

# Syllabus

Ceramics 1 Art 161

Three Rivers Community College

Tuesday and Thursday  
1:00 – 3:45 am  
Ceramics Lab D Wing RM 100

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Office Hours: T & R 12:00 – 1:00pm

Open Studio Hours:  
TBD

Spring 2015

## **Course Description:**

This course will broaden the students' understanding of clay as a viable medium for personal visual expression. The primary emphasis will be on studio work leading to a portfolio of finished pieces. An emphasis will be placed on throwing and hand construction techniques with attention being placed on design, aesthetics and the creative process in the development of clay objects. The course will include an examination of clay, glazing, decoration methods, and the firing process, as well as cultural, historical and personal modes of expression. Students will develop a vocabulary specific to the medium, and will use this vocabulary to participate in critical discussions relating to their own work as well as the work of others. Students will become aware of safety issues involved in working with ceramic materials. Studio: Meets 6 hours per week.

## **Course Objectives**

The students will:

- Understand the origins and physical properties of clay.
- Develop skills in various forming methods including pinch, slab, coil, wheel throwing and sculpture techniques, as well as glazing and firing techniques.
- Develop sensitivity to the materials, to aesthetic design, and to individual and imaginative use of the materials.
- Be familiar with studio procedures, maintenance, and safety concerns.
- Be able to critique a work of ceramic art using an informed visual vocabulary specific to clay.
- Be familiar with the uses of specialized tools and equipment.
- Develop body of work that prepares the student for Ceramics II and other upper level ceramic courses.
- Develop an ability to create expressive, unified, and cohesive three-dimensional forms in clay.
- Develop the ability to use ceramics vocabulary to discuss critically the development of their work, and to discuss work of other contemporary and historical ceramic works.

## **Academic Expectations:**

- Attend all classes.
- Care about the work you are doing in class. Visit the ceramic studio between classes to monitor the drying process of your clay projects.
- Help others in class to succeed, by sharing your knowledge with other students and by keeping the studio clean.
- Follow class health and safety regulations.
- Complete all assignments to prepare a ceramic portfolio showing progress in the medium for a final grade.
- Assignments are graded on planning and idea development, craftsmanship, creativity, visual impact, personal investment, personal exploration, the ability to constructively critique your work, and exploration of the medium.

- All work must be signed and submitted for a grade along with the appropriate rubric.
- A Ceramics Notebook is required for ongoing reflections and responses to lecture material as well as for chronicling the development of their ideas, inspirations, trials, successes, and critical reflections of the work they produce in clay.

**Attendance:**

A major part of this class relies on consistent attendance since much of the class information is explained in class demonstrations. Attendance is considered a significant portion of your success. Please remember this is a studio class and class time is very important. Clay projects must be done in class because unfired work is fragile and easily damaged in transport.

You can take one 15-minute break during class. When you are working on a project, you will intuitively know when is the best time for you to take a break. Do not take your breaks when a demonstration is planned. I will let you know at the beginning of the class when demonstrations are to occur.

**Lateness:**

It is essential that students come to class ON TIME. Important information will be given during the first few minutes of each class.

**Work outside of class hours:**

Students are required to finish all assignments in the assigned time. This is very important because if your work is not done in time your project will not be dry and may have to miss a firing, which will set you back. You will need to spend time in the open studio time slots outside of class hours. Your success in developing studio skills will be directly proportional to the time spent in the studio in and outside of scheduled class time. This means coming into the studio outside of class to finish projects, and cover or uncover work to control the drying process.

**Ceramics Notebook:**

Students are required to keep a Ceramics Notebook. **Students need to bring this notebook to class!** Its purpose is to document your ideas and artistic development. This notebook will be a useful tool in helping to work out your ideas and plans before starting a project. You will also use it to document problems, successes, and reflections on your work. The notebook will contain class notes, vocabulary, sketches of your ideas and of your work, problems you encounter, solutions you came with, a critique of each of your clay works, and visual examples of work that inspires you. Your notebook serves as a documentary of your development in the class. The notebook needs to be a loose leaf 3-ring binder, and can be purchased in the TRCC bookstore. This notebook should be only for this Ceramics class.

**Supplies:**

Being prepared for class is important, therefore always having your tools and necessary equipment for class is essential to your progress and success in this class. Not being prepared negatively affects your grade and class work time. For this course you will need to be prepared to purchase 1-3 bags of clay at the TRCC bookstore. If you have financial aid, you can purchase all of your bags at once at the start of the semester during the time period designated for using financial aid funds in the bookstore. It is highly recommended that you obtain a lock and use the lockers in the hallway outside of the clay lab, room D100, in which to store your clay and tools. These lockers get taken quickly, so if you want one act

promptly to secure one. This also serves as a place to keep an extra change of clothing if needed. Locks can be purchased at the bookstore or your local hardware store. There is also space in the studio reserved for clay and tools as well, but it is a communal space and the instructor and school are not responsible for the clay. Nor are we responsible for any valuables brought into the studio. The nature of the way we work in class lends itself to having to move around the room and leave belongings unattended. It is not a good idea to remove jewelry and leave it unattended. The same would be true for any other valuable item. Always write your name on your tools, clay bag, and the bags used to cover your work, with a sharpie marker. Before the second class you should have obtained the following from the school store:

25 lb. Clay  
Tools  
Three Ring Binder Notebook  
Lock if you want to use a locker

### **Evaluations and Grading Policy:**

Your work and performance in class will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Your self-motivated, sustained, and thoughtful attention to your work, and the reflection of that attentiveness in the quality of your completed assignments.
- Your genuine commitment to the class and the course, as reflected in your:
  - Attendance and preparedness for each class,
  - Honoring of due dates,
  - Active participation in class work, discussion, and critiques.
- Evidence of involvement with the problems presented, and the artistic and creative originality of the resolutions.
- In the ceramic process, problems of aesthetics and design are inseparable from the craft techniques that express them. A well-crafted work by itself does not constitute a work of art, but a great concept cannot be expressed without the adequate technical skill, therefore, workmanship as well as an aesthetic awareness is an important part of the final grade.
- Proper handling of studio tools and equipment and correct safety and maintenance procedures are considered. Participation in studio maintenance and clean up is essential. This includes an end of the semester clean up session.
- Participation in the critiques and the capability to verbalize ideas and concepts are also important components of final grades.
- Maintaining an ongoing Notebook that includes notes from class, documentation of the development of your ideas, and planning and critique sheets for each project.
- All students are required to maintain an online learning portfolio in Digication that uses the college template.
- **Projects will be graded after their due dates, the notebook will be reviewed at mid term and graded before the last class, and final exam will be given.**

**Grading will be based on the following:**

**Assignments and Projects - 60%**  
**Notebook– 20**  
**Final Exam – 10%**  
**Studio Conduct and Participation- 10%**

Grading is based on individual development. Each student is responsible and expected to fulfill certain requirements to successfully receive credit for the course. Grading is as follows:

A- Superior work both creatively and technically, consistently works above standard for the entire semester/always works above and beyond assigned requirements, genuine enthusiasm and engagement with course material, turns assignments in on time, develops strong creative ideas, takes creative risks, committed to development of creative ideas/ research in notebook through information both in and outside of class, follows through on ideas and development of ideas, high level of critical thinking evidenced in notebook entries as related to course material and executing creative ideas, arrives to class on time, excellent attendance record, independent self starter, willing to participate in class activities and critiques, always clean up after him/herself, proper time management skills.

B- Above average work, shows potential and adequate success in completed projects, evidence of moderate focus on developing creative clarity in work and moderate improvement in development of technique and craftsmanship, however not the same level as superior/A craftsmanship and creativity, improvement is evident at various points through each project and process, moderate investment in work is displayed, inconsistencies in craftsmanship revealed in various aspects of project/s, notebook entries modest in creativity and critical thinking.

C- Average – Student works with minimal enthusiasm or investment in project, insufficiency and inconsistency in creativity and craftsmanship, lack of creative exploration or engagement in process, not proactive/independent starter, work lacks attention to detail/ craftsmanship, or critical thinking. Notebook does not meet all guideline requirements, or completes all guideline requirements in a cursory manor, poor punctuality to class, poor attendance.

D- Below Average – assignments late, unfinished, incomplete, excessive absences, tardy to class, does not use class time wisely, unprepared for class, no motivation, unengaged in class, poor effort craftsmanship and critical thinking skills, leaves workspace dirty, leaves class early.

F- Failing – excessive absences, assignments incomplete and or missing, lack of effort in class, does not take pride in their work, careless use of equipment, failure to clean up, disrupts the learning environment.

**N Grade -**

The N Grade is assigned to students when there is no basis for a grade. This would apply to students who never came to class as well as to those who didn't attend or participate long enough to be graded. The N grade is used to distinguish between earned failures (F), official withdrawals (W) and students who stop attending or participating before there is a basis for a grade.

(In most cases there would be no basis for a grade for students who stop attending or participating before the 60% point.)

**Late work policy:**

Any assignment that is not ready for submission in accordance with the expectations of the assignments and syllabus will be considered "late" and late work will not receive credit. Extensions for time with respect to the submission of course assignments will require verifiable, appropriate circumstances. Each student's circumstances will be evaluated by the instructor on a case-by-case basis. All petitions for extensions must be in writing stating the specifics of the petition for additional time and must be

*approved* by at least three days **BEFORE** the deadline for the assignment.

### **Studio Rules for Your Health and Safety:**

**DO NOT use machinery unless the instructor of the course has instructed you in its use.**

Please consider your well-being and those around you when working in the ceramic studio.

Make all efforts to minimize the creation of clay dust.

Tie long hair back when using the wheel, grinder or other rotating tools.

Do not have long fingernails; they make clay very difficult to work with.

Do not put anything except unfired clay in the recycling buckets.

Access to the ceramics studio is allowed only to students enrolled in the class.

Do not use sand paper on raw clay.

Do not smoke, eat or drink in the ceramics studio.

Never touch kilns unless authorized by the instructor.

Do not talk or text on your cell phones during class.

### **Cleaning Up:**

Always clean up at the end of class - do not leave without cleaning your workspace (table or wheel, tools and plastic containers). Each student will be responsible for cleaning personal and shared areas and recycling his or her own clay. It is expected that you will clean an area that you find untidy even if it is outside your work area. You will need to put back all materials (stored in bins, jars, or bags) to their original storage area after use. Floors need to be left free of objects so that the cleaning staff can vacuum the studio area. Do not put fired clay into the clay recycling buckets. Do not let clay go down the drain. Please wash your hands, tools, etc. in the bucket provided in the sink to remove clay from them before rinsing them again in the sink.

**If we all do this, we will have an efficient and safe place to work. A messy, dusty studio is a HEALTH HAZARD for everyone.**

Do **NOT** bring any friends into the studio during class or monitored outside class work times. No individual not enrolled in ceramics can use the lab or use the equipment or material in the studio. Please use appropriate language that is respectful.

### **Classroom Attire:**

Please wear clothing that is appropriate for studio work. There is no guarantee that clay and glazes will come out of clothing, so please do not wear any article of clothing that is expensive or important to you. Please be sure to wear clothing that is comfortable and does not restrict your movement.

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic Dishonesty shall in general mean conduct which has its intent or effect the false

representation of a student's academic performance, including but not limited to (a) cheating on an Examination, (b) collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course, (C) plagiarizing, including the submission of others' ideas or papers or projects (whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained) as one's own, (d) stealing or having unauthorized access to examination or course materials, (e) falsifying records of laboratory or other data, (f) Submitting, if contrary to the rules of the course, and (g) knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.

### **Disability Statement**

If you have a hidden or visible disability that may require class modification, Please notify me as soon as possible. Students with Learning or Physical Disabilities should contact the Learning Specialist, Chris Scarborough at 860-892-5751 or at [cscarborough@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:cscarborough@trcc.commnet.edu) as soon as possible to ensure timely accommodation.

Students with a physical, medical or psychiatric disability contact Kathleen Gray at 860.885.2328 or by email at [kgray@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:kgray@trcc.commnet.edu) or Matt Liscum at 860.383.5240 or by email at [mliscum@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:mliscum@trcc.commnet.edu).

### **Inclement weather**

In the event of inclement weather, students should check the college website at [www.trcc.commnet.edu](http://www.trcc.commnet.edu) there will be a message on the main page indicating whether or not classes are held. You can also call Information Services TRCC- 860-886-0177 or you can also enroll in the free service, "myCommNet Alert". MyCommNet Alert is a notification system that delivers critical information to students, faculty and staff of the Connecticut Community Colleges in the event of an emergency. The system delivers emergency messages through text messaging over cellular phones. Emergencies can include campus-related immediate health or safety situations and may also include weather related class cancellations. Log in to the myCommNet portal from <http://my.commnet.edu>. On the Home Tab's left column under the System Announcement Channel you will see the myCommNet Alert Channel. Click the "Create Account" link in the myCommNet Alert Channel. Then in the upper right-hand corner you will see the link to "Create Account", click the link to create your account profile.

### **College Withdrawal Policy**

A student who finds it necessary to discontinue a course once class has met must provide written notice to the Registrar. Withdrawal forms are available at the Registrars on all campuses. Non-punitive "W" grades are assigned to any withdrawal requested before the various unrestricted withdrawal deadlines listed in the calendars published in front of each course listing. Withdrawal requests received after these deadlines must bear professor signatures. No withdrawals are permitted after the last class preceding the final exam. Students, who do not obtain an official withdrawal, but simply stop attending class, run the risk of receiving an "F" grade for the course.

### **Electronic Devices:**

Cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off during class. Phones must not be answered during class. Text messages or Internet use is not permitted during class. When there are extenuating circumstances that require a student to use an electronic device, the student should speak to the instructor prior to class, so together they can arrive at an agreement. Headphones and MP3 players are allowed during studio work time, but cannot be used during lectures and demonstrations and should be kept at a low volume. Music cannot be played aloud during class. Setting your phone on vibrate or occasionally checking your phone is acceptable as long as it does not disrupt your or another student's class time.

## Library:

You are strongly recommended to take advantage of the ceramic books and publications we have in the library. Most books in the ceramic section are on reserve and can only be used in the library. Make sure you take some time to do make use of these resources.

IF AT ANY TIME YOU HAVE CONCERNS OR QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT IS EXPECTED, HOW YOUR ARE PROGRESSING, YOUR GRADES, OR ANYHTING ELSE, PLEASE SEE ME RIGHT AWAY.

## Ceramics Class Calendar Spring 2015

### Class 1. R. 1/22/15

Experience questionnaire, Review syllabus, origins and properties of clay, purchase and label supplies.

### Class 2. T. 1/27/15

Overview of Notebook requirements, ceramics vocabulary, wedging demo, and pinch pot demo, introduction to first assignment: organic pinch pot. Homework find inspirational historical and contemporary examples, make min. 3 sketches of possibilities for the assignment.

### Class 3. R. 1/29/15

Review pinch pot assignment, pinch pot power point. Practice Pinch pot method, Watch Importance of pottery in archaeology video, Fill out project planning sheet. Start pinch pot assignment.

### Class 4. T. 2/3/15

Continue pinch pot assignment. Watch Japanese tea bowl video.

## **R. 2/5/15 professional day Classes not in session**

### Class 5. T. 2/10/15

Finish pinch pot assignment, Leave uncovered to dry. Introduce coil assignment, coil demo, use of extruder, sgraffito, applied coil, carved, and stamped surface demos.

Homework: find inspirational examples of historical and contemporary coiled pot shapes and examples of surface decoration that inspire you (carved, applied and sgraffito)

### Class 6. R. 2/12/15

Start coil pot, coil power point. Ernabella Potters, coil building demo, and start coil pot,

### Class 7. T. 2/17/15

Continue Coil Pot  
**Bisque pinch pots**

Class 8. R. 2/19/15

Continue coil pot, Watch Maria Martinez, woman of San Marco.

Class 9. T 2/24/15

Finish coil, leave uncovered to dry.

Homework:

Find inspirational historical and contemporary clay slab forms you like and examples of contrast in the design of a clay piece. Sketch a minimum of three ideas for this assignment.

Class 10. R. 2/26/15

Glaze demo. **Glaze pinch pots**, review assignment sheet for slab project.

Class 11. T. 3/3/15

Fill out project planning sheet, slab and slab roller demo, surface textures demo, and examples. Start slab Project.

Class 12. R. 3/5/15

Continue Slab Project

Class 13. T. 3/10/15

Finish slab, Leave uncovered to dry, **bisque coil pots**

Class 14. R. 3/12/15

**Critique pinch pots. Glaze coil pots.** Fill out cylinder wheel throwing assignment sheet.

Homework: find 3+ historical or contemporary examples of wheel thrown cylinder shapes you like.

Hand in Notebook for mid term review

**T. 3/17/15 and R. 3/19/15 Spring Break Classes not in session**

Class 15. T. 3/24/15

Introduction to the wheel, including centering, opening, pulling a wall demo.

Class 16. R. 3/ 26/15

Cylinder demo. Watch history of wheel video. Practice throwing cylinders.

Class 17. T. 3/31/15

Trimming Cylinder demo, Pulled Handle demo, Mug and handle aesthetics.

Homework: Find 3+ examples of historical or contemporary bowl shapes you like.

Class 18. R. 4/2/15

Bowl demo. View bowl examples. Fill out wheel thrown project-planning sheet. Throw bowls.

Class 19. T. 4/7/15

Bowl trimming demo, trim bowl. Leave uncovered to dry.

Class 20. R. 4/9/15

**Bisque fire of wheel thrown pots, critique coil pots, glaze slab.** Review sculpture assignment sheet.

Homework: find 3+ examples of historical or contemporary narrative sculpture/mixed media that inspire you.

Class 21. T. 4/14/15

Fill out project planning sheet, View examples, and Start sculpture.

Class 22. R. 4/16/15

Continue sculpture

Class 23. T. 4/21/15

Continue sculpture

Class 24. R. 4/23/15

Finish sculpture. **Last day of wet clay.**

Class 25. T. 4/28/15

All work uncovered on bisque shelf to dry, **Critique Slab Projects**

Class 26. R. 4/30/15

Class 27. T. 5/5/15

Glaze wheel thrown pots, **Final bisque (sculpture)**

Class 28. R. 5/7/15

Glaze sculptures, **Last Glaze Fire**  
**All Inspiration, Planning, Process and Critique Sheets due.**

Class 29. T. 5/12/15

**Critique thrown pots and sculpture,**  
All ungraded work handed in, Final exam.

Class 30. R. 5/14/15

Last class; pick up work, clean room.

Extra Class/ Makeup T. 5/19/15

If we loose a lot of time due to snow days we may use the extra class scheduled for Tuesday 5/19/15.