ARTS 4320
Advanced Ceramics
University of Houston – Clear Lake
Fall 2016
T Th 1:00 – 3:50pm
Arbor N. Building - Ceramics Studio 1200.08
Prerequisites: ARTS 3320 Ceramics

Syllabus

OBJECTIVES
Students will continue knowledge gained in previous ceramics courses, including, continuing to learn to fire kilns as well as mix their own clays, glazes, and slips. Students at this level will begin taking a self-directed approach to making their artwork, developing work that is historically informed, aesthetically considered and expertly crafted. The student will have the opportunity to utilize a number of forming techniques. Students will:
• develop individual approaches to glazing and firing that are appropriate for their work.
• concentrate on a specific area (i.e. throwing, hand building, installation) to achieve excellence.
• learn about historical and contemporary precedents and movements in the field of ceramics
• develop a vocabulary to visually communicate ideas through ceramics.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
This course will be demanding and I expect you to be dedicated, throughout the semester. In addition to finishing assigned projects on time, you are expected to maintain regular attendance, and actively participate in discussions and critiques. You will be fully involved in all stages of making your work—from mixing clay to loading, firing, and unloading kilns. Most of the class time will be dedicated to working on projects, class critiques and demonstrations. However, you will be required to attend certain events outside of class time such as visiting artist slide lectures or seeing work on display in the gallery.

ATTENDANCE
You are expected to attend class everyday. Essential demonstrations and informational instructions will be given in class. Demos will not be repeated if you are absent, and it will be your responsibility to get the missed information from another student before the next class. After three absences your grade will drop for each additional absence. Missing six classes throughout the semester will result in an automatic failure regardless of completing all other course requirements.

In case of an emergency where the instructor is unable to attend class and no substitute instructor is available, an email will be sent out, so please frequently check your UHCL email.

The instructor reserves the right to make appropriate changes in the syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep updated on course information if he or she is absent.

*Syllabus is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion, at anytime.
TIMELINESS
Every three times you come late to class (or leave early) will be considered equal to one absence. If you are more than 30 minutes late, or leave more than 30 minutes early, it will be considered an absence. If you come to class unprepared to work or without the materials needed, you will also be considered absent.

PROFESSIONALISM
During this course I expect you to conduct yourselves in a respectful and professional manner. Attending class everyday prepared and on time, fulfilling requirements and projects on time, and participating in the studio environment is all part of this. Disrespect to fellow students, instructors, or the studio will not be tolerated.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
All UHCL students are responsible for knowing the standards of academic honesty. Please refer to the UHCL catalog and the Student Life Handbook for the University Academic Honesty Policy. Plagiarism, that is, using research without citations, or using a created product without crediting the source, will result in a grade penalty or failure of the course.

COMMUNICATION
I will be available during class for questions, concerns, or complaints. If you need to talk outside of class please talk with me and schedule an appointment or visit during office hours. I am more than happy to help you in any way possible, but it is your responsibility to approach me.

DISABILITY SERVICES
Disabilities: “If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact Disability Services at 281-283-2648 or disability@uhcl.edu as soon as possible and complete the registration process. To ensure your accommodations are in place for the entire semester, please request your accommodation letters from Disability Services and provide them to me at the beginning of the semester. The University of Houston System complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students with a disability. In School of Human Sciences and Humanities accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, each University within the System strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them.”

SAFETY
All students must read the “UHCL Ceramics Studio Safety Document” and agree to abide by all safety protocols. Only currently enrolled ceramics students are allowed to use the facilities, no visitors please. MSDS Sheets detail the hazards of materials we use are available in the studio. There is a first-aid kit located about the main sink. Two fire extinguishers are present, one in the main studio and one in the kiln room. Be familiar where these items are and your instructor will demonstrate their use and specific location. For more details see “UHCL Ceramics Studio Safety Document”. Failure to abide by UHCL Safety protocols will result in the loss of studio access.
STORAGE
There is limited room and space in the studio. Your shelves are for storing work in progress, not for tools (they should be in a locker), storing old work, or projects from your other classes. Work in progress should not be stored in workspaces (on tables or wheels). If you do not make good use of your space, you may lose some or all of it. Label your locker with your name and semester (i.e. Garith Romer, Fall 2016). Store your tools in your locker, not on shelves in the studio.

GRADING
Ceramics is a very process-intensive medium; it is essential that you learn proper technique while developing your aesthetic and conceptual decision making skills. I expect you to devote yourself to working hard in the ceramics studio. The studio is open 24 hours a day (with a proxy card, notify instructor if interested), be in the studio at night, on the weekend, and whenever else you can. Working only during class time is not sufficient to pass this class. Plan to spend a minimum of 5 hours a week in the studio outside class to be successful.

In this class, you will be graded both on your overall progress, commitment, studio responsibilities, and on individual pieces. As advanced students, you are expected to actively pursue your own artistic growth. This means doing more than just completing assigned projects; I expect you to push yourself to grow and develop artistically. Completing all of the assigned projects on time with a reasonable degree of craftsmanship and care, participation in class, and regular attendance including working outside class time are the minimum expectations. Higher grades will be awarded for creative excellence and exceptional dedication.

For every project, you will submit a brief proposal that will include sketches. This will be factored in as part of your grade for that assignment. Assignments are to be completely finished on the due date. Any projects not finished for critiques or turned in late will drop one letter grade and will not be discussed during the class critique.

Students will have the opportunity to address specific challenges or problems with the instructor. This may include discussions of technical, formal, logistical or aesthetic concerns or whatever is relevant to the student at that time. Group critiques will also help the student understand how they are doing and how they may improve.

The course grading breaks down as follows:

- **Studio Citizenship, Participation, and Attendance** is worth 10% of your grade.
- **Sketchbook** is worth 10% of your final grade. (DUE Thur. December 1st)
- **Projects/ Midterm/ Final Critiques** are worth 75% of your grade.
- **End of the Semester Clean-up** is worth 5% of your grade.

STUDIO CITIZENSHIP/ PARTICIPATION/ ATTENDANCE
Maintaining regular active attendance and being actively engaged during in class discussions are essential to continuing to understand course content and your success in the course. In addition you will be responsible for signing up for 1 kiln shift, either unloading, loading, or firing to actively be a part of the entire ceramics process.
SKETCHBOOK

A sketchbook is essential to an artist's process and for this class. Each student must have a sketchbook that is dedicated to this class. You will be responsible to maintain an organized sketchbook throughout the semester and will turn it in at Midterm with a flash drive containing:

- 50 influential images, objects, artworks, and/or artists.

Your sketchbook should be brought to EVERY class. Your sketchbook should contain and will be assessed upon the following criteria:

Project Ideas/Proposals:
Each assignment requires you to brainstorm and sketch out your proposed ideas. These should be clearly labeled for each assignment. Have you completed all of your idea sketches BEFORE each assignment? Do your ideas and sketches seem complete and thought out? Have you created a significantly larger number of idea sketches than you used?

Source material:
Have you collected a large reservoir of source material (drawings, notes, images from the internet/books, text, etc.) to use as a starting point for your work? Is there evidence in the sketchbook of outside creative or technical research (beyond assigned material?) Have you been creative in your collection of source material? Have you been open-minded as to how source material informs your creative work?

Notes:
I will cover lots of information that is difficult to remember during demonstrations and lectures, so you will need to write it down and refer back to your notes later as needed. Also include notes about the conceptual development of your work. Notes on the discussions we had during critiques or during class? (either about your work or others)

Glaze Notes:
When you glaze pieces, keep a written record in your sketchbook (including sketches of pieces) showing what glazes you used. Notes on how that glaze turned out will also be helpful. Include details on application method as well (i.e. Orielly White, brushed, 3 coats).

Handouts:
Any handouts (i.e. syllabus, safety document, each individual assignment sheets) given out during class should be kept in a folder with your sketchbook.

PROJECTS/C R I T I Q U E S

Each project will have a handout with detailed instructions, including specific requirements and timeline (i.e. wet critique & finished critique deadlines). Projects will be more self-directed and able to be customized to individual interests, construction methods, etc.

For Critiques, you will be responsible for demonstrating your progression throughout the project/semester, but more importantly you will be installing final resolved work demonstrating your progression, resolution, ideas, and content/research. Your installation/presentation of the work will be equally weighted as the finished objects. Both should represent professionalism, thought, and intent.

For each critique you will also need to do the following:

• Print individual copies of your artist statement to provide to each student during critique
• Your work needs to be purposefully displayed and set up by the start of class
  • Presentation and set-up will be considered part of your grade
• Prepare a succinct introduction to your work and focus the direction of your critique
END OF THE SEMESTER CLEAN-UP

During class at the end of the semester, time will be dedicated to cleaning the communal studio, equipment, materials, etc. You will be assigned various tasks to complete to get the studio back to the condition it was at the beginning of the term. In addition, you will be responsible for removing all of your work, tools, and materials after our last meeting during Finals Week. Failure to do so will result in your items being discarded and a loss of points for the course.

IMPORTANT DATES (*subject to change)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Critique</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Day to Drop Course</td>
<td>Monday, November 7th</td>
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<td>Wet Clay Cutoff</td>
<td>Friday, November 18th @ 12 Midnight</td>
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<td>NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Break</td>
<td>November 23 – 25th</td>
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<td>Glaze Cutoff</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<td>Sketchbook Turn In</td>
<td>Thursday, December 1st</td>
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<td>Studio Clean-up/ Potluck</td>
<td>Tuesday, December 6th @ 1:00 – 3:50pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Group Critique</td>
<td>Thursday, December 8th @ 1:00 - 3:50pm</td>
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SUPPLIES
The course fee covers the cost of the following materials; studio claybodies, glazes, and firing. You are likely to already own all the tools necessary from other ceramics classes you have taken, but the necessary tools typically run approximately $30.

- Particulate Respirator (rated “N95” or better). Disposable particulate masks can be purchased in the studio for $1. You must have this on hand during class and cleanups. Store your respirator in a clean plastic bag.
  If you are taking ceramics (or sculpture) class again, you should invest in a reusable particulate respirator
- Basic pottery tool kit ($8-10 union bookstore, Ben Franklin, or Hobby Lobby)
- Metal Fork
- Felting Knife ($5 for the real deal, $0.25 for a paring knife that will work just fine from dollar store)
- Sketchbook (union bookstore, Ben Franklin, or Hobby Lobby)
- 1 gallon Plastic Bucket
- 13 Gallon Trash bags, flat bottom for storing mixed clay
- Plastic bags for covering projects in process (13-gallon trash bags or clear plastic drop cloth)
- A small plastic container with a lid (this can be a yogurt container or an inexpensive Tupperware)
- Folder with pockets to contain all handouts and reference material
- Pencil, Pen, Sharpie
- Masking Tape

Optional Tools (as needed)
- Personal Apron
- Good brushes (natural bristle, high “mop” Japanese hake brush or bamboo watercolor brush $3-5 each)
- Metal straight edge/ruler
- Safety glasses (Hardware store, $2-5)
- Latex gloves
- Bat Pins – Sockethead cap screw, stainless, 1/4”-20 x 1.25” and 1/4”-20 wing nut (2 of each)  
  Available at ACE Hardware

Recommended Texts:
Reijnders, Anton/ European Ceramics Work Centre  
Craft and the Art of Clay
Peterson, Susan,  
The Ceramic Process
Hopper, Robin,  
Functional Pottery
Olsen, Frederick L.,  
The Kiln Book
Bayles, David and Orland, Ted,  
Art & Fear

Things To Not Bring/Do: No headphones, no cell phones out on tables, taking phone calls in the classroom, NO TEXTING, no exceptions.
**RULE ONE:** Find a place you trust, and then try trusting it for awhile.

**RULE TWO:** General duties of a student - pull everything out of your teacher; pull everything out of your fellow students.

**RULE THREE:** General duties of a teacher - pull everything out of your students.

**RULE FOUR:** Consider everything an experiment.

**RULE FIVE:** be self-disciplined - this means finding someone wise or smart and choosing to follow them. To be disciplined is to follow in a good way. To be self-disciplined is to follow in a better way.

**RULE SIX:** Nothing is a mistake. There's no win and no fail, there's only make.

**RULE SEVEN:** The only rule is work. If you work it will lead to something. It's the people who do all of the work all of the time who eventually catch on to things.

**RULE EIGHT:** Don't try to create and analyze at the same time. They're different processes.

**RULE NINE:** Be happy whenever you can manage it. Enjoy yourself. It's lighter than you think.

**RULE TEN:** "We're breaking all the rules. Even our own rules. And how do we do that? By leaving plenty of room for X quantities." (John Cage)

**HINTS:**

Always be around. Come or go to everything. Always go to classes. Read anything you can get your hands on. Look at movies carefully, often. Save everything - it might come in handy later.