ARTS-3324.001 Intermediate Ceramics: Spring 2018

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Center For the Arts room 116, M/W 9:00am - 11:50am

Office Hours: M/W 3:30 - 4:30 (or by appointment)

Office: CA 116

Course Specific Information

- Course description: This course is an introduction wheel thrown ceramics. It is designed to teach you, or allow you to learn, to throw, and to throw a variety of forms that conform to a dogma of "good" form. It is not the instructor’s belief that these dogmatic criteria for what truly is good or beautiful are effective, but conforming to certain criteria will bring about pots that are functional, teaches the new potter to get accepting of what is easy, train the eye, and train the hand. In short this course takes the philosophy that good art can be built on skill and training. The course will further your understanding of glazes through lectures and testing and will expose you to historical and contemporary functional pottery.

Stoneware clay and slips will be used. Most work will be glazed and fired to cone10 in reduction or soda. Students will prepare clay and will mix clay as needed during the semester. Students will use the gram scales and will learn to prepare glazes. Students will learn to unload and load bisque and glaze kilns. Lectures on glaze materials and glaze composition will be given.

- Student Learning Outcomes:
  1. Competence in basic throwing techniques, skills and forms, to increase surface application skills and develop a palette of glazes and/or slips.
  2. Increased surface application skills and to develop a palette of glazes and/or slips.
  3. Increased competency in loading of kilns and more understanding of firing.
  4. Additional awareness of historical and contemporary functional ceramic art.
  5. Exposure to glaze materials, theory and glaze testing

Time Commitment
This is a time intensive class. It is near impossible to do all the work for the class during in class times. Part of this is because learning to throwing relies on learning hand-skills. Hand-skills are best learned if practiced daily. If you come for just class time your skill level will likely advance to only a very low level. It will be frustrating and not very productive.

Drying pots to an appropriate hardness for trimming, covering, attaching handles etc. probably cannot be accomplished within a two day a week schedule. Plan on stopping by the studio to cover and uncover pots as needed.

**Graded activity:**

**All assignments should have your initials incised or stamped into the clay. Bats holding your pots may also be marked with slip.**

**Read Syllabus and class materials completely. Read the appropriate parts of the Lab Handbook. You might be tested on the safety material contained in the pages "Basic Safety Material, and Safety Agreement"**

- All ceramics students **must** be a member of the Ceramics Listserv and read their email M-F. Email may be checked in CA 201. Students should send an email to Louis.Katz@tamucc.edu with "Join Ceramics" in the subject line. Please include your real name and not just your email account name. Students not having an email account can get one on campus. When you join you will be given a link to our list archives. They may be of interest.
- All art students **should** belong to the Art Listerv. You may join by sending your name to Louis with "Join Art" in the subject line. The listserv has departmental information and announces shows and other art community events. It is also a place for discussions of art issues.

**Assignment One**

- Throw five cylinders at least six inches tall. They must have relatively even walls and a flat floor. Make prints of these and get them checked off. This assignment is strictly a completion grade. Remember that the ability to throw a good cylinder is determined by looking at the entire body of work at the end of the semester. Finishing this assignment is required before moving on to Assignment two.

**Assignment Two: Tumblers**

- Five tumblers at least six inches tall. These can be made in any style but must be functional. They also need to be done as sets. Now since we are making fifteen, they don’t all have to be done as one set. You can make two or three sets.
- The cylinders should have walls with even thickness of 1/8 - 1/4 inch thick. Thinner is acceptable but even walls is an important goal. Evenness is more important than thinness. Weigh your clay and keep your ball size constant. Work
to get the floor the same thickness as the wall. Learn to use the wooden cutoff tool to produce a neat bottom edge.

- The bottom edge should be smoothed when the pot is leather hard. The center of the bottom should be tapped to cause it to curve up slightly.

- If you slide your pots onto a board, make sure it is a clean unfinished (no paint) wooden board and not a plastic bat. The wood will draw water from the bottom of the pot and dry it. After the pot has sat on the board a short time (1 hour or two) come back with your wire and recut but do not attempt to cut it off with a wire again after it has sat on the bat for more than three (?) hours. The wire will rise up and may slice through the floor.

- Rims. You are learning to make "good pots". **Rims are perhaps the most important part of a pot after form, maybe even more important than form.** A good rim serves the function of the pot. In pouring pots such as pitchers and teapots the lip that is poured over may have a sharp edge to prevent drips, but this makes the lip prone to chipping. In all other forms including cups the rim should be rounded. You probably do not want a rim that will cut your lips. Use a balloon or chamois on the rim and make it round and a pleasure to put against your lips. Often anemic rims can be saved by good use of a chamois, but learn to leave a little meat at the top of your walls to make the rim from.

**Your learning objectives** in this assignment (and most of all the other assignments) are to begin thinking about the process of making the same form a number of times. This is done to train your hands to do your bidding and not the clay's. It will also train your eye to start picking up the subtle differences between each like form. It helps to edit pots that don't meet your criterion also. Not all pots thrown will be fired.

**Assignment Three: Cups with handles**

- Five drinking vessels with pulled handles. This means make many more and keep the best. These will be done in three sets.

- The vessels should have walls with even thickness 1/8 - 1/4 inch thick. Thinner is acceptable but evenly thick walls is an important goal. The pots **may not be trimmed.** Weigh your clay and keep your ball size constant. Work to get the floor the same thickness as the wall. Learn to use the wooden cutoff tool to produce a neat bottom edge.

- Dry the pots just to the stage where handles can be pulled on them without distorting them. The wetness is critical. Too dry and the handle may crack at the upper attachment, to soft and the pot will distort.

- The handles should be pulled with soft aged clay. If the clay is only 2 days old, don't bother. You can always use slop dried on a board or bat. Wedge it well. Roll your carrot on dampened canvas or on Formica. If the surface of the carrot is dry the handle will crack when it is bent. Score and slip the pot with rather thick slip. Do not slip the carrot. This is one of the purposes of using wet clay. Make sure
you roll the carrot onto the pot to expel air. Before you begin to pull have a tad of slip on your serrated rib for attaching the bottom of the handle after pulling.

- The dogmatic "good handle" has an attachment that looks like a branch leaving the trunk of a tree. There is a much thicker attachment than the cross section of the handle. The bottom attachment is more flexible. It can look like the top or be thinner. Only bend the handle once. If you bend it twice or try to correct the curve it will loose the freshness of its spring. Practice making handles before you try them on your good cups.
- The bottom edge should be smoothed when the pot is leather hard. The center of the bottom should be tapped to cause it to curve up slightly.
- **Learning objectives** in this assignment is to further the understanding from assignment one and to learn the aesthetics of handles in relationship to a pot.

**Tips**

- You can practice handles on bricks, cans, or some other non-cup that you are not going to keep. It is much easier when the stress is lower. When you can do three in a row without screwing it up, start with your worst cup. Start practicing pulling handles early.

**Assignment Four: Teabowls**

- Throw ten teabowls and trim feet on them. Sets are not required in this assignment, but if you find a form you enjoy see if you can repeat it. Ample clay must be left on the bottom for trimming (at least 3/4 of an inch, if your pots are wobbly, more). These pots should be dried to trimming stage slowly (at least 3 days). If the pots have dried quickly (less than two full days), they should be placed tightly under plastic and allowed to become evenly hard. You may NEVER trim bone-dry pots for use in this class; they must be trimmed before they are bone dry. It makes too much dust. **Pots trimmed bone dry will not count towards a grade in this class.**
- Feet should be trimmed so that the outside of the form conforms to the inside with even walls. The foot-ring should be out far enough to give the pot a steady stance, and should be tall enough that there is at least 3/16’s of inch clearance between the body of the pot and the table.
- Experiment with types of forms, surfaces, rims and feet.
- Teabowls are a standard form in the United States for loosening up you’re throwing and starting out a new body of work or when in school a new semester. They need not take more than a few minutes each to throw.

**Tips**

- Make sure your pots are the right hardness to trim. Do not dry them too quick. If the outside is stiff and you trim into soft clay you have dried them too fast. It will take at least four days to dry pots well to trim them.
- This assignment does not require great skill in throwing but it does require that you learn to trim. Leave enough clay at the bottom of the pot to trim good feet.
- Practice trimming early. See the exercise below. If you are having trouble, make sure the pot is centered before trimming and keep the wheel speed up around what you would use for opening.

**Assignment Five: bowls**

Throw three round bottom bowls and trim feet on them. Successful bowls will have continuous curves, well trimmed feet and considered rims. They will have even walls and well-sized and detailed feet.

**Tips**

- Learn the sequence required to get a smooth inside curve with little hump or slump.
- Concentrate on the curve of the floor.
- Trimming is easier when the curve is smooth
- Aged clay really helps with bowls.

**Vocabulary Self Study**

Students should learn to identify the following styles, kilns, and artist's typical work:

- Shoji Hamada
- Bernard Leach
- Michael Cardew
- Peter Volkous
- Richard Notkin
- Akio Takamori
- Rosalie Wynkoop
- Linda Arbuckle
- Clary Illian
- Gail Nichols
- Historic:
  - Shino
  - Oribe
  - Shigaraki
  - Leach school
  - The Archie Bray Foundation
  - English Slipware

GRADE BEFORE ATTENDANCE_________________
GRADE AFTER ATTENDANCE

For a grade of A student must:

- Complete all studio practices.
- Finish all objects satisfactorily. At least three must be excellent.
- Demonstrate all skills satisfactorily. At least three skills must be excellent.
- Student can’t have more than three absences.

For a grade of B Student must:

- Complete all studio practices.
- Finish all objects satisfactorily
- Demonstrate each skill except integration satisfactorily.
- Student can’t have more than five absences.

Excellence in any one part of a group offsets an unsatisfactory in that group

Grade of C

- Complete 2 of three studio practices
- Finish all but two objects satisfactorily. Student must complete all but one of the objects.
- Demonstrate all but two skills satisfactorily. Must show competent use of glaze.

Projects that are finished by the end of the semester but do not meet wet finished or glaze deadlines will be marked unsatisfactory

- All student grades after computing by this method will be adjusted per the attendance policy.
- All work must be available for review during the final exam period

More Requirements

- Use of Campus email system.
- Having a "HEPA" type respirator for dusts and mists for use in class
- Having a pair of rubber gloves available for glazing
- Completion of all projects assigned.
- Preparation of clay. Mixing may take place outside of class time. Do not plan to mix clay during beginning class time.
- Participation in loading, firing, and unloading of group kilns, and preparation of clay
- All project work and outside work to be graded must be available for review at the end of the semester. Due to space limitations finished work may not be stored in the ceramics studios. If work will not fit in lockers, students must make other arrangements for safe storage—i.e., take work home, etc. Again, all work must be available for review at semester's end.
- Each Advanced and Intermediate ceramics student may be put in charge of a bucket of glaze. They will be responsible for keeping it full, the sides scraped down and keeping the consistency appropriate.
- Tests: students may be tested on class information, lectures, vocabulary and reading assignments.
- Studio Hygiene and Safety: read, sign, and hand in student agreement, attached. Students using equipment or materials in an unsafe manner may be prevented from using the ceramics facility even if this results in a failing grade. All students are required to clean up their work areas before leaving the studio and do other studio cleaning as necessary.
- RESEARCH— to enrich their own work, students should:
  - Make a habit of looking at Ceramics publications. -Become familiar with The Library's large collection of Ceramic titles and periodicals. Search under subject headings Ceramics, Clay and Pottery or head for the stacks.
  - NOTEBOOK—Students are required to keep a notebook with all class information, all handouts including this syllabus, results of glaze tests, and notes from class lectures. It should also contain the Class Work Sheet. Students will be expected to have this notebook in the studio every day in class with a writing implement (It is not acceptable to leave it in your locker). The presence of the notebook may be checked during the final exam. The notebook must contain a complete set of class handouts including this one.
- Participation in critical discussions

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is mandatory for your success, will be recorded during each class session and is considered as part of the professionalism element of your final grade.

- You will lose a single letter grade on your fourth (4) absence.
- Five (5) absences will result in the drop of another letter grade.
- Six (6) absences will result in the failure of the course.
- Three (3) late arrivals or early departures will result in the recording of one (1) full absence.
- Students are required to attend class for the duration of the scheduled time or until the Professor dismisses the class.
- Attending critiques are mandatory.

STRONGLY SUGGESTED TEXT
- A Potter's Workbook, by Clary Illian, University of Iowa Press. You can get this book used for about fifteen bucks on Amazon. In my opinion it’s one of the best out there.

SUGGESTED TEXTS:

- Ceramics Monthly Magazine PO Box 12448 Columbus Ohio 43212
- A POTTER'S BOOK- by Bernard Leach. A classic, this book was the inspiration for many of these centuries’ greatest potters. It has some very good basic information, but is better as an expression of a philosophical stance towards pottery. The part "Towards a Standard" is an important read for those who are serious.
- CERAMICS, A POTTER'S HANDBOOK- Glenn C. Nelson, Fifth Edition very good general text, especially about technical topics. You should have read this or a similar text in the beginning and intermediate class.
- HANDS IN CLAY- Charlotte Speight, Has the most information about contemporary and historical ceramics, along with technical and technique oriented information.

TOOLS: HEPA Respirator, notebook & rubber gloves REQUIRED. Any respirator with a HEPA cartridge for dusts and mists should work. The Cartridge must say HEPA. My suggestion is a Mine Safety Appliances respirator from the bookstore or from Home Depot. Buy it as soon as possible preferrably before the second day of classes. Make sure the respirator is not a small or large unless you have a very unusually large or small face. Filters often come separate. These respirators are often available from Home Depot but may need to be ordered online.

If you don't already own a potters tool kit, bucket and serrated rib, buy them. The bucket should be big enough to really clean your hands but not so big that it is too tall to get your hands inside of. Mark all your tools with a permanent marker.

This list is intended only as a guide- you may find you need or want other tools.

- A small 2"X 4" piece of real chamois attached to a fishing float or a long balloon. The chamois is better than the balloon.
- Brushes for slips and glazes. You will need a fine brush for labeling glaze tests. If you want to see catalogs to order from, ask.
- Thin plastic drop cloths (.03 mm) for covering work.
- Work clothes: You might want to keep a change of clothes that you can get very dirty in your locker, also closed top, sensible shoes. You cannot mix clay or use potter's wheels wearing sandals or high heels or loose clothing or hanging jewelry. See student agreement.
- Hair control devices: long hair must be tied back when using potter's wheel, mixing clay, using the grinder, or firing kilns.
- Scarf or cap: to cover your hair when mixing clay or glaze, sweeping, or other dusty jobs.

- The last day for wet clay work is approximately 2 weeks before reading. This day is determined in consultation with all instructors near the end of the semester.
- The last day for glazing work is approximately 1 week before the first ceramics final.
- Final due date for all assignments is beginning of the final exam period.
- Finals. Problems with these times should be discussed with your instructor during the first week of classes.

Provisional Calendar

Studio Schedule

Project Calendar

January

17W  Orientation
22M  Assignment One
24W  Studio Practice
29M  Studio Practice
31W  Studio Practice

February

05M  Studio Practice
07W  Assignment Two: Tumblers
12M  Studio Practice
14W  Studio Practice
19M  Studio Practice
21W  Assignment Three: Cups with handles
26M  Studio Practice
28W  Studio Practice

March

05M  Studio Practice
07W  Studio Practice
12M  Spring Break
14W  Spring Break
19M  Assignment Four: Teabowls
21W  Studio Practice
26M  Studio Practice
28W  Studio Practice

April
02M  Studio Practice
04W  Studio Practice
09M  Assignment Five: bowls
11W  Studio Practice
16M  Studio Practice
18W  Studio Practice
23M  Studio Practice
25W  Studio Practice
30M  Studio Practice

May
02W  Last Day of Class
09W  Final 8:00 – 10:30

23 April Last day to set work outside for bisquing
30 April High Noon, Last day to set out work for glaze kilns
11 May 1:00 PM Final Studio Cleanup

Daily demos, lectures or critiques as humidity and firing dictate
Two weeks before Reading day is the provisional last day for wet clay work.

One week before Reading day is the provisional last day for glazing.

The last day of finals is the last day to remove work from the studio before it is subject to being thrown out.

BREAKAGE, LOSS, FIRING ACCIDENTS Ceramics is fragile, firing is difficult and full of unknowns, especially in a group situation. It is inevitable that some pieces will be lost, broken, or misfired. While losses are regrettable they will happen. The faculty and TAMU-CC cannot be held liable for such accidents. Students should handle work carefully and as little as possible. All work must be marked with a student's initials or stamp.

- LOCKERS: See the Art Office (CA107) to reserve a locker in the hallway. You will need one. The sooner you get one the closer it will be to the studio. If you wait there might not be one available.
- STUDIO HOURS:
  - You may use the Ceramics Lab any time when the building is open except during class time for the other sections of Ceramics or during floor cleaning.
  - The class will involve work in the studio outside of class time.
  - The building is open many nights and weekends. Check on the front door, or with the building supervisor for details. It may be closed Thanksgiving weekend and Labor Day weekend and MLK day.
- CALENDAR: Ceramics is a time sensitive medium. Allowing projects to dry slow and even makes work less prone to cracking and easier to manipulate. Consequently work completed late in the semester will have a greater chance of cracking in the drying process. It is often possible to finish a piece in a small fraction of the time it would take to do it in one week if you spread the work out.

Approximately two weeks before final exams will be the end of the time when wet clay can be used. (This date is different in the summer). This date is not fixed until a month before the end of the semester. If most of the work in the studio is already bisqued a few more days of wet work can be added. If little has been bisqued a few more days for firing will be needed and there will be less time for wet work. Even with this two week lead, objects made the last few days for wet work will need to be small if they are to survive the fast drying necessary. Roughly one week before finals will be the last time pots can be glazed. This will occur during dead week. The exact date for the last day for wet work is determined by the amount of work in the studio still needing to fire at the end of the semester.

Occasionally there is too much work to fire in the last week. If the work was glazed before the last day to glaze and it was on the racks to be fired before the
last day for them to be placed there it will be graded as if is was glaze fired. Work still needing firing may be brought back into ceramics at the beginning of the next long semester for firing. It may not be left in the studio between semesters. Work left in the studio between semesters will be thrown away.

Required statements:

**Grade Appeals**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/index.html](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

**Disabilities Accommodations**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Academic Advising**

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any
amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information, please call 361-825-3466.