

Art 261

Basic Ceramics

January 25 - May 10, 2019

Friday, 12:00 -3:45 pm

Studio (Ceramics) NFAC•198



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Course Description

Introduction to the basic skills, processes, materials, and vocabulary of ceramics, with the opportunity to experiment with various finishing techniques. Contemporary trends and traditional approaches will be considered within the context of developing students' basic skills. We will cover all the fundamentals of working with clay. This includes direct modeling, use of the potters wheel, and plaster molding techniques for sculptural and functional objects, glazing and firing.

Required Materials

- 1) knife - fettling, butter, or paring
- 2) brush(es) - watercolor, hake, or bamboo
- 3) bucket - 1 gallon
- 4) towel
- 5) misc art supplies - sketchbook, pencils, etc.
for notes, glaze results, and drawing ideas.

Optional Textbooks

The Craft and Art of Clay

by Susan Peterson and Jan Peterson

ISBN-13: 978-1856697286

Clay and Glazes for the Potter

by Daniel Rhodes (reprint)

ISBN-13: 978-1614277996

Ceramics - A Potter's Handbook

by Glenn Nelson and Richard Burkett

ISBN-13: 978-0030289378

Reference

www.veniceclayartists.com

www.accessceramics.org

Attendance

Students are expected to be present and working during class. I do take attendance. If you have perfect attendance or have only 1 miss, you will earn a bonus of 0.6 points to your overall grade. If you miss 4 or more classes you will lose points. The penalty for missed classes is on a graduated scale that escalates the more misses you have. Attendance points are added or subtracted after the total average grade is calculated. (1 point changes the letter grade, e.g. 8=B, 9=B+).

It is your responsibility to keep track of the syllabus, schedule, and critique dates. If you miss a class, ask me or a classmate to help get you back up to speed. If there is a major event/problem happening in your life, come talk to me and we will figure something out.

Critiques are equivalent to taking a test in an academic class. Do not miss them! Participation in critiques is required and will be reflected in your final grade. If you miss a critique you will lose both absence points and critique points. On the plus side, points are awarded for active participation for each critique.

Participation

Your grade will reflect the amount of energy you put into daily class work, assignments, kiln firing, outside-of-class studio time, discussions, and critiques.

Studio time outside-of class is expected. Generally for an art class, you should plan at least as much time in the studio outside of class as you spend in class.

Kiln firings are an essential part of the ceramic experience. All students are invited and encouraged to participate and you will receive points for helping with a firing. The default firing we do is cone 6 mid-fire Stoneware. We may also have the possibility of firing Low-fire.

Assignments

All assignments must be completed by the **start** of class on the assigned due day. If completed on time, assignment projects may be improved or redone at any time up until the Final Critique date, **May 10**.

Late assignments, if accepted, will be penalized a letter grade and they may not be re-submitted for a better grade.

Grading

Each project will be evaluated and will receive a letter grade. It will be evaluated as follows: technique, visual impact, problem solving, craft, skill, and concept.

As mentioned under the “assignments” topic, projects may be redone or resubmitted with improvements up until the final critique date. Grades for resubmitted projects will replace the old grade if it is higher. In the unlikely event the redone project is a lower grade it will be discarded and you will keep the original grade.



Important Dates

Art 261 – Basic Topics/Assignments

February 22, Friday

- ☛ Using any technique, (slabs, coiling, pinching, modeling) build **three small related figures** (forms). Be aware of the positive / negative spaces and interior / exterior shapes you create. This is a one day project - don't get too precious with it.
- ☛ **Animal based theme:** it could be a representation of your favorite animal, an abstraction, a spirit-animal, a comment on animal / human or animal / animal relationships, etc. Remember to always keep the thickness a 1/2" or less. Make the piece big enough that it takes two hands to move it.
- ☛ **30" combined height** of multiple wheel thrown pieces, (not bowls).

March 22, Friday

- ☛ **Lidded jar** (hand-built), minimum of 14" tall.
- ☛ **Four bowls** - thrown, trimmed and footed bowls.
- ☛ **Molded Sculpture:** Use all or part of a mold one or more times in a sculpture combined with other elements of your choice, (i.e. other molded, thrown, hand-built or extruded sections).

April 19, Friday ▲▲▲ LAST DAY OF WET WORK - Midnight! End of April & May is needed for drying & glazing.

May 10, Friday *(Final Critique)*

- ☛ Related set of **four cups** w/ handles.
- ☛ **Four covered containers**, one is sculptural. (May substitute w/ teapots).
- ☛ Your best work from the semester for your ceramic portfolio presentation.
- ☛ Everything to be graded must be finished.

May 16, Thursday? **May 17, Friday?**

- ☛ **Final Exam 8:00 - 10:00 am?**
- ☛ **Final Exam 12:00 - 2:00 pm?**

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(subject to change)

Week 1 (January 21 - 25)

Project: **Three Related Forms**

•— during the week before class —•

Enjoy the last moments of winter break and the start of classes.

•— in class —•

Review of syllabus and semester projects, particularly those in the first critique group. Distribute tools, overview of studio functions, Art lab safety. Wedging methods; Properties of clay; flexibility and manipulation of clay through pinch pots. Three related forms created, clay sketching, positive/negative & interior/exterior awareness, slabs, coils. Introduction of animal inspired project.

Week 2 (January 28 - February 1)

Project: **Animal Inspired**

•— during the week before class —•

Research animal characteristics for your sculpture. Create sketches or collect numerous reference images for the animal(s) or figure(s). Make sure you have at least four different viewpoints plus close-ups of important areas (face). Three-quarter angles are particularly useful. Finish **three related forms** if they were not completed during class.

•— in class —•

Demo of potters wheel, centering and cylinders. Help with development of throwing techniques, troubleshooting. Review of your animal drawings and images with individual discussion of your ideas for the animal inspired work. Video references for animal creation. Techniques for working on longer clay projects, importance of monitoring dampness and thickness. Throwing Guide.

Bring in animal drawings and/or reference images.

Week 3 (February 4-8)

Project: **Animal Inspired, 30" thrown**

•— during the week before class —•

Work on **animal piece**, and keep checking that it's moist and properly covered. Make note of any particular difficulties. Basic form structure should be completed. Practice, practice, practice centering and **throwing** cylinder forms. Don't be too critical at first, keep your hands as well supported as possible and don't move too quickly. Gently but firmly put your hands on the clay whenever your hands first touch or leave the clay.

•— in class —•

Help with development of throwing techniques, centering and throwing, review of your successful thrown forms. No trimming allowed. Review of your animal sculpture form structure progress and suggestions for completion. Working with colored clay slips, engobes. Creation of quick handmade plates for painting & texture.

Basic form structure for Animal piece. Try for 10" of acceptable cylinders.

Week 4 (February 11- 15)

Project: **Animal Inspired, 30" thrown**

•— during the week before class —•

Work on final form of **animal piece**, and start texturing where desired. Still keep checking that it's moist and properly covered. Final form structure should be completed. More practice **throwing** cylinder forms. You should have about 20" of good vertical thrown forms, (not bowls).

•— in class —•

Help with refinement of throwing techniques, review of your successful thrown forms. Review of your animal sculpture's final form progress and suggestions for completing texture. Variations of shape.

Final form structure for Animal piece, texture started. 20" of acceptable cylinders completed.

Week 5 (February 18 - 22)

Project Due: **Animal Inspired, 30" thrown**

•— during the week before class —•

Finish **Animal** inspired sculpture.

Throw as many inches of cylinder forms as possible. The goal is at least 30" combined height.

•— in class —•

CRITIQUE

Animal inspired sculpture due.

30" thrown work due.

Quiz

Demo of thrown bowl forms and trimming the bottom feet.

Demo of hand-built forming for 14" lidded jar.

Animal inspired sculpture complete. 30" of vertical thrown forms completed.

Week 6 (February 25 - March 1)

Project: **Bowls, 14" hand-built lidded jar**

•— during the week before class —•

Practice throwing **bowls**. Try to get at least two good ones. Remember to leave enough thickness on the bottom to trim. If you are saving the bowls to trim later - keep them soft or leather-hard.

Explore ideas for the 14" hand-built **lidded jar**.

•— in class —•

Discussion of mold use and demo.

Review of 14" lidded jar ideas.

Help with throwing bowls or trimming.

Loading kilns for bisque fire.

Info on firing cycles, kiln care

Two thrown bowls, trimmed or untrimmed. Ideas, drawings, notes or clay sketches for lidded jar.

Week 7 (March 4-8)

Project: **Bowls, 14" hand-built lidded jar, Molds**

•— during the week before class —•

Continue practicing **bowls**. Try to get all four bowls thrown this week. Keep leather hard for trimming.

Make and finalize form for 14" tall **lidded jar**.

Concept development for **mold** piece.

•— in class —•

Help with throwing techniques for bowls and help with trimming bowls. Review of your successful thrown bowls.

Review of your 14" lidded jar form structure progress and suggestions for completion.

Review of progress on mold piece.

Info about glazes, firing temperatures, atmospheres.

Try for all four bowls - trimmed. Final form structure for lidded jar. Mold ideas.

Week 8 (March 11- 15)

Project: **Bowls, 14" hand-built lidded jar, Molds**

•— during the week before class —•

Trim four **bowls** if not already completed.

Texturing and painting **lidded jar** form.

Finish **mold** piece.

•— in class —•

CRITIQUE

Four trimmed bowls due.

14" handbuilt lidded jar due.

Mold piece due

Quiz

Demo of off-the hump cups and pulled handles.

Four bowls thrown & footed. 14" lidded jar completed. Mold piece complete.

Week 9 (March 18 - 22)
Spring Break

•— during the week before class —•
Spring Break

•— in class —•
Spring Break

Week 10 (March 25 - 29)

Project: 4 related cups, 4 covered containers

•— during the week before class —•
Practice pulling handles and getting consistency with your cup shapes.

•— in class —•
Review of cups or handles if needed.
Demo of covered containers. Information on the different functions of particular lid styles.

Week 11 (April 1 - 5)

Project: 4 related cups, 4 covered containers

•— during the week before class —•
Complete the four related cups with handles.
Work on the measurement and accuracy of your covered containers.

•— in class —•
Help with making cups or covered containers as needed.

Four related cups w/ handles, ideas for sculptural covered container.

Week 12 (April 8- 12)

Project: 4 related cups, 4 covered containers

•— during the week before class —•
Continue working on the measurement and accuracy of your covered containers.
Make progress on the sculptural container.

•— in class —•
Help with refinement of throwing techniques, review of your successful thrown forms.
Review of your animal sculpture's final form progress and suggestions for completing texture

Form for sculptural container in progress. Other covered containers are complete.

Week 13 (April 15 - 19)

Project Due: 4 related cups, 4 covered containers

- during the week before class —•
Finish sculptural container.
- in class —•
Last day of wet work.

All wet work must be completed. NO more wet work permitted.

Week 14 (April 22 - 26)

Project: glazing all work

- during the week before class —•
Get all work bisque fired and start glazing.
- in class —•
Glazing.
Loading bisque and glaze kilns.

All work bisque fired. Work on glazing.

Week 15 (April 29 - May 3)

Project: glazing all work

- during the week before class —•
LAST Chance - GLAZE! Glaze! Glaze!
- in class —•
Glazing.
Loading glaze kilns.

All work glazed.

Week 16 (May 6- 10)

Project: all work is fired or in kiln

- during the week before class —•
The last of your work should be in the kiln and firing.
- in class —•
Final CRITIQUE
Four related cups w/ handles due.
Four covered containers, one sculptural, due.
Best work from semester.
ALL WORK must be glazed and finished.

Prepare for exam.