



ART 290 Intro to Ceramics

Fall 2019

ATLAS M. RODRIGUEZ-DECKER
Location: Studio Arts 107
Time: Mon/Wed 9:15AM-11:45AM

Office: Studio Arts 116
Office Hours: TBD or by appt.

Contact:
Phone: 781.507.6455
Email: amrodriguezdecker@gmail.com

New Ideas come from differences. They come from having different perspectives and juxtaposing different theories.

Nicholas Negroponte

Ceramics is a multifaceted art form that allows the artist to push boundaries to their limits. Working with clay gives you an opportunity to investigate history, science, social studies and culture while discovering your own path as an artist. Using clay as a tool can also have it's own challenges – hard work, patience, experimentation, and risk taking is required.

Don't play it safe. Challenge yourself. Push yourself to discover and accomplish more than you ever thought possible. It's worth the struggle. Where it will lead you, is yet to be determined. Take advantage of every opportunity even if it doesn't seem necessary, important or related to what you are doing now.

The more you do - the better the work will be. Due to the nature of ceramics, you will have pieces that either break or that you are not satisfied with your glazing decisions. These are reasons to be as productive as possible. Use your time and skills wisely. In the end you will be much happier with your final results. Remember that the hardest piece is always the first piece. If you make a second version of the first, it will go 50% faster with 90% less problems. All the learning happens in the first piece. In the second piece, you know what you are doing and you will do it much better with greater results.

I look forward to working together and going beyond what we know right now. Ask questions, take risks and have fun.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Non-majors are introduced to both the fundamentals of working with clay, and the fundamentals of an artistic practice. What does it mean to think with and through a material? Process and an engaged investigation will be emphasized, with strong encouragement for experimentation and creativity. This class has a required consumable student fee of \$95.00. This fee must be paid by the drop/add date of Friday, February 22nd. If you do not pay this fee you must drop the class by drop/add date.

COURSE CONTENT (ASSIGNMENTS)

Clay is a great material to explore design, function, and where they intersect with abstraction and personal interest while developing skills and critical thinking. We will be addressing issues about clay as a material and working through basic building techniques.

Course Projects Include:

- 1) **Past and Present.** Inspired by researched works from ancient civilizations such as Africa, Peru, China, Japan, Korea, and Mexico, as well as contemporary ceramics. Students learn about coil building, and pinching techniques in order to create clay 12" 'vessels'.
- 2) **Narrative Tableware.** Using the table as a landscape, utilitarian forms are explored in order to both fill this landscape while expressing narrative. Narratives can be conveyed through form and/or surface and mixed media is encouraged to "set the stage" for the final presentation on the table.
- 3) **Self - Directed Research Project.** Students will do research on a subject of their choice that they find inspiring. Using the building techniques learned throughout the course (coil building, wheel working, extrusion, slab building) and the surface techniques demonstrated (slips, underglazes, glaze, resist, mishima, sgraffito) propose and create a set of at least 3 pieces that convey your interpretation of your chosen subject.

The following is a list of course exercises:

- 1) **Pinching:** Explore a range of mid-range clay bodies through the act of pinching clay.
- 2) **Coil Building:** Building method using hand-rolled coils of clay combined with the "score and slip" method of attachment.
- 3) **Extrusion:** Using the hand-extruder, extrude a variety of shapes from logs of clay.
- 4) **Slab-Building:** Using either a rolling pin or the slab-roller in the classroom, create compressed sheets of clay that can be used to build forms with, create tile work or use with slump molds.
- 5) **Wheelthrowing:** Using the pottery wheel to create functional and non-functional forms.
- 6) **Surface Techniques:** Explore a variety of surface techniques including resist work with wax/tape, carving into slip-covered clay (sgraffito), slip inlay (mishima), painting, mono printing, stencils, and decals.

REQUIRED SUPPLIES

Sketchbook/Notebook

Basic Clay Tool Kit: (metal and wooden rib, pin tool, wooden tool, sponge, trim tools, wire tool)

Additional Tools:

- sharp knife / fettling knife*
- flexible rubber ribs
- dish towel*
- serrated rib or fork, comb, old cut credit card*
- stamps/textural items for impressing into clay
- bucket for tools/water*
- small rolling pin
- apron
- sketchbook
- selection of inexpensive brushes for glazing (bamboo handled brushes are ideal for glazing)

some of these items you can find at goodwill down the street or at the bookstore, a couple of these you might have to either find on amazon, or order from <http://www.theceramicshop.com/>

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course addresses the following ART290 COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- *Recognize the expressive possibilities of clay and the ceramic process*
- *Independently and collaboratively construct three-dimensional objects using a variety of ceramic techniques*
- *Find, compare, and discuss a wide range of art through written art appreciations*
- *Interpret space, scale, and materiality through individual studio work*
- *Describe, evaluate, and speak articulately and critically about one's own work and the work of others in group critiques*

COURSE STRUCTURE

Each class period will be filled with demonstrations as well as personal work time. The last 10 minutes of class is reserved for cleaning. There will be a WEEKLY department-wide bisque firing, that is loaded on Tuesday, fired on Wednesday, and UNLOADED on Thursdays. Students develop and execute work within a number of specifically designed projects. Students will be responsible for a number of exercises and keep a journal of class information. Technical information is focused on hand building, wheel throwing, slip and glaze application as well as a few kiln firing techniques. Lectures and discussions are focused on historical and contemporary ceramic work that is relevant in conversation today. Informal one-on-one critiques and group critiques will take place over the semester culminating with a critique with final projects at the end of the semester. All projects/exercises must be completed for the final critique.

STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED:

- 1) to attend/participate in all class events and activities. Group class time is scheduled from 6:15PM to 8:45PM on Mondays and Wednesdays.
- 2) to complete all required projects on time and ready for critique.
- 3) to come in and work outside of class for at least 2 hours per week.
- 4) to meet individually with the instructor on a regularly basis throughout the semester.
- 5) to keep a journal of ideas and sketches which will be reviewed at each individual meeting.
- 6) to pay all required consumables fees.
- 7) to attend the MANDATORY clean up day at the end of the semester. Your grade will suffer if you do not show up.
- 8) to respect and be considerate of the people, the equipment, and the spaces of the ceramics department.

There is a lot of information to be covered in this course. It is imperative that students be ON TIME as all demonstrations will be at the beginning of class, in order to give students time during class to experiment with the techniques and ask questions. IF YOU MISS A DEMONSTRATION, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO GET INFORMATION FROM EITHER A CLASSMATE OR MYSELF.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This class meets twice per week. No more than four (4) absences per semester will be permitted if you taking the course for credit. You are expected to inform your instructor prior to missing any class and to make up any missed assignments during an absence. Attendance will be taken at the start of every class at 6:20PM. If you are continuously late, this will count against you. If you are late more than 4 times, it will count as an absence.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

- Absences on religious holidays listed in University calendars is recognized as an excused absence. Nevertheless, students are urged to remind the instructor of their intention to be absent on a particular upcoming holiday.
- Absences on religious holidays not listed in University calendars, as well as absences due to athletic participation or other extracurricular activities in which students are official representatives of the University, shall be recognized as excused absences when the student informs the instructor in writing during the first two weeks of the semester of these planned absences for the semester.
- Absences are also considered excused if ill and a doctors note is provided.

COURSE ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION and GRADING

Students receive feedback and suggestions throughout the semester, concerning the development of their ideas and research in progress. Students must critically explain their research. Comments will encourage students to expand their experiences and knowledge of art, ideas and materials while also delving deeply into a personal relationship with their research. If a student, is not challenging themselves to broaden their base of critical thinking, and awareness of historical, contemporary and cultural context, they risk failing the course.

Grading art is unlike grading other subjects in that there are no wrong answers. Grades will be based on:

- Idea (25%): What you chose for your sketch, how original it was, and how technically challenging the piece is.
- Effort (25%): Did you use your in class work time wisely? Do you spend time out of class in the studio?
- Execution (50%): How well did you execute your idea? Is your piece well made? Were your surface decisions well thought out? Do you feel like the piece is successful?

LATE WORK will only be accepted on a conditional basis.

COURSE RESOURCES:

- There is an extensive selection of books and magazines on ceramics and ceramic artists in the library. Please take the time to explore these resources and be inspired.

WEBLINKS:

www.accessceramics.org

<http://artaxis.org/index.html>

<http://www.designboom.com/>

Museum Resources

Museum of Art and Design / NYC

A Visual Database of Contemporary Clay Objects

An Evolving Network of Independent Artists

Contemporary Innovations in Design ... search Ceramics

Cooper Hewitt Museum / NYC

<http://madmuseum.org/>

<http://www.cooperhewitt.org/>

Everson Museum of Art / Syracuse NY

<https://www.everson.org/home.php>

Arizona State University Art Museum

Ceramics Research Center <http://asuartmuseum.asu.edu/ceramicsresearchcenter/>

Metropolitan Art Museum

<http://www.metmuseum.org/collection>

Princesse Hof Museum / Netherlands

<http://www.princessehof.nl/>

Fall 2019 WEEKLY CALENDAR

AUGUST 28:

- Handouts: Announcements, Calendar and Schedule
- Sign training certification
- Correct contact list
- Talk about semester expectations
- Assign shelves

Demo: Pinching techniques and using the slabroller

DUE NEXT CLASS:

go onto <http://accessceramics.org> and explore its different features. Begin to note artists that you find interesting. Pick 5 artists you find inspirational and email me images of their work **no later than 9/3 at 9PM!**

Also visit JSTOR or the library and select 2 historical options that you might like to work with. Email a photo and note historical information.

Either bring sources to class or send to amrodriguezdecker@gmail.com no later than 2/18 at 5:30PM. Be prepared to share sketches/discuss your ideas one-on-one with the instructor.

Be prepared to speak informally in class about the above.

SEPTEMBER 3: **Introductions and Project #1: Past and Present**

- Discussion of Assignment
- Sketch in class
- brief class introductions with images

Demo: Coiling techniques

DUE NEXT CLASS: begin work on first project

SEPTEMBER 5: **In class work on Project #1: Instruments**

- One on one discussion with instructor on progress of forms and research done

DUE NEXT CLASS:

have at least 2 elements leather hard and ready for attaching.

SEPTEMBER 9: **In class work on Project 1**

- One on one discussion with instructor on progress of forms

Demo: Extruder and plaster molds

DUE NEXT CLASS:

have at least one form in progress and be prepared to work on it in class.

SEPTEMBER 11: **Last day to work on Project 1**

Demo: Color and Surface: slips and underglazes, introduction of surface techniques including resist, mishima and sgraffito

DUE NEXT CLASS: have all forms finished in the green stage.

SEPTEMBER 16: **Presentation of Project 1: Past and Present**

- class critique
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SEPTEMBER 18: **Introduction to Wheel Throwing**

Demo: Using the pottery wheel to create cylinders

DUE NEXT CLASS: 6, 6 inch cylinders thrown on the potter's wheel.

SEPTEMBER 23: **In class practice: wheel throwing**

- complete cylinders

Demo: Using the pottery wheel to create bowls, jars, and closed forms

DUE NEXT CLASS: Bring in your favorite mug, dish, or plate from home. Be prepared to discuss what makes it your favorite in regards to function, form, or surface.

SEPTEMBER 25: **Introduction to Project 2: Narrative Tableware**

- brief discussion about favorite objects

Demo: Using the slab roller to produce slabs, templates, and slump and hump molds.

DUE NEXT CLASS: sketch/brainstorm ideals for project 2

SEPTEMBER 30: **In class work on project 2**

- practice wheel throwing

Demo: Using the pottery wheel to create plates and non-functional forms. Piercing leather hard forms.

OCTOBER 2: **In class work on Project 2**

- one on one discussion with instructor

DUE NEXT CLASS: have all forms close to finished.

OCTOBER 7: *In class work on Project 2*
DUE NEXT CLASS: *have all forms finished in the green stage.*

OCTOBER 9: *Last day to work on Project 2*

OCTOBER 14: **Presentation of Project 2: Narrative Tableware**

- group critique
- introduction of final project

OCTOBER 16: **Introduction to Glazes**

- *brief presentation on colors in glazes*
- *look at glaze books in class*
- *fill out recommendation cards*

Demo: glazing techniques and spray booth

OCTOBER 21: **Introduction of Final Project**

- expectations
- sources

Demo: hollowed out sculpture

DUE NEXT CLASS: *one page, double spaced proposal for your final project sent to me by 1:00PM 4/17!*

OCTOBER 23: **Work on Final Project**

- *one on one meeting with instructor about final project*
- *approval of proposals*

OCTOBER 28: **Work Day** *Demo: sculptural slip and relief carving*

OCTOBER 30: **Work Day**

NOVEMBER 4: **Work Day**

- *introduction to raku*

Demo: TBD

DUE NEXT CLASS: *make sure all work to be raku-fired is glazed and ready for the kiln by 8:30 AM on 11/11*

NOVEMBER 6: **Glaze Day**

- *begin glazing all remaining work and make sure all work that needs firing is put onto the appropriate shelving*

NOVEMBER 11: **Raku during class**

NOVEMBER 13: **!!!!!! LAST DAY FOR WET WORK IN CLASS !!!!!!** *You must stop producing work by the end of the week*

- *make sure all work that needs to be bisque fired has been placed on the appropriate shelving*

NOVEMBER 18 & 21: **GLAZE GLAZE GLAZE** *All work must be bisque or glazed and put on the appropriate shelf for firing*

NOVEMBER 25 & 27: **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

DECEMBER 2: **FINAL CRITIQUE - ALL WORKS NEED TO BE COMPLETED AND GLAZED (PROJECTS 1-3, AND DEMO SAMPLES)**

DECEMBER 4: **LAST THOUGHTS, PHOTOGRAPH WORK**
Shelves must be cleaned out and work removed

All finished work must be picked up by December 6 12PM