

Art 290: Introduction to Ceramics

Class: Tuesday/Thursday 3:30---5:25 PM

Location: Studio Arts Building RM 107

Professor: Abby Donovan

office hours by appointment

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Pay Consumable Fees: <http://www.udel.edu/artconsumables>

Overview

The goal of the clay/ceramics area is to present students with a question: what does it mean to investigate ideas through and with a material? Students at all levels will be encouraged to see how far and wide the possibilities are—with and for—their creativity and the material of clay.

This beginning level course is designed to introduce students to both the fundamentals of working with clay, and the fundamentals of an artistic practice. Process and engaged investigation will be emphasized, with strong encouragement for experimentation and creativity. What does it mean to live and do art? What does it mean to form a three---dimensional object or structure out of dust/dirt/okay let's call it clay?

Objectives

- Recognize the expressive possibilities of clay and the ceramic process
- Construct three---dimensional objects using a variety of ceramic techniques
- Find, compare, and describe an exciting range of art both in discussions and written form
- Interpret space, scale, and materiality through individual studio work

Attendance

As someone kind of funny once said, "Half of life is just showing up," and you'll be amazed at how much better you will do in class by simply attending it. Excessive absences (more than two is excessive) will have a terrible impact on your grade. *****In other words, two unexcused absences will result in your grade dropping by one letter grade, with a half grade drop for for each subsequent absence. And yes, those times coming late/leaving early magically and quickly turn into an absence!

If you have to be absent please try and tell me in advance—or find me the next day/early next week so that your make---up work can be assigned.

Class Requirements

1. Attendance is essential and mandatory. This is not a lecture class so information cannot be found from other sources. Instruction, practice, and peer interaction are the best ways to succeed and progress. Often interaction is a great source of inspiration, as well. Final review and studio clean up are absolutely mandatory.
2. Assignments are due on the date given. Flexibility is at the instructor's discretion, and must be discussed in advance. All assignments must be completed by final review.
3. Class participation is required. In review, you will not only be expected to talk about your own work, but the work of your peers.
4. Cell phones are not allowed to be used during class. If you text during class, I will confiscate your phone.

Studio classes are only 2 hours long. This means you must expect to spend, on average, 4--5 hours a week outside of class time in the studio. At least! But hey, it's your favorite place to be anyway, right?

Grading Guidelines:

If you turn in all your work on time (and if it is satisfactorily completed), attend class and participate, you are ensured a C. A's and B's are based on my evaluation of your effort and reserved for students who excel *beyond* average and competent work.

Or to put it another way:

'A' is reserved for students who exhibit a high level of intellectual investigation, and exceptional performance within the structure of the class. 'A' students use all of their resources, their creativity, curiosity and energy for their work. They are attentive participants in all aspects of studio practice and discussion. They come to class prepared with their tools, reference materials, readings completed, and they meet project deadlines.

'B' students perform at a level of involvement beyond basic course requirements.

If you are worried about your grade at any point during the semester, ask to meet with me. If you *should* be worried about your grade I will send you a friendly but focused warning email with advice on how to improve it and/or I will ask to meet with you.

FAQ

Any student enrolled in this class will have the opportunity to access the studio during open studio hours, which will be posted outside the door by the 2nd week of class.

Class Projects and Schedule

The semester will be organized around projects that will be presented and gone over in class, though it is subject to change/addition. Actual due dates may vary depending on how quickly or thoroughly the class works as a whole. Throwing pottery is not a component of this class.

Key Calendar Dates

- 9/1** 1st day of classes; discussion of studio, go over syllabus.
- 9/3** **DRESS TO GET DIRTY and you must come to class with a tool kit and, preferably, receipt from a paid consumable fee. THROWING WORKSHOP**
- 9/8** You must come in with at least 3 ideas for your first project as drawings, songs, photos, interpretive dance. Bring in whatever remains of your three balls of clay and/or some proof that they did exist at some point. This can be in the form of: drawings, videos, audio testimonials, etc.
- 9/17** **THROWING WORKSHOP**
- 9/24** **THROWING WORKSHOP**
- 9/29** Handout about written art appreciation assignment. **1ST PROJECT DUE (wet stage).**
- 10/6** Demonstration of surface/finishing techniques.
- 10/8** **THROWING WORKSHOP**
- 10/22** **Hand in written art appreciation #1. 2ND PROJECT DUE (wet stage).**
- 10/29** **WORKSHOP**
- 11/19** **Hand in written art appreciation #2. 3rd PROJECT DUE (wet stage).**
- 12/10** **Hand in written art appreciation #3. STUDIO CLEAN---UP PARTY, ALL SHELVES MUST BE CLEARED**

MONUMENTAL/MONOLITHIC

FALL 2015 Art 290 1st class project

Must be at least 20 inches in either length, height, or width. At least! And yes, we will be measuring this.

Think Easter Island. Think Mount Rushmore. What do you need to see monumentalized? It could be:

A trapezoid
An alien
A microprocessor
Dionysius
Your sense of humor
The moon

* You need to think of THREE (3) THREE ideas for this first piece. Bring your ideas to class **Tuesday, September 8th**. And yes, your grade will be affected if you only come in with one idea. If you sketch, bring a drawing. If you don't, bring photos, a poem, the score you've written for the accompanying musical—or some other way to show me what you want to make.

Semester Supply List

Mandatory:

1. Sketchbook
2. Ceramics tool kit from bookstore
3. Plastic container with lid

Optional:

1. Apron
2. Hair dryer
3. Rolling pin
4. Fettling knife
5. Wooden spoon
6. Anything with an interesting texture
7. plastic bags, foam rubber

the fine print:

This course has a consumable fee attached. Consumable fees are optional, but they cover essential studio materials that would be much more expensive if you were required to provide them yourself. In Ceramics these communal studio materials include (among other things): all dry clay and glaze materials, pre-mixed glazes, class clay, propane and cones for kilns, plaster, pre-mixed slip, modeling clay for claymations, dust masks.

****No open-toed shoes or flip-flops are allowed in the studio. SERIOUSLY.***