

A CLOSER LOOK

## Brazilian Jiu Jitsu offered in Tallahassee

FSU students receive a free month of classes at Team Alliance

JESSE DAMIANI  
Staff Writer

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ), the martial art made famous by Ultimate Fighting Championships, is now being offered in a recently opened studio in Tallahassee by a Third Degree Black Belt native Brazilian 19 years of training named Felipe "Zicró" Neto.

According to the studio's Web site, Neto began competing early in his Jiu Jitsu training at the age of 17, and is a two-time Rio de Janeiro state champion.

"One of the things that make this grappling art unique is that fighters use leverage, not power, to put their opponent in a position where they must submit before there is damage to their limbs or they pass out from a choke hold," said Marlon Mutoc, a recently promoted blue belt under Neto. "One of the originators of this art, Helio Gracie, created it so that a smaller person could defend against and defeat a bigger person."

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu differs from many other martial arts in several key aspects.

"There are two types of martial arts: the striking art and the grappling art," explained Neto. "The striking art (which includes Tae Kwon Do, Karate, et cetera) focuses on kicking and punching, whereas the key element in the grappling art is leverage."

Neto continued explaining how leverage and balance play a crucial role in BJJ.

"Balance, timing, speed and leverage are vital to Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, since it is a ground fighting art," Neto continued. "It's the angle and

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The independent student newspaper for Florida State University™. Established 1915

THURSDAY JANUARY 10 - 13, 2008

WWW.FSUNEWS.COM

VOLUME XVI

PAGE 2

news

FSVIEW & FLORIDA FLAMBEAU • JANUARY 10 2008

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position of the body that creates advantages, not muscle power; you don't need to be a strong person to learn or succeed at Brazilian Jiu Jitsu."

Neto also said how BJJ is applicable in real-life situations.

"Ninety percent of fights end up on the ground," said Neto. "By learning Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, a person is arming themselves with the skills to beat a bigger person in a fight."

Neto also commented that the skills are especially important for women's self-defense, and he has taught a women's self-defense class on campus at Florida State.

"The class was a huge success; over 50 people showed up," Neto said. "I hope to set up another self-defense seminar for girls down the road."

Neto said that the benefits of learning BJJ do not end with learning fighting skills.

"The benefits are enormous," Neto said. "You can lose up to 1,000 calories in one cycle, so you can lose weight while increasing your cardiovascular fitness, stamina and flexibility."

Neto further explained that the benefits can also be intangible.

"Another great benefit of learning Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is that you increase your self-confidence," said Neto. "Once you start learning how to fight and become more physically fit, you become more confident in yourself, which translates into all aspects of your life."

New students do not begin fighting immediately, however; they take training classes in or-

der to learn the basic concepts of BJJ until they are ready. The only required item is a uniform (called a "gi"), which can be purchased through the academy; although, a water bottle is also recommended, explained Neto.

The classes are also available to a wide array of age groups.

"I have both kids and adult classes all throughout the week," said Neto. "Also, Florida State students have a discount; the first month is free."

The studio is located at 2418 North Monroe St. #150, across from the Governor's Square Mall. For more information about the studio and the different classes offered, visit [www.alliancetallahassee.com](http://www.alliancetallahassee.com).

