ARTS-5312.001 MFA Studio in Art: Ceramics
Room CA112
Spring 2020

Hours:
Do not work in the open studio during other classes times without asking the instructor.
These times are:

TR 09:00-11:50AM
TR 03:30-06:20PM
TR 12:30-03:20PM

Events:
Spring Break, March 9-13
NCECA Conference, March 24-28, 2020
Bountiful Bowl Rockport, February 8

Stable Information and Teacher Information:
- Name of Instructor: Katz, Louis
- Office phone number: 361 825-5987
- louis.katz@tamucc.edu
- Office number and building: CA105A
- This syllabus is subject to change.
- Louis Katz Office Hours. MWR 1:30 - 3:10

1. Graduate students MUST be a positive safe practices example for undergraduates at all times.
2. Power tool use is limited to times when there is another person (a spotter) present.
3. Graduate Studios must be mopped at least once a week to keep dust down.
4. Other than bisque firing, all firings should start by informing your instructor.

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 (CA105) 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 fired 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 it 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:

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.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, 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.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. 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. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf.

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.
Dropping a Class
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. **Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.** Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

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.
- Missing the final exam (note the date and time on the top of this syllabus) is separate from other attendance. By itself it will lower your grade by one letter. Your work will still need to be presented in order to be given a grade above an ‘F’. If there is an emergency, communicate.

For graduate students this is more flexible but I expect them to be available for discussions and demos throughout the semester. Because this class is stacked, on many days attendance will not be needed and we will meet outside of class time. The student will need to communicate about daily attendance if they are going to miss a class.

**** Because art studios use materials and tools that could be dangerous, safe and cooperative behavior by students is absolutely necessary. The studio course instructor will be the ultimate judge of cooperative as well as safe and unsafe behavior. Individuals engaging in uncooperative and/or unsafe behavior will be cautioned and instructed once by the instructor. If a second occasion of uncooperative and/or unsafe behavior occurs, that student will be un-enrolled from the course and given a “wd” with no refund of tuition and fees. (per Dean Richard Gigliotti)
---end of required statements

Classroom/professional behavior
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Statement of Civility
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high-quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state
and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful
and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual
orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be
tolerated.

Statement of Academic Continuity
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be
held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, this course might continue
through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be
modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites,
and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus.
However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary
means of contacting each student.

Final Exam (Critique): by appointment with committee first semester with faculty.
Students generally have the responsibility to arrange this. Attendance at stacked
undergrad crits required.

(student learning outcomes)

This is a Graduate Level Course. Commitment, hard work, and responsibility are minimal
expectations. Ceramics is a demanding media, requiring skill, technique, technical
understanding, knowledge of an art history not widely taught, and an aesthetic different
from other media. Students with concentrations in ceramics will be expected to gain
expertise in all of these areas. Students will build a substantive body of work, cohesive
yet broad. They will become the expert on their own work, its historical antecedents, and
contemporary relatives, its formal characteristics, and content. (Undergraduate students
usually find that the instructor knows more about the roots of the work and formal
aspects than the student, sometimes this even includes content. By graduation the MFA
student must be able to show that they are the preeminent expert on their work.)

(MFA Students concentrating in Ceramics) The Work. Work for this course must be
reviewed by the instructor at least monthly, preferably less formally weekly (summer
weekly). Partial pieces, sketches, typed verbal descriptions of ideas, and finished work
may be presented. Firing or other finishing should take place throughout the semester
unless the work demands otherwise. Working rhythm is important to all work,
particularly ceramics which transforms radically in firing and normally requires drying
time.

1. Writing.
   o At the beginning of the semester the student will outline their plans in
     writing conceptually rather than numerically. "I will investigate
     asymmetrical platter form" is better than "I will make 10 platters".
     Numerical goals never address quality sufficiently. These plans are not
     contracts for specific work. They are just tools to help provide quick focus
     at the start of a semester. Plans change.
   o Each semester in Ceramics the student will be asked to write a short
     document on some aspect of their work. Its roots, where it is headed, what
     it says, its conceptual stance etc. The statement is due the first day of
     finals week. Unless otherwise stated, the aspect of their work discussed is
     the student's choice. This statement may be identical or based on
statements required in other courses during the same semester. This assignment is upgraded by itself but will add information for the evaluation below.

2. **Technique.** During graduate school the student will fill in any gaps in their undergraduate education. In terms of technique, the graduate student specializing in Ceramics should be able to work in all the basic handbuilding techniques, throwing (even if minimal), make molds and slipcast, and make extruder dies and use them. The graduate student should come with experience loading and firing oxidation and reduction kilns and should have experienced some form of vapor glazing or solid fuel firing.

3. **Understanding** of the students place in the body of contemporary ceramics and history roots.

**Methods of Evaluation**

The primary responsibility of the student is to work towards a successful thesis. It is not required that all areas of this are brought forward at the same time, just that timely proportional progress is made. Some semesters parts of the requirements will make more progress than other parts. This is expected. For more information see the MFA Thesis Requirements on this website and the separate departmental requirements.

A. These parts of the student's grade that are tied together and create a make or break criteria for a student's grade.

   - Quality of work. A graduate student's work must be at or above the level of an undergraduate BFA. When admitted in the area of ceramics the student will have demonstrated the ability to do this.
   - Effort. A student whose work has fallen from the quality demonstrated on admittance into the program must be working hard to improve the work regardless of other criteria for a grade.

B. Each semester the student through critique, papers, discussions and the art work demonstrate substantive progress in:

   - Clarity of work
   - Cohesion of ideas
   - Personal direction of work
   - Formal understanding of aspects of the work
   - Understanding of its content
   - Understanding its place in the genre of ceramics and in the field of art in general

Each of these areas will be marked as:

   - no progress,
   - limited progress,
   - significant progress
   - sufficient for thesis exhibition

   - It is expected that at least three of these areas will have significant progress in order to be granted the grade of A
   - Significant progress in two areas B.
   - Significant progress in on area C. If progress is limited in all areas but the student is meeting minimal quality and time commitments a grade of C will be given.

Committee Meetings: Students will participate in an end of the semester critique with their committee. The student will negotiate and arrange the time. The committee decides
if and when the student proceeds to Thesis and if the Thesis is approved. For more detail see the graduate art handbook and catalog.

**Technical**
Undergraduate programs do not always provide a technical understanding of ceramics. The graduate student specializing in clay will learn to do glaze calculation as a means to greater understanding of the material. Instruction in simple glaze calculation will be provided along with the undergraduate Ceramics classes. Students will be expected to learn the difference between various categories of glaze materials, how to make substitutions, and how to use glaze calculation software. Graduate students are required to attend technical lectures given to undergraduate students. A more in depth understanding of why kilns fire the way they do, new theories of how reduction works and specifics about firing cycles will be covered.

**Ceramic History**
Ceramics Graduate students will be required to read Ceramic History Survey Texts during their time at TAMU-CC and will be required to study individual periods, countries or styles in addition. Serious online research will be accepted. PowerPoint HTML or slide presentations may be required each semester along with foot noted outlines. The presentations will be given to an undergraduate class. Subjects of these talks will be by mutual agreement or by assignment.

For example:
Fall 2001 - A History of World Pottery - Emmanuel Cooper. Read the text, supplement with other texts as needed. Answer the following questions:

What contemporary or modern well-known potters seem to make work closely descended from:
- Greek or Roman traditions,
- English traditions
- Chinese traditions
- Japanese traditions
- African Traditions
- Native American Traditions

What makes you draw these conclusions? Could someone else justifiably determine that these potter's major influence lies somewhere else?

**Aesthetics**
Students will be required to read books on ceramic aesthetics during their coursework at TAMUCC. These will be discussed in weekly meetings.

**Graduate Students Specializing in Other Media**
Graduate students from other areas may use the class to advance the main body of their thesis work or may use the studio to develop work independent of their main body of work.

**Student learning objectives**
- This is THE major objective. To become the expert on their own work, its historical antecedents, and contemporary relatives, its formal characteristics, and content. (Undergraduate students usually find that the instructor knows more about the roots of the work and formal aspects than the student, sometimes this
even includes content. By graduation the MFA student must be able to show that they are the preeminent expert on their work.

- The student will fill in gaps in their undergraduate education learning, firing, forming techniques and other hands on knowledge necessary to become well rounded ceramists.
- The student will read books, learn about ceramic artists, and pursue research

**Firing.** Advanced students are expected to actively participate in the firing, loading and maintenance of kilns. Washing shelves, cleaning burners and loading kilns are normal skills required in a studio. At the end of the semester you should be able to light our kilns, adjust them for reduction, load them and clean the kiln shelves properly. This will require out of class time.

**Attend technical lectures.**

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

The following assignments may also be used with permission of instructor

**Default Assignments for graduate students specializing in other media (other assignments may be given with mutual agreement)**

For 2-D areas:
- Make a 3-D or Bas Relief version of your 2-D work. The piece(s) should reflect a semester's time, and before application of surface be finished to show quality. Bas murals are often most effective when perspective is forced, fish-eyed or skewed. "Oriental" or vertical perspective techniques are often useful. The mural may have fully rendered components attached or in front of behind or to the side of the mural.
- Three D representations of the work. These are best when not considered as a cube but as objects in space. The objects do not need to be attached together and may be displayed on a pedestal table or floor or attached to a wall.
- The murals or 3-D renderings may be "surfaced" in any manner. However, you should consider that you are making a surface, not necessarily a representation of a surface. Other techniques may be much more appropriate than brush and paint.
- You are responsible for firing your own work with assistance if needed.

For 3-D areas:
- Make a clay version of your work. Use the properties, concepts, and surface qualities of clay to their best advantage. The piece(s) should reflect a semester's time, and before application of surface be finished to show quality.
- Carefully consider how material and process affects you finished product. How can you use clay advantageously?
- You are responsible for firing your own work with assistance if needed.

**Grading:**

These pieces will be graded on the following criteria
- relationship to the students work 25%
- quality of workmanship 25%
- intendedness 25%
- the art of finishing 25%
Students working on development of skills with ceramic materials processes will be graded as follows.

- Development of skill 50%
- Use of skill for aesthetic ends 50%

The taking of a course outside one's area of expertise can have several goals.

**The Studio**
The Ceramics Studio is for students enrolled in ceramics courses to use.

End of the semester firing space is prioritized as follows:

1. test tiles
2. students will thesis shows within the next three months
3. The person loading the kilns work (within some limits)
4. beginning class work
5. undergraduate class work
6. graduate class work

The rest of the year priority will be granted as follows.

1. test tiles
2. The person loading the kilns work. This may not be done in consecutive kilns and other limits may be needed.
3. Students with thesis shows in the next three months
4. beginning class work
5. undergraduate work
6. graduate work

Studio space will be allotted for the use of graduate students for coursework. It will be treated as a privilege. Wheels will be made available for use in the spaces unless there is a shortage for the undergraduate classes. These spaces must be kept clean. Priority for these spaces will be as follows:

1. MFA's in their last year.
2. Other MFA's
3. MA's in their last semester
4. MA's in their last year
5. Other MA's
6. All allotted space is at the discretion of the instructor for coursework. Ample space will be made available for all coursework unless none is available. The ability to store fired work in the studio is limited.

**Access to the Ceramics studio after hours**
Graduate ceramics students may use the ceramic studio after hours when the building is closed. They must either stay or have keys. Doors may not be left open or propped. The studio and building must be left locked and secured. After hour access for graduate students is a privilege that has limits. It may be taken away for violation of rules, safety or even because it has become difficult for the instructor to manage.

**Access to the Ceramics studio between semesters.**
Graduate students are expected to remove materials from the common space between semesters. Work not removed from the common space may be thrown away without warning.
Graduate students specializing in ceramics may use the studio between semesters with the following limits:
The graduate student must be enrolled in ceramics the semester before and the semester after the break. During the break the students must be out of the building 15 minutes before closing time unless they have a key. Kiln firing except for electric bisquing requires approval by Louis each time (if between semesters). Graduate students working between semesters must not be a burden in any meaningful way on the custodial staff. Graduate students must comply with all studio rules and inform Louis of all gas, glaze or wood firing between semesters.
Graduate students using the facility between semesters will be expected to participate in a cleanup the week after the end of the semester and the week before the next semester starts.
Graduate students are not to provide access to undergraduates to work between semesters without faculty permission. They must either stay or have keys. Doors may not be left open or propped. The studio and building must be left locked and secured. After hour access for graduate students is a privilege that has limits. It may be taken away for violation of rules, safety or even because it has become difficult for the instructor to manage.

Wheels owned by graduate students may be kept within the graduate space and will not be used by undergraduates. Wheels left in the common space will be available to anyone who wants to use them. Under no circumstances will TAMU-CC, Louis Katz, other students, or other members of the University faculty and staff be responsible for damage or theft of student owned wheels. Wheels must be kept in a safe condition or be removed. Wheels must be removed before graduation. Hydraulic wheels are not allowed.
This syllabus is subject to change.

Graduate students will attend lectures in the Advanced class and participate in Advanced Class Critiques. They will meet with the instructor at least weekly and show work at least monthly. Graduate students will arrange a meeting with their committee at the end of each semester except their first semester.