Instructor: Erik Ordaz
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Phone: 936 244 2256
Office: Open area in ceramics studio

Class meeting time and place: M/W 2:00 – 4:40 pm. Upper Art Building

Credits: 3

I. Course Description:

ART 250. 3 semester hours, 6 hours studio, 6 hours independent study per week. Hands-on practice and study of clay as an artistic medium with emphasis on the potter’s wheel. A thorough study and understanding of throwing techniques to create and design well crafted, thoughtful and poetic vessels. No prerequisites

You will not only learn how to manipulate clay using the potter’s wheel, but you will gain an understanding of clay body formulation, slip and glaze chemistry, glazing and kiln firing so that you can apply and use this knowledge in your own work. We will continue our visiting artist program where a well-known ceramist will visit for two days to lecture, demonstrate, and discuss ceramic issues with you.

The semester will be divided into roughly three equal segments followed by three graded critiques. The emphasis will be on ‘quality’ and how to achieve it in your work. The assignments are not mere projects. Each of your assignments will be a month long, intensive investigation the result of which will be finished pieces of art. The instructor will demonstrate techniques and materials.

II. Program Learning Outcomes:

1. Undergraduate students will demonstrate proficiency in studio foundation skills as they relate to the elements and principles of design.
2. Undergraduate students will exhibit a high level of proficiency in the use of materials, techniques and media.
3. Undergraduate students will demonstrate understanding of contemporary art issues through exploration of synthesis of content, problem solving and creativity.
4. Undergraduate students will define and state knowledge of Art Historical precedents.

III. Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to identify the steps involved in wheel throwing
2. Students will develop technical competency in working with clay
3. Students will explore clay as a medium of personal aesthetic expression
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to construct functional and sculptural work
5. Students will demonstrate the capacity to discern “quality” and how to apply it in their work
IV. **Text and Materials** *(All books are suggested, not required)*

- Clay and Glazes for the Potter, Daniel Rhodes
- The Potter's Dictionary of Materials and Techniques, Frank and Janet Hamer
- Ceramic Science for the Potter, W.G. Lawrence
- Ceramic Glazes, Cullen W. Parmelee
- Mastering the Potter's Wheel: Techniques, Tips, and Tricks for Potters, Ben Carter
- Simon Leach's Pottery Handbook, Simon Leach
- The Ceramic Process, Anton Reijnders
- The Arcanum, Janet Gleason
- Copper Red Glazes, Robert Tichane
- Those Iron Blues, Robert Tichane
- Industrial Ceramics, Singer, Felix and Singer, Sonja S
- Glazes and Glass Coatings, Eppler and Eppler
- Rocks and Minerals, Charles Sorrell
- The Potter's Palette, Christine Constant and Steve Ogden
- A Handbook to Pottery Glazes, David Green
- The Chemistry and Physics of Clay and other Ceramic Materials, Alexandre Brongniart
- Ceramic Colors and Pottery Decorations, Kenneth Shaw

V. **Course Assignments:**

Project 1. Cylindrical vases
Project 2. Bowls, mugs and plates
Project 3. Lidded jars and teapots

Note: the projects may shift gears a bit to accommodate the individual personality of the class

VI. **Evaluation and Assessments (Grading):**

Your grade will be a reflection of your professional attitude in the studio, attendance, research, assignments, participation in class discussions, and finished work graded during critiques.

**Criteria**

**Participation.** You are responsible for your success and you will play a pivotal role in the group dynamic of the class. Therefore, attendance, a strong work ethic, and active participation in all aspects of this course are essential.

**Assignments.** All work must be completed on time and ready for critique. Preparatory work will be taken into account when evaluating your comprehension and effort. The assignments should be completed according to the structures of the project and presented in a professional manner. Don’t expect a full grade for unfinished work.
Sketchbooks will be kept for specific assignments, preliminary work and thumbnail sketches. Outside of class sketching is encouraged. Think of your sketchbook as a creative journal for experimentation and discovery.

Work Days come to class prepared and ready to work. Be present and focused on your work during class time (your behavior is also considered as part of your grade).

Critiques will occur at the beginning of the class as marked on the studio calendar. It is your responsibility to show on time and prepared

Plan on at least 6 hours of out of class work each week.

Studio Habits. Good studio habits are necessary to maintain a clean, safe and healthy working environment. The last 15 minutes of class will be reserved for cleanup. The tools should be cleaned and cared for in a professional manner.

Cell phones must be turned off during class. Headphones are not allowed during class.

Grading

Grades will be given on a standard scale:

A 90-100 = Requirements met with excellent achievement, extra time and effort
B 80-89.9 = Requirements met with good achievement and clear understanding of objectives
C 70-79.9 = Requirements met with average effort and work
D 60-69.9 = Requirements met with minimum effort and careless work
F < 60 = Minimum requirements not met, inadequate understanding of course material

Projects Grades:

Project 1 = 20%
Project 2 = 20%
Project 3 = 20%
Participation* = 20%
Cleanup = 20%

Total = 100%

*This includes and is not limited to research, reports, short presentations or essays, being present and engaged during visiting artists demos and talks, taking part in wood-firing activities, sketchbook, etc.
VII. Student Ethics and other Policy information

Attendance:

The school of Art policy states that attendance is required. If a justifiable absence should occur, it is the responsibility of the student to make up all the work missed. More than two unexcused absences will cost the student a letter grade. Four absences and your grade will drop two letter grades. Three late arrivals (20 minutes) or leaving 20 minutes early will count as one unexcused absence. A student with 5 or more absences will fail the class. If a student misses a critique, it is the equivalent of failing an exam and won’t be able to recover those points.

Studio Hours:

The studio is open 24/7 so take advantage of this open schedule. Students are required to work outside of class time to complete the assigned projects. A minimum of SIX HOURS of outside work is expected.

Health and Safety

The use of raw materials such as clay and glazes can be hazardous to your health. Proper use of the materials will be taught, but it will be up to you to follow the training in your daily practice.

If you are pregnant or should become pregnant while taking this course or have a medical condition that could increase your sensitivity to chemical exposure, it is important for you to take all precautions concerning your own personal safety. While reasonable measures have been taken to insure your good health, there is a risk in the class of exposure to material that could prove harmful to persons at risk. Please contact the professor should you have questions or concerns.

Academic Integrity (A-9.1)

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has
been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54)**

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities**

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

**Student Code of Conduct: Policy 10.4**

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This policy applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the iCare: Early Alert Program at SFA. Information regarding the iCare program is found at https://www.sfasu.edu/judicial/earlyalert.asp or call the office at 936-468-2703.
VIII. Tentative Course Calendar:

Weeks 1 – 4 First Project: Vases, introduction and workdays.
Weeks 5 – 9 Second project: Bowls, mugs and platters, introduction and workdays.
Weeks 10 – 15 Third project: Teapots, introduction and workdays.
Week 16. Finals week

Materials:

The material’s fee you paid at the beginning of school covers the clay, glazes, and kiln firings costs.
The cost of tools will be reasonable. This is a list of the basic things you will need:

- Pottery Tool Kit
- Sketchbook
- Plastic Bucket
- Big Sponge (for cleanup)
- Spray Bottle
- Towel (s)
- Work Clothes (including close toed shoes)
- Lock for locker

You will be informed in advance about exact calendar dates and deadlines. Remember, the clay studio is a communal workspace. The last fifteen minutes of every class will be reserved for clean-up. We will also have a mandatory clean up before each critique and a final clean up at the end of the semester. The instructor reserves the rights to change, delete, or add to the course requirements and schedule at any time.