SFA School of Art

ART 450.001 (CERAMICS II) 10431
Spring 2016

Instructor: Piero Fenci  
Course Time & Location: MW 11:00am. – 1:40 pm.  
Office: 153  
Office Phone: 468-4495  
Office Hours: MW 9:00–11:00 am or by appointment  
Credits: 3  
Email: pfenci@sfasu.edu

I. Course Description:
3 semester hours, 6 hours studio, 6 hours independent study per week. Advanced study of clay as an artistic medium. Levels A – F. Prerequisite: ART 250. Fall, Spring.

II. Intended Learning Outcomes/Goals/Objectives:

Intermediate Ceramics

This course will teach more advanced techniques in working with clay as an artistic medium. The emphasis will be on hand building techniques such as coil building, slab building and mold making, all of which can be used in combination with wheel thrown forms. Throughout the semester you will also be introduced to the principles of clay body formulation, slip and glaze chemistry, glazing, and kiln firing.

Advanced Ceramics

The students in this course will devote their time to developing their own voice. a personal investigation into the creation ceramic art along with research into historical and contemporary ceramics in the art world will be emphasized. The students will focus on making a professional body of work suitable for presentation in a gallery. Further development of the understanding of clay body formulation, slip and glaze chemistry, glazing, and kiln firing will take place under the supervision of the instructor and graduate assistants.

A. Program Learning Outcomes:

1. Undergraduate students will exhibit proficiency in the application of technical and problem solving skills appropriate to their designated concentration, as well as developing individual creativity.

B. Student Learning Outcomes:

1. The student will be capable of unique expression, striving towards excellence in craft and attention to detail.
2. The student will develop technical competency in working with clay.
3. The student will explore clay as a medium of personal aesthetic expression.
4. The student will demonstrate the ability in working on the wheel to construct functional and sculptural work. Analysis of glaze formulation and glazing and firing techniques will be introduced.
5. The student will use the skills earned throughout the semester and will demonstrate the capacity to discern “quality” and how to apply it in their work. Quality is judged by the level of initiative, craftsmanship, intelligence, inventiveness, and dedication to the work being done for the class.

III. Course Assignments:

Intermediate Ceramics

Project 1:

a. Construct a symmetrical “S” curve vessel and an asymmetrical one, both 18 inches or more in height, using coils as the hand building technique. Apply a figure/ground design on the
two vessels using engobes and glazes – naturally the methods employed will be demonstrated by the instructor.

**Project 2**

a. Construct an ossuary using slabs as your hand building technique.
b. Use asymmetry as your design principle.
c. Make 3 different plaster molds from objects you choose, incorporate at least three casted pieces in your project.
d. One of the dimensions in the piece must be as long as a thighbone (of a person or the subject of inspiration), the other dimensions depend on your design.

**Project 3**

a. This last project is free in regards to design and subject matter.
b. You may choose to use one or several of the hand building techniques learned during the semester, or incorporate wheel thrown elements.

**Advanced Ceramics**

After the first semester of advanced ceramics, all projects will be the result of a collaboration between the professor and the student focusing on individual needs of the student, e.g. concentrating on a functional approach (being a potter), a decorative approach (being a vessel maker), or being a sculptor. A contract will be made with each student, and weekly meetings will take place to ensure proper mentoring and instruction, along with three grading periods during the semester.

♦ The students will research Glaze formulation and fire kilns through the semester.

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

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

**Criteria**

- **Participation.** You are responsible for your success and you will play a pivotal role in the growth of your peers. 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 properly prepared for presentation, as if it were installed in a gallery.
- **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). Get your supplies outside of class time.
- **Critiques** will occur the day the project is due.
- **Productivity → quantity, time, effort → is key to your progress!**
- **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 clean up. The tools and equipment should be cleaned after use in a professional manner.
- **Cell phones and pagers, must be turned off 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= 25%
Participation   12.5%
Clean Up        12.5%
Sketchbook /Notebook 10%

Total = 100%

The following will be considered when assessing your performance:

- How well your assignments achieve their objective
- Your understanding of the visual elements and principles, concepts and techniques covered in class, as shown in the work you produce
- Creativity and conceptual innovation
- Craft and presentation
- Attendance and participation, including participation in critiques and discussions
- Effort, ambition and initiative
- Ability to work independently
- Progress and growth

V. Tentative Course Outline/Calendar:

- Weeks 1-5. First Project, introduction and workdays.
- Weeks 10-15. Third project, introduction and workdays.
- Week 16. Finals week.

VI. Course Evaluations:

Near the conclusion of each semester, students in the School of Art electronically evaluate courses taken within the COFA. As you evaluate this course, please be thoughtful, thorough, and accurate in completing the evaluation. Please know that the COFA faculty is committed to excellence in teaching and continued improvement. Therefore, your response is critical!

In the School of Art, the course evaluation process has been simplified and is completed electronically through MySFA. Although the instructor will be able to view the names of students who complete the survey, all ratings and comments are confidential and anonymous, and will not be available to the instructor until after final grades are posted.

Please note, evaluations and suggestions are welcome at any point throughout the semester, either through meeting, email, or anonymous comments left in my mailbox in the art office.

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. A justifiable absence would be assigned MD’s excuse for an illness or a death in the family.
- 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.
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 ensure your safety, 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.

Students with Disabilities

Students who need accommodations for certified disabilities should work through the Office of Disability Services and then your professor.

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/.

Academic Integrity

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 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

Two strikes you are out of policy:

The studio services many classes, so it is important to keep it clean, and the tools and your work in progress in their proper place. If you abuse the privilege of using the studio once, you will be put on probation; if you abuse it twice, you will fail the class.

Acceptable Student Behavior

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 (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). 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 prohibition 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 Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

**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.

**VIII. Readings,** Required Text Books:

- Val Cushing’s technical Manual (will be provided by the instructor)

**IX. Materials:**

The materials fee you paid at the beginning of school covers clay, glazes, and kiln firings costs. The cost of tools will be reasonable, probably under twenty dollars. You may have still most of the tools from last semester.

- Pottery Tool Kit
- Spiral Sketchbook.
- Plastic Bucket
- Big Sponge (for clean up)
- Clear thin Plastic.
- Spray Bottle.
- Scraper.
- Fork
- Towel (s)
- Work Clothes
- Hake Brush
- Lock for locker
- *Respirator

**X. Safety Rules.**

- The equipment can be dangerous, and extreme caution must be exercised at all times. Before using any equipment you absolutely must be checked out by me or a graduate assistant. You must follow the rules, no exceptions.
- Closed toed shoes must be worn in the studio at all times.
- Wear a respirator when mixing clay and glazes, and when scraping kiln shelves – NOTE THAT YOU MUST BUY A RESPIRATOR AND HAVE IT TESTED BY RON KING, THE SAFETY OFFICER; BE SURE TO CONSULT RON REGARDING THE TYPE OF RESPIRATOR TO PURCHASE

PLEASE SIGN YOUR COPY OF THE SYLLABUS SO I KNOW THAT YOU HAVE READ IT AND THAT YOU UNDERSTAND IT.

Signature of Student and date:
Phone Number:_____________________________________
Email:_____________________________________________