



Ceramics ART 209

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Course Description

The Ceramics Course is open to students of all levels and experience, and provides an opportunity for them to work from a creative and exploratory approach, learning not only about techniques and materials of ceramics, but also about the creative process itself, and how a project can be carried from the development of an idea, through to its final realization.

The Ceramics course is about a 'hands-on' exploration of ceramics. Students will learn ancient and contemporary techniques, which they will be able to explore for themselves, in a variety of projects, including vessels, bas-relief, and small sculptural objects.

The main guideline of the course will be the relationship between ancient and contemporary art. This is particularly poignant for students studying in Siena, a city that melds a strong medieval presence with an active contemporary culture.

Students will gain a fair knowledge of Ceramics: the material and its processes. Glazing and firing techniques will be presented, including the technical and chemical aspects. Students will learn to work with several hand-building techniques. They can also learn to use the potter's wheel. Interested students can have the opportunity to explore 'casting' techniques, using plaster moulds.

The course is structured to develop the students' understanding of the material, through a series of exercises, following their development, whilst at the same time, guiding them towards being able to create and realise ideas independently.

Students will work on a variety of short-term assignments throughout the semester, as well as two main projects: a mid-term project and an end-of-semester project. The course fee includes all materials needed for the course; although students may wish to purchase additional materials, depending on the nature of their individual projects.

Fundamental aspects of the course are: learning the technology of clay through direct experience, graphic design objects produced for the intermediate and the final examination, critique and discussion with the teacher about the concepts and reasons behind the project,



exploring connections between contemporary and ancient art of ceramics.

Prerequisites

(none)

Course Hours

Total 5 hrs per week, 50 hrs total. Suggested credits

Student Learning Directive

- To assist students in their on-going artistic development by providing them with numerous opportunities for artistic experimentation and exploration.
- To foster a supportive atmosphere of thoughtful engagement amongst the students, creating a dynamic environment that encourages artistic production, intense critical dialogue, intercultural communication, meaningful reflection, and growth.
- To offer students constructive criticism on their work and offer other forms of feedback, including useful references, such as related artists, writers, or other reference information.

Course Outline

Week by Week Description*

Week One:

- Brief introduction to the course
- Introduction to the ceramics laboratory: equipment, materials & processes (inc basic Health & Safety dos & donts).
- Practical, Hands-on exploration of clay.

Out-of Class Assignment:

Research - images searching, relating to the studio work.

Week Two:

- Discussion of the aspects of previous week's exploration.
- Taking the clay work into the City.
- Hand-building techniques to develop, this and previous week exploration

Out-of Class Assignment.

Begin a research/study/sketch/ideas workbook

Week Three:

- Developing aspects gained from previous two weeks' projects, including out of class Assignment.
- .Development of Hand-building



- Exploring Vessels: what constitutes a vessel
- Out-of Class Assignment: Researching vessels, in historical and contemporary contexts
Incorporating research/study/sketch/ideas workbook

Week Four:

- Discussion on Out of Class assignment
- Vessel-building

Out-of Class Assignment:

- Research – Extending/Pushing the concept of ‘vessel’.
- Incorporating research/study/sketch/ideas workbook

Week Five:

- Finalization of Mid-Term Projects, In class
- Presentation of aspects of research/study/sketch/ideas workbook

Week Six: Mid-Term Week: Mid-Term Projects Due

- One-to-one critique of projects, constructive critique points of approach, method
- Group critique and discussion and constructive.

All students will be evaluated on their mid-term projects, and they will receive a mid-term grade and comments, to be included in their mid-term progress report (listing all mid-term grades and comments for all classes.)

Week Seven:

- Modelling
- Drawing in 2 & 3 Dimensions
- Out-of Class Assignment: free drawing and research on assigned topic

Week Eight:

- Modelling.
 - Drawing
 - Practical Bas-relief work
- Out-of Class Assignment: free drawings and research on assigned topic

Week Nine:

- Bringing together the modelling and drawing projects
- Out-of Class Assignment: free drawings and research on assigned topic



Week Ten: Preparations for End-of-Semester Exhibition

- Portfolio review
- group critique and discussion

Week Eleven: Finalization of students' final projects

Week Twelve: Exam week, Final Critique and wrap-up of students' final projects and reviewing their progress over the course of the semester.

*** Schedule may be changed at the teacher's discretion:** order of weeks switched, timescales extended, project source changed – depending on what the teacher considers most beneficial for the students, including in the case of there being work in an exhibition in the region, which could be used for a project.

Assignments:

Small technical exercises will be assigned throughout the course to follow-up on in-class activities. Such assignments will include experimentations with various techniques. These smaller projects will be evaluated throughout the course, and will be presented on the final day of class as each student's coursework portfolio. The main focus of the course will be students' independent projects, to be completed by the final day of the course. Along with the final project, students will be asked to write a final self-evaluation essay at the conclusion of the course.

Kiln firing:

Students will learn how to pack and fire a kiln for 'biscuit' firing, as and when projects demand.

Textbook and required materials:

Materials will be provided for all in-class activities, the cost of which will be covered by the course fee. However, the course fee does not cover materials to be used for students' final projects and other independent work. The teacher can assist students in finding appropriate materials for their specific undertakings.

There is no required textbook for the course, but students are encouraged to utilize the reference books in the book arts studio. Additional reference materials will be provided as hand-outs, and hyperlinks.



Grading System

Participation 30%

Initial Project 10%

Mid-Term Project 25%

Final Project 35%

The instructor will provide specific requirements and grading rubrics for each assignment with the written assignment description.

Grading scale

| | | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----------|----|----------|----|----------|----|
| 98-100 | A+ | 88-89,99 | B+ | 78-79,99 | C+ | 68-69,99 | D+ |
| 93-97,99 | A | 83-87,99 | B | 73-77,99 | C | 63-67,99 | D |
| 90-92,99 | A- | 80-82,99 | B- | 70-72,99 | C- | 60-62,99 | D- |
| <59,99 | F | | | | | | |

Excursions

N/A

Course Policy

Academic Integrity:

Effective learning, teaching and research all depend upon the ability of members of the academic community to trust one another and to trust the integrity of work that is submitted for academic credit or conducted in the wider arena of scholarly research. Such an atmosphere of mutual trust fosters the free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential.

In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged, and work that is presented as original must be, in fact, original. Faculty, students, and administrative staff all share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at the Siena Art Institute and Siena School for Liberal Arts.

Students with documented disabilities:

Any student who has a documented disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact the instructor as soon as possible to discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and to facilitate the educational opportunity.



Participation and Attendance:

We consider attending class a crucial part of gaining the most from your study abroad experience. For this reason, we allow only **one unexcused absence** per course during the 15 weeks of the program. This means that you are only allowed to miss **one** lesson of each course for unexcused reasons. Reasons for an absence to be considered unexcused include absences related to personal travel (including delays, strikes, missed connections, etc.) or visits from family and friends.

In addition, being late to class on **4** occasions constitutes an unexcused absence. Please also consider that leaving before the end of the lesson or coming back late from a break is the equivalent of an unexcused absence.

Participation and attendance is worth 30% of the overall grade for every class.

Absences due to health-related issues are considered excused if the student informs the professor and office by email or phone before class begins.

No make-up exams or critiques will be considered unless warranted by extreme circumstances [for example, health, family tragedy] supported with proper documentation.

Notes for participation and attendance for studio art classes:

During studio, please respect your colleague's and instructor's efforts to contribute to the studio's work, content and discussions.

Active Participation in all discussions, critiques, reviews, and collaborations is required and counts as part of your grade. Students should come to class prepared to work and bring with them all appropriate supplies and materials. In order for you to be actively engaged, no iPods or similar devices are allowed during the designated class times.

Your grade is also affected by your demeanor and behavior during studio time, scheduled field trips, lectures, and most importantly the level of respect for your fellow students' work during critiques and discussions, and your contributions to the "studio culture."

Your grade will be detrimentally affected by tardiness, unexcused absences, late submissions of work, and incomplete work.

*Attendance is mandatory for each class for the entire class period, as well as for all required field trips and site visits. You are required to accomplish measurable progress when in the studio. **You are not permitted to use studio time for gathering materials, data, equipment, printing work that is due at the start of class, etc.***

All students must participate in the mid-term group critique, the end-of-semester group critique, as well as the group critiques at the end of each unit, during which students projects will be evaluated. (These group critiques are the equivalent of a "test/exam.")

Other than severe emergencies, the school cannot change exam dates. Students may not re-schedule critiques unless they have an extreme situation such as a health emergency.

NOTE: *Punctual attendance and complete work, completed on deadlines is absolutely necessary.*

Grading for studio art classes:

Your work will be evaluated based on its quality, your effort and curiosity, your understanding of readings and lectures, as well as the depth and breadth of your studio projects.

A Exemplary work, which is accompanied by initiative beyond the description of the stated subject. Work which makes evident a significant understanding of the subject, is very well crafted/represented, exhibits conceptual clarity and depth, and displays exploration, open-mindedness, and a willingness to benefit from criticism.

B Very good work which shows an understanding of the subject, displays a conceptual foundation and is well crafted. Shows competence and mastery of skills. Is attended with an open and inquisitive attitude.

C Adequate work which meets the minimum requirements of the subject and course. Shows an understanding of the subject while acknowledging some deficiencies. Shows a reasonable competence of skills and concepts.

D Work, which although complete, does not show an understanding of the subject, and demonstrates deficiencies in the competence and mastery of skills. This work can often be attended with a belligerent or close-minded attitude particularly with respect to criticism and self-motivation. Work in this category, although technically passing, is seen as unacceptable

F Failing work which does not meet the requirements of the problem or course, shows a serious deficiency in the acquisition of skills.

I No incompletes will be considered unless warranted by extreme circumstances [for example, health, family tragedy] supported with proper documentation.

Respectful use of spaces for studio art class:

You are responsible for cleaning and removing any trash or debris after your work and participating in general studio clean-up. It is your responsibility to keep the studio space clean at all times. Please be mindful of others when using the studio: remove all debris immediately following each use and thoroughly clean after yourself. Do not leave any trash, dust or debris in shared studio spaces. Minimize the risk of fire by removing waste materials to a proper trash receptacle, and make sure that work stored in corridors does not block any exits or egress spaces. Do not restrict free movement and accessibility by the accumulation of materials. Aerosol sprays should be used with caution and only on the balcony.



Retests/ makeup tests

All students must participate in the mid-term group critique, the end-of-semester group critique, as well as the group critiques at the end of each unit, during which students projects will be evaluated. (These group critiques are the equivalent of a “test/exam.”) Other than severe emergencies, the school cannot change exam dates. Students may not re-schedule critiques unless they have an extreme situation such as a health emergency.