

Three Rivers Community College
Syllabus – fall 2012
ART161: Ceramics 1 and ART162: Ceramics 2
M / W 9:00 – 11:45
D – Wing – Room 100
Eileen Young, Professor
E-mail: eyoung@trcc.commnet.edu
Office Hours: M/W 1:00-2:00
Open Studio: TBA

In all our objectives, "Our common goal is clear: [to learn how to see.](#)"

Course Description:

This course is intended to broaden the students' understanding of clay as a viable medium for personal visual expression. The primary emphasis is on studio work leading to a portfolio of finished pieces. While experiencing a new material, students will be encouraged to push its limit, take risks, and build to the point of collapse, discard, recycle, and build again. Through observation and trial and error students will be able to foster creative thinking and problem solving skills. Students will participate in critical discussions relating to one's own work as well as the work of others. The class will review historic and contemporary examples of ceramic vessels. Periodically throughout the term, slides or films will be shown to help illustrate what students are learning.

Topics this semester will include:

1. Introduction to clay, the material: where it comes from, how it was formed, how it is gathered, early methods of forming clay objects, pinching, coiling, and wedging.
2. Introduction to the potter's wheel: centering the clay, forming bowls and cylinders, trimming on the wheel.
3. How sculpture is made with clay: slab construction, extrusion and texture and raised design.
4. Glazing: the function of glazes, how they are made and simple surface decoration, texturing and coloring clay, slips, englobes, oxides and under glazes, glaze testing and proper application, and health and safety.
5. Firing: what happens inside a kiln, exploring different kinds of kilns (low fire, high fire, wood kilns, raku kilns, oxidation firing, reduction firing, and bisque firing)?
6. Emphasis will be on student work: growth in the medium and ability to create expressive, unified and cohesive three dimensional forms in clay. Students will explore form, the meaning of structure, spatial design, surface, color and light, proportion and composition, and function and content.

Academic Expectations:

- Attend all classes.
- Care about the work you are doing in class. Visit the ceramic studio between classes to move your work along, follow through with assignments.
- Help others in class to succeed, by keeping the studio clean.
- Follow class health and safety regulations.
- Complete a ceramic portfolio showing progress in the medium for a final grade.
- Assignments are graded on craftsmanship, creativity, and visual impact, level of involvement and exploration of the medium.
- All work must be signed and submitted for a final critique.
- A sketch book is required for drawing and keeping track of all student inspirations.

Lateness:

It is essential that students come to class ON TIME. Important information will be given during the first few minutes of each class. Three tardiest are equal to one unexcused absence.

Work outside of class hours:

Students are requested to finish all assignments in the assigned time. You are required to spend a minimum of 3 hours per week in the studio outside of class hours. In any case, consider that your success in developing studio skills will be directly proportional to the time spent in the studio outside of scheduled class time. We will regularly make work that requires drying time between various stages (for example, waiting for a pot to be "leather-hard" before applying a handle). This means coming into the studio outside of class to cover or uncover work to control drying and finish projects begun earlier.

Sketchbook:

Students are required to keep a sketchbook. **Students must bring sketchbooks to every class!** Its purpose is to document your ideas and artistic development. Sketchbooks can be the most useful tool in helping work out ideas and plans before starting projects, and during them.

Each sketchbook should also include all class information, all handouts including this syllabus, and notes from class lectures. If students ever find themselves with extra time extra effort can be put into sketchbook assignments. Students are never limited to just your class assignments - extra effort in the sketchbook demonstrates that one is learning to think like an artist. Boredom is not allowed in this studio – boredom is only for boring people. There are no 'good' or 'bad' sketchbook drawings. **Just have fun!**

Supplies

25 lb. Clay
Dry cleaning plastic
Tools and apron
Collect different item that have texture
Drying towel
Sketch book

Field trips:

One or more field trips will take place during the semester.

Evaluations and Grading:

- Work will be evaluated at midterm and a final critique will be scheduled at the end of the semester. Grading of studio work is necessarily a subjective process – however, the following points will give an idea of the criteria I have in mind and their relative importance in determining a grade.
- Generally, I will be looking for evidence of involvement with the problems presented; the dedication and effort apply to them, and the quality of 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. Workmanship therefore is an important part of the final grade.
- I will appreciate evidence of original thinking and of awareness of the possibilities of the medium.
- Individual research is also a very important part of student work.
- Proper handling of studio tools and equipment and correct safety and maintenance procedures are considered. Participation in studio maintenance and clean up is essential.
- Participation in the critiques and the capability to verbalize ideas and concepts are also important components of final grades.

Grading will be based on the following:

Assignments and Projects - 60%

Studio Conduct - 15%

Attitude and Class Participation – 25%

The final grade will be determined by an overall judgment of the professor.

Studio Rules for Your Health and Safety:

- **DO NOT use machinery unless you have been instructed in its use by the instructor of the course.**
- Please consider your well being and those around you when working in the ceramic studio.
- Wear a respirator when working with dry glaze materials or spraying glazes and while sweeping.
- Wear gloves and safety glasses or face shields when required.
- Do not sacrifice your safety for your ceramic work; you can make another piece but you cannot make new hands.
- Tie long hair back when using the wheel, grinder or other rotating tools.
- Do not have long fingernails; they can cause hand injuries.
- Do not put fired clay into the clay 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.
- Do not wear flip-flops or sandals in class. Wear only closed toed shoes.
- Never touch kilns unless authorized by the instructor.
- Do not use 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.

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, **no exceptions**. Please use appropriate language that is respectful to your peers.

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 (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 as soon as possible to ensure timely accommodation.

Inclement weather

In the event of inclement weather, students should check the college website at www.trcc.commnet.edu there will be a message on the main page indicating whether or not classes are held. 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 may 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. Nonpunitive "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 are allowed during studio work time, but should be kept at a low volume. Music cannot be played allowed during class. 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 or another student's class time. You can take one 15 minute 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 a 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 during it.

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 consulted in the library. Make sure you take some time to do this.

Suggested Reading:

Periodicals:

Ceramic Monthly. 1609 Northwest Blvd., Columbus, Ohio 43212
"The world's most widely read ceramic arts magazine"

Studio Potter. Box 172, Warner, New Hampshire 03278
"Studio Potter is a magazine for the community of potters everywhere. It is written by potters and directed toward fellow-potters who earn their living by making pots..."

American Craft. American Craft Council, 44 W. 53rd. St., NY, NY. 10019

Books:

Making Marks: Discovering the Ceramic Surface. By Robin Hopper, 2004

The Craft and Art of Clay. (3rd Edition) (Paperback), by Susan Petersen, 1996

The Potter's Book. By Bernard Leach, 1988
This is a definitive "classic" work which set the stage for the revival of clay craft in Europe and America.

Pottery Form. By Daniel Rhodes, 2004

Clay and Glazes for the Potter. By Daniel Rhodes, 2000

The Human Form in Clay. By Jane Waller, 2001

The Potters Hand Book. By Glen C. Nelson and Richard Burkett, 2001

Hand Building Ceramics. By Kathy Triplett, 2000

Shaping Silence: A Life in Clay. By Robert Turner, 2003