

Art 211: Ceramics Elective

Syllabus

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Office Hours: Thursday 1-2pm or by appointment

Course Objectives

The purpose of this class is to introduce students to the basic techniques and aesthetic principles of ceramic art. This course will consist of demonstrations, supervised studio work, critiques, slide lectures, readings and working in the studio outside of class. We will focus on hand-building techniques including pinch, slab and coil construction during this eight-week course. We will use a variety of methods to finish and glaze our work. In addition to learning technical applications, each student will be encouraged to explore their individual voice stressing creative solutions to class assignments.

Course Requirements

- Attendance and timeliness is mandatory and necessary for your success in this class. Class begins at 8am and we will conclude working at 12:15pm to allow time for cleanup. Do not arrive late. Do not leave early. Either will count against your final grade. Arrive prepared to learn and work.
- In addition to class time you should expect to spend at least 3 hours working outside of class each week to finish assigned projects. You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of open studio hours. You must also manage the drying rates of your pieces.
- Critique and class discussions will be a common activity in this class in which your participation is crucial. I will expect you to take an active interest in the subject matter, your work, and the work of your fellow students. You are required to attend and actively participate in all critiques.
- We work in a shared, communal space. Keeping it clean is imperative. We will spend 10-15 minutes cleaning up before the end of class, leaving the room as clean or cleaner than when we began.
- You will be required to obtain a sketchbook. You will use ceramic tools provided by the Lux but I encourage you to bring in other utensils and tools that you find useful. You must bring your sketchbook to every class; we will dedicate 10 minutes of every class to sketching/drawing/writing down ideas that pertain to the current assignment. I encourage you to have your sketchbook with you at all times and to fill it with images/objects you find visually inspiring.

Studio Etiquette

- The ceramics studio is a cooperative system. All members of this class must do their part to maintain an orderly and clean studio space. ALWAYS clean up after yourself. Politely remind your fellow classmates if necessary.
- There will be no food in the studio.
- Turn all cell phones and other electronic devices to silent when you arrive to class.

Grading

° Final grades are determined using the following equally weighted criteria:

- Completion of assignments, including sketches and historical research
- Class Participation, including attendance, discussion and cleanup
- Craftsmanship, intent and effort
- Positive attitude and willingness to learn about materials and processes

Materials Fee

This will cover all of your clay, glazes and firings for class and should be paid to Doane.

Tools

° *You provide:* Sketchbook and a pencil. I suggest a spiral bound, hard cover, 8x10 sketchbook, available at any art supply store or hobby store such as Gomez or Hobby Lobby.

° *Lux provides:* Standard ceramic tools such as fettling knives, needle tools, rubber ribs, metal ribs, small sponges, wire tools and trimming tools. The Lux also has available for your use forks, spray bottles, plastic bags, brushes, rulers, cleaning sponges, buckets, towels and smocks. If you want to purchase your own you may do so and store them here.

° *Other suggested tools:* Surform, 3M Green Scrubby, 120 or finer Sandpaper, Kemper Mini Tool Kit.

Where can I get supplies?

° **Gomez Art Supply:** They have a large variety of basic art materials. It is very close to UNL city campus--located at 120 N 14th Street (on 14th between O and P), 402- 477-6200.

° **Glasers Ceramics:** This place has tons of ceramic supplies, including bisque ware, commercial glazes, and ceramic decals. It is funky and unusual, a little odd, and for some people hard to find. Take 27th St. North. Continue on 27th past Vine and Holdredge and over the big bridge. At end of bridge, take a right onto Theresa St, and then an immediate right onto State Fair Park Dr. Go 1/8 mile and take a right onto Kimco St. Go left onto Kimarra Place and Glasers will be on your right.

Class Schedule:

Week 1, March 20: Course overview. Facilities and exhibition tour. demonstration of slab and coil construction. Introduction to slips and the use of a technique called sgraffito. Begin work on project #1 (*SPHERE AND TETRA*) of a 4" sphere and a 4" tetrahedron. By the beginning of class next week, both forms must be constructed/built.

Week 2, March 27: Complete 4" tetrahedron with slip and carving. Complete 4" sphere with texture applied or impressed. Slide lecture on historical vessels/functional ceramics and introduction to project #2 (*YIXING TEAPOTS*). Distribution of Reading 1. Field trip to Glaser's at 11am. Class dismissed.

Week 3, April 3: Introduction of glazes and stains as a patina, and basic glaze theory. Glaze tetrahedron and sphere from project #1. Review sketches, discuss construction methods and begin work on project #2. Discussion of Reading 1. Direction of research for Project #3.

Week 4, April 10: View and discuss results of project #1. Continue work on project #2. By beginning of class next week, all wet work on project #2 must be complete. Introduction to project #3 (*CONTEMPORARY HISTORY VASE*). Distribution of Reading 2.

Week 5, April 17: Review sketches, discuss construction methods and begin work on project #3. Discussion of Reading 2.

Week 6, April 24: Glaze project #2. Continue work on project #3. Generate research paper ideas and choose subject for paper.

Week 7, May 1: Project #3 ready for once-fire by the end of class. Research paper due at the beginning of class.

Week 8, May 8: Final critique and last chance to glaze any bisque ware. Breakfast/brunch potluck/movie/dancing.

Notes on Completing Projects:

Learning to manipulate and work with clay can be very frustrating for some students. I encourage you to keep your cool, ask questions and be very attentive to the material. I will demonstrate all techniques that you will use. It is important that you learn to work with the material and understand the different stages of the construction, drying and firing processes. Drying time at the Lux is reasonable, and tightly covered pieces (with plastic sheeting) dry slowly. You must have your projects at the stages necessary to move to the next step as discussed in class. If you are not ready to move ahead, your grade will suffer and it will be difficult to get work fired.

If you are completing all projects on time and to the best of your abilities, I encourage you to make objects beyond the class assignments. I will make and fire as much work as you feel inspired to make. My objective as a teacher is that you will gain knowledge about ceramic history and techniques. I also hope that over the course of this class you will find a creative, problem-solving bug inside of you that leads you to new ways of thinking and looking.

