

Gracie University
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From : Danowitz, Ryan (Lieutenant) [REDACTED]
To : "Rener Gracie" [REDACTED]
Date : Tue, 25 Apr 2023 13:21:02 -0700
Subject : Fwd: ESPD Sponsored Jiu-Jitsu Training for Sworn Officers
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Hello All,

I have some exciting news!

In our ongoing efforts to ensure all Officers are properly trained and proficient to handle volatile encounters, Chief Bermudez has approved a six-month pilot program where the Department will pay for individual memberships at Gracie University (Torrance), one of the world's leading Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) schools.

Each sworn member of the Department, who has completed the field training program, may attend up to eight classes per month paid for by the Department. This is a voluntary program and if you decide to participate, classes will be attended off-duty.

This program will start on **May 1, 2023**. After six months, a decision will be made whether or not the Department will continue the program based on a number of factors including, but not limited to, Officer participation rate and the success of the training.

[Click here](#) to watch a video featuring Rener Gracie, CEO and Head Instructor at Gracie University, as he explains some of the benefits of this program.

If you would like to participate, simply send me an email so I can add you to the roster that will be shared with Gracie University for training authorization before you attend your first class.

Here are some key details to consider:

ACT Training: This program does not replace in-house Department ACT trainings. Any questions regarding Department approved ACT techniques taught in this program should be promptly discussed with Lt. Danowitz for clarification.

Jiu-Jitsu Uniform Cost: Classes at Gracie University require students to wear an official Gracie uniform (a.k.a. "gi"). No outside gis are permitted. Gracie University will provide a gi to each Officer that opts-in to the program (when they show up for their introductory class) for use during a 30-day "trial period." The Department will cover the uniform cost for each Officer that remains committed to the program after the 30-day trial period. Gis that are purchased by the Department will remain property of the El Segundo Police Department *until* the officer receives their Gracie Combatives belt (the first belt beyond white belt which typically takes 8-12 months of dedicated training to earn). Any Officer who stops attending Gracie University classes for a period of two consecutive months (and has not earned their Gracie Combatives belt) will need to return their gi to the admin sergeant. The Department will monitor monthly attendance.

Online Gracie Video Access: Gracie University offers free subscriptions to its robust online video curriculums to all of their active members. This resource allows students to preview upcoming classes or review past-learned techniques 24/7 from any computer or mobile device, greatly increasing the retention of the techniques learned at the in-person classes. All Officers who opt-in to this program will receive this benefit as long as they maintain active attendance in classes each month.

Safety & Injuries: One of the main reasons we have chosen to partner with Gracie University is due to their exceptional safety policies. In their beginner classes, there is no competitive sparring so the likelihood of injury is incredibly low. In the unlikely event an injury occurs during the training, it shall be reported as outlined in Department policy.

Gracie Combatives (Beginners): For Officers with no experience in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Gracie Combatives is the beginner program you will be participating in. This program is based on the 36 fundamental street self-defense techniques of jiu-jitsu, and it is broken down into 23 one-hour classes that can be completed in any order. No experience is necessary to attend *any* of the 23 classes in this program.

Master Cycle (Advanced): Officers who hold rank in BJJ (blue belt or higher) are permitted to use their sponsored training credits to attend Master Cycle (advanced) classes at Gracie University, but only once they have attended every Gracie Combatives beginner classes at least one time. This is to ensure that Officers experienced in BJJ become familiar with the techniques, safety practices, and training methodologies in the beginner program before they begin honing their skills in the advanced classes.

Class Schedule: Gracie University offers a robust schedule of classes each week with early morning classes, midday classes and evening classes for both beginner and advanced students. Each Officer can attend classes at times that are most convenient for them.

Other BJJ Schools: Some have asked if this supplementary training opportunity can be utilized at BJJ schools other than Gracie University. While we support any Officer who trains at a different school, for now the Department sponsored opportunity only exists through Gracie University in Torrance, CA. There are a number of factors that were considered in our decision to partner with Gracie University, such as: 1) Their safety policies, 2) the structure of their curriculum, 3) the street-applicability of their techniques, 4) their status as a CA P.O.S.T. approved organization, and 5) their extensive experience teaching law enforcement officers.

Women Empowered Classes: Gracie University offers an industry leading women's self-defense program called Women Empowered. Female Officers who would like to apply some or all of their monthly training credits to those classes may do so.

Attendance Tracking: Each Officer will have a Gracie University official attendance tracking card issued to them on their first day at class. This personalized card is used to document every technique learned in the Gracie Combatives classes and will help Officers identify which days to attend in order to complete the program most efficiently.

Credit Card: Even though the Department is willing to sponsor the uniform cost and the training costs as outlined above, each Officer will need to have a credit card on file at Gracie University. This policy is for all students. You will be personally charged if 1) You **fail** to continue beyond your 30-day trial and you do not return the uniform, 2) you participate in more than eight classes in a given month, and 3) you participate in any private classes or special events outside of regular group classes.

In partnering with Gracie University, our goal is to build each Officer's confidence and capabilities so they can de-escalate whenever possible. And when physical means are necessary, we want to make sure that each Officer has the skills to protect themselves while also protecting the civilians they are interacting with.

We've gone to great lengths to make this program possible and we sincerely hope every Officer will take advantage of it.

Action Steps

1. Reply to Opt-in: If you would like to opt-in to the program, please reply to this email so I can add you to the roster that will be shared with Gracie University for training authorization. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me or any one of our DT team members.

2. Schedule Your First Class: Once you've replied to opt-in, contact the Student Services Manager, Abel Gastelum at abel@gracieuniversity.com to schedule your first Gracie Combatives class (or Women Empowered), based on the attached class schedule.

3. Start Learning: Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the class start time and let the receptionist know that you are an Officer with the El Segundo Police Department. They will print your attendance card, provide you with a uniform, and set you up on your 30-day trial at no cost to you.

If you have yet to watch the Renner Gracie video, [click here](#) to check it out.

I hope to see you in class!

Sincerely,

Lt. Ryan Danowitz

Gracie University Weekly Class Schedule Attached and ESPD Enrollment Form Attached. Enrollment forms need to be completed and turned in to Gracie University before your first class.

Ryan Danowitz | Lieutenant Investigative Division Commander
El Segundo Police Department

