip Horizontal Parries
- Normal Grip Vertical Parries
- Circular Parry
- Combat Thrusts
- Bo Kicking Techniques
- Advanced Combat One Step 1: Thrust (dead side)
  - Dead Side Vertical Parry
  - Dominant Descending strike
- Advanced Combat One Step 2: Thrust (live side)
  - Horizontal Parry/ Speed Strike
  - Step through to dead side, one handed thrust
- Advanced Combat One Step 3: Descending Strike (dead side)
  - Highline Dead Side Vertical Parry
  - Uppercut

INTRODUCTION TO SPARRING

Sparring is a form of training where fighting is simulated, except there are rules and procedures to minimize injury. In Good American Bojutsu, bo sparring is sparring with a staff and is required to advance in rank starting at green belt. As the student advances in rank, they will be required to practice and demonstrate a variety of skills involving the staff, such as being unarmed but being attacked with a staff, being taken down and taking down, and many others. Although different training and classes require different guidelines for sparring, rules that apply to all matches are:

1. Keep your partner safe. The safety of your partner is your responsibility.
2. Wear full gear and use padded staves for all matches.
3. Use touch contact for all head strikes. This means just enough to make contact.
4. Use light contact for strikes to all other parts of the body.
5. Do not strike to the groin.

The first form of sparring students practice is pure bo sparring. Each student has a padded staff and is wearing a weapons helmet and gloves. There are no kicks, disarms, takedowns, ground fighting, or strikes not involving the staff. The most advanced form of bo sparring is very free-flowing and has almost no illegal techniques. Students can punch, kick, strike with the staff, submit, sweep, and almost any other technique. Specific rules, such as no grappling, will be given before the start of a match. The purpose of such a free match is not only to give students the ability to practice and improve on a wide variety of techniques, but also to teach them to look for the best possible attack, which is the purpose of all combat bo: to use techniques that work best in a given situation.

BLUE BELT CURRICULUM

HOURS REQUIRED
42 Hours

CLASSES REQUIRED
20 Classes

STRIPES
Traditional & Combat

ASSIGNMENT
3 Traditional Combos

TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

- Sweep Overhead Front Strike
- Reverse Uppercut
- Reverse Sweep Uppercut
- 3-Point Combo
- 6-Point Combo
- Spinning Overhead Front Strike
- Spinning Overhead Rib Strike

KATA

- Bo Kata 3

COMBAT

- Long Grip/Guards
- Long Grip Thrust
- Long Grip Vertical Parries
- Poke
- Speed Strike
- Sparring
- Self-Defense: Grip, Strikes, Grab Defense
- Ground Fighting: Position, Movement, Technical Get Up
- Long Grip One Step 1: Descending strike (live side)
  - Highline live side vertical parry
  - Front Thrust
- Long Grip One Step 2: Ascending strike (dead side)
  - Dead side vertical parry
  - Descending strike
- Long Grip One Step 3: Thrust
  - Circular Parry (pushing downward)
  - Horizontal highline strike

BROWN BELT CURRICULUM

HOURS REQUIRED
48 Hours

CLASSES REQUIRED
20 Classes

STRIPES
Traditional & Combat

ASSIGNMENT
3 Combat One Steps

TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

- Sweep, Batting Stance
- Reverse Poke

KATA

- Bo Kata 4

COMBAT

- Sparring
- Reverse Grip
- Reverse Grip Strikes/Defenses
- Shield Block
- Back Strike
- Disarms
- Reverse Grip One Step 1: Lowline Strike (live side)
  - Live side lowline vertical parry
  - Slide descending strike
- Reverse Grip One Step 2: Thrust
  - Dead side lowline vertical parry
  - Heel Thrust
- Reverse Grip One Step 3: Descending Strike (dead side)
  - Dead side highline vertical parry
  - Back Strike to Leg

HOURS REQUIRED
54 Hours

CLASSES REQUIRED
24 Classes

STRIPES
Traditional & Combat

ASSIGNMENT
Create a Kata

RED BELT CURRICULUM

TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

- One Arm Curl
- Advancing Poke
- Skip Overhead Front Strike

KATA

- Bo Kata 5

COMBAT

- Sparring
- Overhand Grip/Guards
- Overhand Strikes/Defenses
- Self-Defense: Blunt Weapon, Knife, and Shield Block Defense, Unarmed
- Overhand Grip One Step 1: Triple strike defense
  - Appropriate lateral defenses (blocks or parries) while stepping back
  - One Handed Thrust
- Overhand Grip One Step 2: Thrust
  - Live side lowline vertical parry with footwork
  - One handed thrust (side variant)
- Overhand Grip Defense 3: Stand-off position (end-staff to end-staff)
  - Slip
  - Catch opponent's staff and redirect with back strike motion
  - Descending strike

BLACK BELT CURRICULUM

HOURS REQUIRED
60 Hours

CLASSES REQUIRED
24 Classes

STRIPES
Traditional & Combat

ASSIGNMENT
Essay

TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES

- Forearm Roll
- Wushu Poke
- 360 Exchange OHFS

KATA

- Bo Kata 1
- Bo Kata 2
- Bo Kata 3
- Bo Kata 4
- Bo Kata 5
- Bo Kata 6
- Student's Choice of Kata: Left Side

COMBAT

- All One Steps
- All Self-Defense
- Disarms
- Kicking Techniques
- Ground Fighting
- Close Quarter Combat
  - Pinning
  - Pushing
  - Slipping
  - Levering
  - Pulling
- Sparring

ASSIGNMENT

Write an essay, minimum one page, answering the question, "What makes a martial artist good?"