

ART 3301 Ceramics I
University of West Georgia
Time: 10:00-11:50 am **Day:** M,W,F
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Course Description / Objectives

This is a creative problem solving fine art studio course designed to serve as an introduction to the historical precedents, theories, processes, and materials utilized in the realization and production of Contemporary Ceramic art. Emphasis will be placed on developing a variety of hand-building techniques and attaining a basic understanding of claybody composition and properties. Also included will be an introduction to slips, glazes, and firing techniques.

In addition, this class will focus on developing design, presentation, perceptual, and aesthetic skills, understanding and developing content, and learning about artists (both ceramic artists and artists working in other media) of both past and present. We will consider Ceramics in a variety of contexts such as, Ceramics as: Communication, Commentary, Commodity, Celebration, and Critique.

Instruction Methods

The primary method of instruction will be class demonstrations, lectures, individual input, readings and research. A very significant portion of instruction will also come from your fellow students in the form of critiques and collaborations. Building a safe, effective, and comfortable studio practice will also be developed.

Assignments

A series of five (5) projects (not necessarily five pieces) will be completed that develop the items covered above. Knowledge and techniques acquired in each project will inform each successive project. All assignments require research and sketches. Assignments are due on the critique day. There will be one quiz during the semester and one (final) exam at the end of the semester. All of which will cover basic technical knowledge and processes. *Take notes during technical lectures.*

The following list highlights the general areas of focus for Ceramics I.

- ▶ Intro. to Ceramic Materials
(properties, description, etc)
- ▶ Intro. to Ceramics Techniques – wedging, attachments,
- ▶ Intro. to Content Development
- ▶ Intro. to Artist Research
- ▶ Clay making techniques
- ▶ Hand-building Techniques
Coil, Slump, Hump, Press, Stiff slab, soft slab...
- ▶ Intro to Slips, Stain, and glaze techniques
- ▶ Kiln loading, unloading
- ▶ Kiln Firing (04 electric, and Raku)
- ▶ Basic Glaze formulation

Critiques

Aside from completing the assignments themselves, critiques are the most important aspect of this class. You will gain valuable feedback about your work, and more importantly, develop critical and analytical thinking and communication skills. Participation in group critiques is mandatory. **Do not miss any critiques.** Missing a critique will lower your semester grade by one letter grade.

Grades

Project Grades will be based upon the fulfillment of the assignment objectives; craftsmanship, conceptual and physical investment of time, and aesthetic (form and surface) and conceptual potency (inventiveness) of work.

In addition to each project grade, the level of effort, the willingness to experiment and overall dedication will be evaluated. In this course there may be more than one “right answer” to each problem or project. This situation will require you to invest time, take risks, and potentially start over repeatedly in order to find the “best” or most effective answer possible. An open, inquisitive, and flexible mind is essential. *See Project Evaluation sheet*

A Glaze/Surface grade will be based on the effort, emphasis, and quality of results of all assignments. The glaze/surface grade is equivalent in terms of weight as that of a typical assignment.

A Final Exam, which covers vocabulary and terminology and techniques, will be given at during finals week.

Final Semester grades for the course will be based upon an average of project grades, glaze/surface grade, quiz, written final exam, participation in critiques and discussions, your willingness to explore and take risks with your work, participation in maintaining a clean and efficient working studio environment, and attendance.

◀ **for more on grades please refer to the grade qualification sheet.**

Effort, Attitude, and Time

This class requires a serious commitment of time and both a physical and mental investment. (i.e. hard work) Dedication, a serious attitude, and an open mind are necessary. A minimum of 6 hours of out-of-class time is required per week. Some projects may require a slightly longer, undetermined amount of time to complete. An attitude of, "What is the least amount of time that I can invest to get my project done" will not serve you well in this class. A "NO FEAR/NO EXCUSES" attitude will serve you well in this class. Aside from specific times to use special equipment, the studio will be open at all times for you to work at your own leisure.

Attendance

This class requires 100% attendance. Attendance and punctuality are not only required but are absolutely essential for your success in this class. Missing lectures and demonstrations will seriously jeopardize your ability to produce work of the caliber required by this class. You (or your parents) are paying for this course; please use it to its full potential. In the event of an extreme emergency, please inform me immediately so that we can make arrangements to keep you on track..

◀ **for more on attitude and attendance please refer to the grade qualification sheet.**

Participation

You are expected to participate fully in all planned group activities and studio maintenance/ management. This includes field trips, gallery openings/ lectures, clay mixing, and kiln loading / unloading. Studio maintenance/ management - keeping your workplace clean and organized. Ten percent of your semester grade is based on maintaining a clean workplace.

Conduct and Professionalism

Repeat: Ten percent of your grade is based on maintaining a clean and safe workplace. All materials and supplies must be stored, arranged, and kept in an organized and consolidated fashion. All spills, splatters and scatters must be dealt with immediately. It is essential to develop, practice, and maintain a respectful and accommodating approach to others in a studio environment where work and storage space are limited. All students will be evaluated on the above mentioned practices on a weekly basis.

Studio Environment

In a Ceramics class there is an extremely high probability that you will get dirty. Please wear comfortable clothing that you can justify getting dirty. An apron can also be useful. Keeping the classroom clean and orderly is important to foster a safe and stimulating environment. Each student is responsible for maintaining a clean work environment on a daily basis. Your performance regarding 'studio environment' is percentage of your overall semester grade.

Extra Credit

I will accept extra-credit projects provided they reflect the material covered in class. Extra credit projects cannot replace required projects. All assigned projects must be completed by the due date before extra credit will be *considered*. All extra credit projects must be accompanied by a ½ page proposal highlighting how the extra credit project will surpass the original project based on the assignment's objectives. You will NEVER be penalized for doing more than what is required. With this in mind, there is no reason to receive a grade lower than an 'A'. The grade you receive is the grade you earn.

Research

The Library has a substantial collection of books on Ceramics including the magazines Ceramics Monthly and American Ceramics. Aside from being necessary for your research project, I strongly urge you to become familiar with these materials. They can make your life much easier in this class in many ways.

Sketchbook

You are expected to use a sketchbook for notes, sketches, research, and writings. A sketchbook can serve as an invaluable multi-purpose tool in the development of an artist and his/her artwork. The significance of the role of a sketchbook is often underestimated. Your sketchbook is for your private use only. On occasion you may be called upon to share items of your own choice from your sketchbook to share in group discussions. Sketchbooks should be at least 9" x 12" in size. (Suggestion: Get a nice one.)

Supplies

The following list represents the basic tools for the course. They may be purchased at Michaels, Rome St. Gallery, Hobby Lobby, etc. Feel free to acquire as many additional tools as you feel necessary at any point throughout the semester.

Dust masks (2-3)
Fettling knife
Wooden tool (any size)
Needle tool
Loop tool (any size)
Serrated Metal Rib
Metal Rib and Rubber Rib
Metal Cutting Wire
Sponge

Bamboo Brushes (one or two)
Metal fork (silverware drawer...Goodwill?)
Combination lock (lockers are available in the hallway)
2- 3 Brushes 1", 2", 3" (Must be natural bristle) Can be found in most hardware stores.
Hand Towel (to cut down on paper waste)

Lab Fee

A _____ lab fee will be billed directly by the University. This covers clay, glaze materials, and firing costs.

Materials Fee

An additional fee of \$40, to be collected by the course professor, will be due one week from the first day of class. Receipts will be provided one week after the fee collection date.

Cellular telephone and mp3 player policy

All c-phones and mp3 players must be turned off (including vibration) prior to the beginning of class. The use of cellular phones during class is strictly forbidden.

Email Policy

In the interest of privacy and confidentiality please use only the myUWG email system when contacting me via email.

Special Needs

Please inform me of any special needs (allergies, conditions, etc.) that you think may affect your ability to participate in this class. With a little bit of dialogue, hopefully we will be able to avoid as many potential pitfalls as possible.

Note from the Professor

I am committed to making my classroom a community which promotes a culture of inclusion in which all feel valued, respected, and supported to perform to their full potential.