

Shumei America Basic Study Course

Course Guide

2024



OVERVIEW

The Basic Study Course is Shumei America's nationwide program accompanied by standardized educational material. It is primarily designed to support all new members who have joined Shumei within the past two or three years. The course, however, is not restricted to new members but is open to *all*, including non-Jyorei practitioners already familiar with Shumei's activity. This course provides you with opportunities to review what you already learned in the Introductory Classes and to gain new insights into Meishusama's teachings.

The course also serves those who wish to attain leadership positions within Shumei, such as Assistant Senseis or Senseis, or who wish to receive a Komyo Ohikari.¹ To fulfill all the requirements to receive a Komyo Ohikari, members need to complete the Basic Study Course and Advanced Study Course with their respective certificates. In addition, it is important to note that the completion of the Basic Study Course is recommended for all future Misono Hoshi Program applicants.

*Depending on the length of your membership, as well as the degree of your involvement in Shumei's activities, there are exceptional cases wherein you might qualify for reception of a Komyo Ohikari without completion of all three study courses. That decision is made at a Senseis' Meeting.

GOALS

The Basic Study Course has three primary goals, which are to help:

- Deepen your understanding of Meishusama and his teachings
- Familiarize yourself with Shumei's rituals and its basic spiritual practices
- Support your participation in Shumei's various activities

Through the course, you will learn the significance of the basic spiritual practices, such as Sampai, Jyorei, and Hoshi, and explore how they can benefit your life and further your spiritual growth. It is expected that you will be able to chant the Amatsunorito smoothly before completing the course.

¹ There are three forms of Ohikaris worn by Shumei members: the common Ohikari, the Komyo, and the Dai-komyo. Inside the silk pouch of the common Ohikari is a reproduction of Meishusama's calligraphy of the Chinese ideogram for "Light." Inside the Komyo are two ideograms meaning "Bright Light." The Dai-komyo contains three ideograms that mean "Great Bright Light."

CURRICULUM

The Basic Study Course consists of eight classes. The following are the themes, instructors, and descriptions of each class:

Sat., February 17 - "Understanding Jyorei" by Sensei Atsushi Fujimaki

Explore the healing power of Jyorei, focusing on its basic principles and benefits. It will also cover how to share effective and powerful Jyorei.

Sat., March 16 - "The Spiritual World and the Physical World" by Sensei Francois Kuwata

Explore the spiritual world, karma and reincarnation, the Law of Spiritual Precedence, spiritual cords, spiritual levels, the aura, ancestor spirits, Jyorei, the soul, and more.

Sat., April 20 - "Purification and Gratitude" by Sensei Eugene Imai

Explore the principle and process of purification and learn how gratitude can support it. Included in the discussion will be the Law of Purification, the types of purification, and the causes of purification. Also covered will be acquired spiritual clouds and inborn spiritual clouds, as well as how a spiritual lifestyle that includes gratitude can improve the experience of purification.

Sat., June 15 - "Meishusama's Life" by Sensei Steven Tokunaga

Explore Meishusama's life, including his childhood and early adult life, as well as his mystical experiences and his relationship to Kannon Bodhisattva, the deity of compassion. Meishusama's life story is a living testament to the values and ideas he taught, which include the purpose of purification, the ability to learn and grow through adversity, and the significance of love and service. All participants are required to finish reading *Sincerity and Truth: The Life Story of Meishusama* before the class.

Sat., July 20 - "The Significance of Sampai and Chanting" by Sensei Jim Kashiwagi

Explore Meishusama's teachings about sampai, the importance of spiritual gatherings, and the various types of sampais. The class also explores Shumei rituals, which incorporate the Scroll of Light, the Kannon Screen, and the deity Daikokusama. This class also discusses the meaning and purpose of chanting the Amatsunorito and Zengensanji, the reason for bowing and clapping, and the value of gratitude and reverence.

Sat., August 17 - "Appreciation of Art and Beauty" by Chisako Fukushima Sensei

Explore Meishusama's teachings about art and beauty, how Meishusama studied art, why Meishusama established a museum, Kaishusama's passion for beauty, the Miho Museum, taiko, and how art and beauty can create social harmony as well as elevate our spirits.

Sat., September 21 - "Understanding Natural Agriculture" by Assistant Sensei Kenji Ban

Explore Natural Agriculture, its principles, benefits, and history, as well as the cause of illness and the value of healthy food.

Sat., November 16 - "Hoshi: Selfless Service" by Assistant Sensei Eriko Welsh

Explore Meishusama's teachings about love for others, service to God and the world, Hoshi as a basic spiritual discipline, the benefits of Hoshi, and the desire to help others be happy.

CLASS FORMATS

The Pasadena National Center will offer all eight classes via the Internet. The classes will be live-streamed on Zoom. The reminder for each class and its Zoom link should be emailed to the course participants at least twice: eight days before the class and one day beforehand. The text material should be sent with both emails.

Local Shumei Centers also provide their classes, depending on the needs of local members. For class schedules, please contact your local center. Also, the Pasadena National Center and local centers provide make-up classes. The make-up classes can be available both online and in person.

APPLICATION

Before attending the first class, please fill out the application form online at the Shumei community hub link below.

<https://sites.google.com/shumei.us/ssa-member-site/programs/study-courses/basic-study-course>

PROCEDURES

The class lasts 60 – 90 minutes, including chanting at the beginning. Although there is no fee requested for taking the class, an Otamagushi (monetary offering/donation) is suggested for each class. The class invitation/reminder email includes a button for Otamagushi through which you can send your offering/donation. If you would like to make Otamagushi by check, please make it payable to 'SSA', and send it to the Pasadena Center, whose address is: 2430 East Colorado Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107.

For those who miss the first or second classes, some Senseis or Assistant Senseis may provide make-up classes. These can be taught either in person or online.

REQUIREMENTS FOR COURSE COMPLETION

All participants are encouraged to finish the entire course and receive a completion certificate within their first year of enrollment. However, if that is difficult to do, there is no need to rush. One should not take several classes within a short period of time. The important thing is not to take a class simply for the purpose of graduating, but to learn from it. Even after you finish the course, you can always attend any class again as a refresher. The following are the basic requirements for you to complete the course.

- Attend all the regular classes (total of 8)

If you miss a class, you can catch up by attending a make-up class to be held within two months (ideally).

- Submit a final essay or interview by a Sensei

CERTIFICATE

To get the Basic Study course certificate, you need to write a Final Essay or participate in an interview about three different subjects covered throughout the Course.

You will receive the subjects of the essay by email once you complete all 8 classes. You can submit your essay according to the deadline given to you. You can submit your essay to your Sensei and to education@shumei.us.

Once your essay has been approved by the Sensei, or you have completed the interview, you will receive a certificate of completion. With this certificate, you can then move onto the Advanced Study Course.

BOOKS

Essential Teachings of Meishusama and *Sincerity and Truth – The Life Story of Meishusama* are the most important books to read and study throughout the course.

MIAKARISHU – A Collection of Light

Also, *An Offering of Light*, *Spirit of the Land*, *A Journey of Light*, and *Farming to Create Heaven on Earth* are highly recommended. Copies of these books are available at your local Shumei Center. Please check them out.

Booklet

Principles and Practices of Shumei

We hope you will find this course both enjoyable and spiritually enriching.