

Ceramics I Syllabus

Instructor: Chotsani Elaine Dean

e-mail: chotsanielainedean@me.com or cdean@trcc.commnet.edu (both emails are linked)

Office phone: 860-823-2823 (voicemail)

Ceramics Lab 100D M/W 1:00pm- 3:45pm

Office Hours: Monday 12pm-1pm/Tuesday 2pm-4pm

Class website: bookmark on your personal computer or smartphone for your login convenience via Blackboard.

The site is password protected.

user name: ceramics

password: spring2012

Course Description

This course is designed as a continuation of Ceramics I, with the addition of advanced concepts and techniques. Students are required to develop a unified portfolio of work using a combination of sketches, research and experiments to develop a theme. Studio: Meets 6 hours per week.

Objective/Learning Outcomes

Course Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of Ceramics II, students should:

- Have created a unified body of work in clay to supplement visual arts portfolio and the body of work will culminate in a formal presentation at the end of the semester
- Possess strategies for exhibiting work and applying for residencies and grants and transfer to a four-year institution
- Ability to articulate studio practice techniques specific to ceramics, proficiency in the ability to talk about and critique a work of art, specific to ceramics
- Upon transferring to a four-year program student should be able to enroll in advance level classes
- Introductory understanding of clay composition, glaze chemistry and electric kiln firing

Objective

At the end of the session, students should be able to turn a lump of clay into an aesthetically pleasing and conceptually strong form. Also, students will be able to critically assess one another's work and discuss technical issues and conceptual issues relative to the medium of clay. The student, with consistent work ethic will have developed a good level of confidence with the

material. Last, using the library as a reference and source for books to inform assignments. will enable the student to investigate and research the historical and contemporary span of ceramics and its relationship to both traditional and contemporary art.

Grading Policy

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

1. Your self-motivated, sustained, and thoughtful attention to your work, and the reflection of that attentiveness in the quality of your completed assignments.
2. 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, critique and in the collaborative aspects of clay production and presentation.
 - cooperation and participation in maintaining a safe, orderly and clean work environment.
3. Points system is used for grading, as follows: 40pts for Resource Sketch Book + Demo/ Lecture Notes; 60pts for Studio Projects; 15pts for Participation - total possible points 115pts.

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 sketchbook through information both in and outside of class, follows through on ideas and development of ideas, high level of critical thinking evidenced in sketchbook 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, sketchbook entries modest in creativity and thought.
- 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, sketchbook does not meet all guideline requirements or inform creatively to class projects, 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, non responsive to course, suggestion, poor effort, leaves workspace dirty, leaves class early
- F- Failing – excessive absences assignments never completed, total lack of effort in class, never helps in class, behavior is disruptive to peers

Attendance

A major part of this class relies on consistent attendance as much of the class information is explained in class demonstrations. Attendance is considered a significant portion of your success in the course material/assignments, please remember this is a studio class and class time is very important. Clay projects cannot be taken home to work on. Demonstrations will not be repeated, in some cases there will be supplemental demonstrations and some of the demonstrations will be available on the class website and supplemented with technical handouts, but there is no guarantee that every demonstration will be on the class website - the posting of video does not serve as a replacement for being present for in-class demonstrations, the videos are supplemental to the in-class experience of learning how to work with clay. *On-time attendance is expected.* On-time is defined as arriving at the beginning of our class time. Those who arrive more than five minutes after class begins will be marked “tardy” for the class. Three “tardies” will be the equivalent of a class absence and will be calculated into the overall attendance pattern accordingly as attendance is directly related to in class work with clay.

Classroom Attire

Please wear clothing that is appropriate for studio work. There is no guarantee that clay comes 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 adequately covers your body and is comfortable to move around in as you will be sitting at the potters wheel and this will require constant standing and sitting (also bending down to pick things up and cleaning), so it is important that your clothing allows you to move comfortably and **covers your body adequately**. Do not bring jewelry/valuables into the classroom.

Nails: nails **must** be cut short in order to successfully work with clay. Acrylic nail tips will not allow you to successfully work with the material and hinder your ability to handle the clay that will directly affect your grade negatively and learning/experiencing the skill of working with clay.

Sketchbook

ALL students are required to keep a sketchbook solely for this course. The sketchbook can be purchased in the TRCC bookstore, it is **required** for the course and must be purchased in the bookstore. You must **bring your sketchbook to every class**. During class demonstrations you will be expected to take notes, as these notes will be helpful when operating equipment in the department and will be reviewed for grading. The sketchbook should be filled more than 50% by the end of the session (use only one side of the page, do not write on both the back and front). You will be graded on the sketchbook. Your sketchbook also serves as a documentary source for your development in the class. **You are required to include process images in your sketchbook.** ****(refer to sketchbook guidelines handout)****

Homework

There will be scheduled open studio times for students to work on projects outside of class. Students are not required to attend outside sessions during the semester, however it is highly recommended students plan to attend one open studio session to work on class projects outside of class as clay needs to be worked with at different stages and extra time outside of class is beneficial and may be needed at various stages of the assignment. Monitor times for the studio - TBA, will be posted on class website and announced in class during the semester, class website can be accessed via Blackboard.

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 2-3 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. 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 as well but it is a communal space and the instructor and school are not responsible for the clay. Always write your name on your clay bag with a sharpie marker.

Clean-up

Everyone is expected to participate. Also, cleaning up after working is required of everyone, all students are responsible for their workspace. Not cleaning up will definitely negatively affect your grade.

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. **NO EXCEPTIONS**

Studio Etiquette and Rules -

- **No** Ipod’s/mp3’s(headphones) in class, this will negatively affect your grade.
- **No** cell phones or texting during class. If you must make a call, please leave the room – it is extremely disruptive and rude to talk on the phone in the ceramics lab while others are working and I am teaching. I understand with recent incidents on college campuses that we must remain connected – however, setting your phone on vibrate or occasionally checking your phone is acceptable as long as it does not disrupt your and other students class time. Also, you

can let me know at the very beginning of class if you are expecting an important phone call in the event you need to excuse yourself during an in-class demonstration.

- *If you are seen using your phone (this includes texting) in class it will result in an **automatic 5pt deduction from your overall grade. No exceptions.**
- *You can take one 15 min. break during class- you can use this time to check your phone messages or email (outside of the classroom). Please inform me when you are taking your break, please do not just leave the studio without notice as I may be preparing to conduct a demonstration and would not want anyone to be absent at the start of the demonstration.
- ***Do **NOT** bring any friends in to the studio during class or monitored outside class work times. No individual **NOT** enrolled in ceramics can be in the lab, use the equipment or material in the studio, **no exceptions**. If this rule is broken this will result in a full letter grade drop or possible disciplinary action/dismissal from the class.
- Please always use appropriate and respectful language that is respectful to your peers.
- Keep class discussion to a minimum unless the conversation is directly related to course work/ material.

In the event of class cancellation:

- Check the TRCC website: trcc.commnet.edu for weather cancellations.
- Check Blackboard for class cancellations.
- Check the class website for class cancellation/announcements.
(please let me know if you do not have computer/internet access at home)
- Information Services phone number for TRCC- 860-886-0177

Students with Learning Disabilities

Please inform me at the beginning of this course of any learning disability you have and any documentation for my records and information, for more information and resources you can contact Student Services:

Mission

1. To support access to Three Rivers Community College information resources for diverse learners
2. To provide current and quality information on learning disabilities and services for Three Rivers Community College students, faculty, staff, and the community
3. To support self-understanding and self-advocacy for persons with learning disabilities
4. To encourage collaboration among libraries and community organizations in order to improve information and service for people with learning disabilities, their families, professionals, and the public at large

Assistance - Learning Disabilities Contact

Chris Scarborough - Learning Disabilities Specialist

Phone: 860-892-5751

E-mail: cscarborough@trcc.commnet.edu

(please note semester calendar/syllabus is subject to change, please make note of changes when announced in class and/or via website, it is the sole

responsibility of student to be aware of changes to the calendar/syllabus as announced and reviewed in class)

(open studio is defined as class days when students work individually on class projects, all students must attend open studio as this during the course class time)

MON - 1/23/12 - Review of class syllabus and relevant handouts, introduction to stamp making, review of first assignment - 'Issues in Ceramics' ⇒ **due date Monday 1/30/11 - written response in sketchbook/journal**

WED - 1/25/12 - View documentary 'Objectified' -class discussion review/discussion of 'Issues in Ceramics' handout, review of stamp making/carving/design, introduction to pinch pot technique - in class assignment - pinch pots ⇒ due at end of class - **Homework:** finish carving clay or plaster stamps+signature stamp, 3 **simple** shape stamps - **due date Monday 1/30/11 at beginning of class**, review of class website

MON - 1/30/12 - Finish watching 'Objectified'-'Issues in Ceramics' assignment **due** at start of class ⇒ presentation of responses and class discussion, African-coil building technique demonstration

WED - 2/1/12 - View 'Women of San Marcos', class lecture, African-coil building technique review/demonstration/intro to slip application, open studio to begin coil building

MON - 2/6/12- View, excerpt from documentary *Greece: Crucible of Civilization (Red and Black Attic vases and potters)*, demonstration of technique of slip application and sgraffito, oxide - open studio to work on coil pot. **Homework:** read handout, *The Inescapable, Indivisible, Essence of Pottery* by Warren Fredrick - **required journal entry response per sketchbook guidelines**

WED - 2/8/12 - Review of handout with class discussion, *The Inescapable, Indivisible, Essence of Pottery* by Warren Frederick, open studio - work on African coil pots

MON-2/13/12 - View 'Craft in America' - class discussion, open studio, coil pot (at this point layers of slip should begin to be applied on the surface of the vessel for sgraffito preparation)

WED - 2/15/12 - View 'Craft in America-Memory'/class discussion - open studio, coil pots, sgraffito slip application should be complete at end of class

MON- 2/20/12 - **NO CLASS - PRESIDENT'S DAY/COLLEGE CLOSED**

- WED - 2/22/12 - View 'American Masters' class discussion - class demonstration on making slabs/test tiles, introduction to glaze assignment and tile assignment, make test tiles
- MON - 2/23/12 - View 'History Detectives', class discussion, open studio, vessels should be **100%** complete and ready to dry out slowly for sgraffito/surface work, load test tiles in kiln
- WED - 2/27/12 - Glaze demonstration/lab - in class assignment, prepare test tiles for glaze kiln, load glaze kiln
- MON - 2/29/12 - Review glaze results, open studio for sgraffito on African coil pots, detail work, no more coil building, pots should be at the leather hard to bone dry stage with all layers of slip added for sgraffito design
- WED - 3/5/12 - Review of tile assignment, intro to wheel throwing
- MON - 3/7/12- Open studio - sgraffito/surface work, tile project, **Homework: answer Issues in Ceramics, 2nd response due for midterm on 3/12/12 Monday**
- MON - 3/12/12 - **Midterm**, group critique of coil pots ⇒ sketchbooks **due at end of class**, 2nd written response to Issues in Ceramics for Midterm in sketchbook as well as critique questions/response Sketchbooks returned 3/14/12
- WED - 3/14/12 - **Last day** to finish African Coil Pots, **due at end of class**
- MON - 3/19/12- **SPRING BREAK NO CLASS**
- WED - 3/21/12 - **SPRING BREAK NO CLASS**
- MON - 3/26/12 - Slide lecture, Introduction to Wheel throwing/demonstration
- WED - 3/28/12 - Wheel throwing demonstration- slab/vessel building/extruder demonstration
- MON - 4/2/12 - Open studio - begin work on wheel
- WED - 4/4/12 - Open studio - wheel work
- MON - 4/9/12 - Open studio - wheel work
- WED - 4/11/12 - Last day for wet clay work/wheel throwing

- MON - 4/16/19- Open studio - trimming only, no more wet clay wheel throwing
- WED- 4/18/12 - Open studio - last day for trimming
- MON - 4/23/12 - Detail/finishing work on pots, **pots due at end of class** - Load pots into bisque kiln
- WED - 4/25/12 - Unload bisque kiln, Glazing demonstration - in class time to review and select glazes and begin glazing
- MON- 4/30/12 - Open studio - glazing
- WED - 5/2/12 - Open studio - glazed pots due at end of class, load glaze kiln
- MON - 5/7/12 - Unload glaze kiln, Homework - Sketchbook, 3rd Issues in Ceramics response, complete final entries, **sketchbook due 5/10/12**
- MON - 5/9/12 - Group critique - Journals due at end of class for final review

Ceramics I/II
Three Rivers Community College
Instructor: Chotsani Elaine Dean

Sketchbook Guidelines

The sketchbook you keep for this course is to function as a documentary resource and reference guide throughout the course. You will not only use the sketchbook to take notes but document your work process on the various projects in class from start to finish in your sketchbook. **Requirements:** printing of process photos taken during class with the studio camera, then neatly cut/pasted in your sketchbook with glue, **not tape** - photos can be downloaded from the class website (the student photo section will be updated after every class), all writing assignments/reflections must be completed in your sketchbook and notes from in class demonstrations will be recorded in your sketchbook and reviewed by me as well at the indicated due dates for midterm review, final grade review and informal in class reference while working on projects.

All writing assignments and entries must be dated and your entries should follow an organized/chronological order. Entries include all writing assignments from the

Issues in Ceramics handout, but should also include reflections that are unique to the individual student, project and experience. For example, if you saw a piece of pottery at an antique shop that you recognize from a blog post or class lecture, if you visit a museum and see something familiar or new, if a friend or relative has a piece of ceramic art that you saw for the first time, etc... are all inspirations and points of departure for a journal/sketchbook entry, yet relevant to the course material.

Neatness and organization are essential in the composition/development of your sketchbook, entries are encouraged to be handwritten using pen or pencil. You are also encouraged to use of other media (paint, watercolor, colored pencil, acrylic, charcoal, etc) as well to draw and express creative ideas. Similar to working with clay, the craftsmanship, creativity, consistency of the sketchbook is to be taken seriously and implemented for all entries.

The sketchbook should be filled more than **50%** by the end of the course. There should be a **minimum of 30 entries, 15 by midterm and 15 after midterm** at the end of the semester, not including the Issues in Ceramics responses.

The sketchbook does not only serve as a place to draw, but a place in which you make creative inquiries and reflections of the new information you will be learning in regards to working with clay. You have great creative license in your sketchbook. You can collage images, write poetry, creative writing, you can use a multitude of media in your sketchbook such as acrylic paint, watercolor, markers, pastel, pencil, pen - any creative tool/material is up for grabs! Also, there will be plenty of blog entries I create during the semester to respond and reflect on, as well as class lectures, discussions and films.

Please note: do not include any sensitive/personal material in your sketchbook you do not feel comfortable sharing with your peers. You are required to share your sketchbook entries with myself and your peers in class.

ISSUES:

1. Why do we make pots in the first place?
2. What makes a good, honest pot?
3. How can we discover and develop our own pots, voice, vocabulary, and handprint?

1. Why do we make pots in the first place?

What difference does it make to others or ourselves?

Is there any social significance whatsoever?

Or is it mere self-indulgence or escapism?

The first pots had a social purpose, necessity. What about ours? Do we really need to provide the privileged with more stuff to clutter the environment and fill the cosmic landfill?

2. What makes a good pot? A successful pot? What is an honest pot?

A "real" pot, an honest pot is like a person's fingerprint or handwriting (- unique, personal, and identifiable).

What is the difference between a lively, spirited pot and one that is dead, inert, without life (Busy pots are not necessarily lively and quiet pots can sing)

3. What kind of pots do we want to make and why?

How does one search for their own personal form?

How does one discover and develop their own pots, their own personal voice, vocabulary, signature, and handprint?

Each of us brings our own unique histories, personalities, abilities, skills and sensibilities to this incredibly responsive, expressive, plastic, formable and formidable material?

How to become one's own Teacher/Critic? Hone one's skills for being more objective, learning how to see.

Is there any objective way to know if a pot is good and worth keeping or making? How do we look at pots? Others? Our own? What criteria do we use to judge a pot that is good, that works, that sings and continues to live after it has been made?