ART F201 F71
BEGINNING CERAMICS
Summer 2014  3 credits
Meeting time: M-Th 2-5pm
Fine Arts Bldg room 415
Instructor: Teresa Shannon
Office Hours: by appointment
Phone: 378-0966
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Beginning Ceramics provides an overview of the medium of ceramics and its possibilities through the study of
clay forming methods, glazing and firing.
This class will focus on the basic methods of hand building construction: pinch, coil and slab. Through my
demonstrations and lectures you will become familiar with basic methods of construction, decorating, glazing and
firing techniques. At the end of the semester students should have a working knowledge of various ceramic
forming techniques and an understanding of visual elements and principles of design. You will also learn of the
safe usage of materials and equipment in the studio.

TEXTBOOK: There is no required textbook for this course. There is a required tool list: see below. If you
want to have good basic book on ceramics, I recommend one of the following: Working with Clay by Susan
Peterson; Craft and Art of Clay by Susan Peterson; or Hands in Clay by Charlotte Speight.
I do require you to sign up for an email list from http://www.ceramicartsdaily.org/. They send out several
emails a week with tips on techniques and new artists. This website is a great place to start exploring clay on the
internet.
I may at times direct you to different web sites for videos and/or articles and for some projects you may be
required to do some research either on the internet or at the library.

ASSIGNMENTS: There will be five graded assignments throughout the semester. When I introduce each new
assignment I will give you an assignment sheet explaining my expectations.
#1 Basic Forming Techniques. This assignment is split into 3 small projects that will introduce you to some
basic forming and decorating techniques. This will be the foundation for all your other projects
The remaining assignments will focus on your visual reference for the project. Each one can be
interpreted in many ways from very functional pottery to purely sculptural, depending on your
interest. On the day that I introduce each of these assignments I will provide you with a handout
explaining my expectations for the project. For each project you must plan out your ideas in your
sketchbook and go over those ideas with me before you begin. You can utilize any combination of the
basic forming techniques to complete these projects.
#2 Historical Ceramic Reference: For this assignment you will reference an historic vessel or sculptural object.
You will make two objects: a replica and an interpretation of your chosen historic object.
#3 Natural Reference: For this assignment you will find a natural object and make a piece inspired by that
object. This could be anything from a sculptural interpretation to images on a vessel.
#4 Architectural Reference: For this assignment your inspiration will be architecture. You can reference a
whole building or small details.
#5 Free Choice- for your final project, I will work with you to design your own assignment.

SKETCHBOOK: For each of these assignments I expect you to devote some time to brainstorming ideas in your
sketchbook. Sketch out what you are thinking. These sketches do not have to be great drawings; they are just a
way to help you organize your thoughts. Before you start each assignment I will want to see your sketches.
DEMONSTRATIONS AND LECTURE:  For each assignment I will be demonstrating techniques and/or giving lectures on relevant information. These demonstrations and lectures will usually take place at the beginning of class so it is important that you arrive on time. If you miss a demonstration or lecture it is your responsibility to find out what you missed.

CRITIQUES: We will have critiques at the start of class on Thursdays. You should present your best work from each assignment. Critiques are when I grade your work; they are the equivalent of an exam. Do not miss critiques. It is your responsibility to know when critiques are to be held. You should have your assignment finished and ready for critique at the start of class on critique days.

* If you miss a critique your grade for that work will drop one full letter grade and it is your responsibility to contact me about evaluating your work. *

GRADING:
Assignments will be graded during 5 individual or group critiques held every Thursday. Each project with be graded on the following criteria: Production level and/or completion of assignment: technical skill: progress in skill: effort: creativity and sketchbook.

Your final grade for the class will be based on:
80% Work presented at critique
20% Class Participation.

A: (90-100%) An honor grade; indicates originality and independent work, a thorough mastery of the subject and the satisfactory completion of more work than is regularly required.
B: (80-89%) Indicates outstanding ability above the average level of performance.
C: (70-79%) Indicates an average level of performance and completion of all assignments.
D: (60-69%) Indicates work of below-average quality and performance
F: (59% and below) Indicates failure

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Ceramics is a community activity. Through mixing clay and glazes to firing kilns, you will rely on each other to complete your projects. This part of your final grade will be graded in relation to your fellow students. Each time you mix clay, glazes, load kilns, etc. you will earn 5 points. At the end of the semester those with the most participation points will receive an “A” in participation with everyone else being graded in relation to them. For example, if StudentA has 100 participation points for an “A” then StudentB with only 70 participation points would have earned a “C”

ATTENDANCE: This is a studio art course and there is a direct relationship between your attendance and your success in this class. Attendance is required. I will be taking attendance at the start of each class. If you are late or leave early you will only get half credit for that class. If you have 3 unexcused absences your final grade for the course will drop one letter. Excused absences include only illness with a doctor’s note or official university functions with a note. If you miss a significant number of classes, even if they are excused, you will find it difficult to pass this class. If you do miss class it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. I will allow you to make up 2 absences by attending approved art related functions and writing a 1 page (200 word) response

TOOLS REQUIRED
- Tool packet from the bookstore
- Serrated rib (available at bookstore) or fork
- Variety of brushes
- Small bucket for water
- Large sponge to clean up
- Clear plastic to cover your work.
- Sketchbook
- You may need to purchase additional tools for some projects.
- You might want to have an apron, towel and ruler.
MATERIALS: Your lab fee covers a reasonable amount of clay, glazes and firings for the semester. If you use an excessive amount of clay you may be asked to pay an additional fee.

Mixing Clay: Clay is only to be mixed during class time or with prior approval from instructor. You must fill out the mixing log posted by the mixer each time you mix clay.

**You will be making clay as a class; no special clay bodies will be mixed in this class.**

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS:

- Clean up when you are finished. This means cleaning off the tables with a sponge, sweeping up the floor if necessary, and putting your work away on the shelf. Make sure to cover clay bin. Do not put clay down the sink. Do not leave your work on the tables.
- Leave the studio cleaner than when you found it.
- Everyone will be expected to help mix clay during the semester.
- You are expected to work hard and show progress. To complete the projects you will need to work outside of class time. Expect to spend at least 8 additional hrs a week.
- You will have 24hr access to the studio. Use it.
- If at any time you do not understand an assignment, expectation or use of equipment, it is your responsibility to contact me. Do not use any equipment that you have not instructed in the proper and safe use of by the instructor.
- Absolutely no clay, glaze materials or equipment can be removed from the building.
- Only currently enrolled ceramics students have access to the ceramics studio. This means no kids, spouses or friends. Your friends and family can visit you outside of class time, but they cannot use any materials or equipment.
- No cell phones during class time.
- iPods: you must be able to hear me at all times during class time. You may listen to your iPod on work days as long as you can still hear if I make an announcement. No iPods during critiques or demonstrations. If I feel that it is becoming an impediment to the class I will require that you put them away.

On the final day of class all work must be removed from the studio and lockers cleaned out. Work and tools left in the studio after this date will be thrown away.

Disabilities Services: The Office of Disability Services implements the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and insures that UAF students have equal access to the campus and course materials. I will work with the Office of Disabilities services (208 WHIT, 474-5655) to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities.