Course Syllabus: Handbuilding Ceramics 1 CERM 3210-001

Units: 4.0
Instructor: Lauren Gallaspy, Assistant Professor of Ceramics
Class Time: M,W / 9:40am – 12:40pm
Room Number: SCULPT 187
Office Hours: M,W, 12:40-1:30 or by appointment
Office Number: 801.581.8677
Email: gallaspylauren@gmail.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course is designed to give an overview of the working, glazing, and firing of stoneware ceramics. Through the construction of various hand-built objects, demonstrations, lectures, slides, and critiques, students are introduced to the world of contemporary hand-built ceramics.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

Handbuilding Ceramics 1 is for students with little to no experience with clay who wish to develop a basic familiarity with various ceramic handbuilding techniques with an emphasis on material exploration, craftsmanship, and the expression of distinct personal perspectives through clay. Throughout the course of the semester, we will cover most basic ceramic building processes including slab building, pinching, coiling, modeling, additive and subtractive techniques. Assignments will be designed to introduce or advance students’ knowledge of clay and its physical properties. The course will include demos of relevant construction methods as well as instruction on generating ideas for each project. Much time will be spent looking at and discussing historical and contemporary artwork and its significance in the development of human culture. Students should leave the class with some understanding of how ceramic material has been and currently is viewed and utilized as both fine art and as everyday cultural objects, and the basic skills necessary to begin to contribute to that history.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this course, students should:

- Have developed a flexibility with building methods and a creative approach to use of clay in varying states
- Have an understanding of the tenants of good design in particular as they relate to functional ceramic objects
- Have developed some awareness of and ability to discuss current trends and artists in contemporary ceramic arts
- Have practiced translating ideas, notes, urges, and impressions into three dimensions: sketches (both two/three dimensional), written ideas (lists, poems, paragraphs) and/or research (images and words from outside yourself) should precede the initiation of each piece.

- Have developed some sense of how their personal perspectives may be communicated through clay.

- Have developed some technical understanding of clay, clay bodies, and glaze (there’s a LOT to learn; you’ll get a good start).

- Have established some understanding of basic cone 10 firing processes.

**TEACHING, LEARNING, & EVALUATION METHODS:**

Digital slideshows, demonstrations, reading and writing, assigned projects, sketchbooks, quizzes on terms and/or techniques, one-on-one discussions, and personal and group critiques may all be utilized throughout this course for instruction.

A spirit of inquiry, a willingness to research (look, listen, read, write), and a strong work ethic are the core principles of this course. If you are asking questions of me and your fellow students, seeking out outside information and images, and devoting the expected hours of time on given assignments, you are probably doing well in this class. In other words: it is better in this class to explore ideas and techniques with fervor and "fail" than to "succeed" passively and without curiosity. I do not expect everyone's work to be "bold," but I do expect it to be engaging. Powerful work can take any form.

**CONTACT:**
You can reach me most easily by email at lauren.gallaspy@utah.edu.

**CANVAS:**
I will regularly employ Canvas for this course, in particular for updates on or alternations of assignments or assignment due dates. Each assignment description will be posted on Canvas following the introduction of the assignment in class. Slideshows and additional research information will also be posted on Canvas. **You should have your canvas set up to notify you of any announcement/file upload via an email account that you check regularly. When you receive notification of an update, it is your responsibility to read the announcement on canvas and respond/prepare accordingly.**

**FACULTY AND STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

I will explain all assignments and due dates in class. Assignments may or may not be accompanied by a written guideline in handout form. It is your responsibility to take notes.
and to be responsible for any additional specifications, requirements, dates, resources, or ideas that I present in conjunction with the handout.

Students are encouraged to come to me for extra help or explanation about class work if necessary.

A Sketchbook: My Ceramic students will be required to keep a sketchbook (a bound collection of unlined paper). You may use a sketchbook that you use for another class and/or personal use, but you must be able to have the sketchbook available in class daily. You are expected to fill your sketchbook with evidence of your research around (this can take the form of words, images, sketches, maquettes, recorded media, etc.) and contemplation of (how you have engaged with the idea intellectually) each assignment. I take this research seriously, but am giving you, the artist, responsibility for developing your own ways of organizing, processing, and conveying ideas and plans. Occasionally, I may give specific assignments to be completed in your sketchbook. These will be averaged into your participation grade.

COMMUNITY:

- Respect yourself, your classmates, and your classroom—you should always leave the classroom better than when you entered it.

- Please keep liquids closed and food protected from dust during class

- Clean up after yourselves: Artists are often messy people by trade. All of that mess in one room can not only obscure (literally and metaphorically) ideas, but seriously unnerve those artists whose methods are not so messy. When you are done each day, please undo any evidence of your efforts that have not become a part of the piece you are working on. **Your grade may be lowered if you fail to clean up after yourself with consistency!**

- Express yourself, as best you can, with clarity and openness in critiques. Giving helpful feedback is a valuable skill that should be practiced and improved upon within the course of this class.

- All students are expected to maintain professional behavior in the classroom setting, according to the Student Code, spelled out in the Student Handbook. Students should read the Code and know their responsibilities. With those responsibilities come a student’s right to support and assistance in maintaining a climate conducive to thinking and learning. If you do not feel you are receiving that, please speak with me about your concerns.

*Non-Contract Note: The syllabus is NOT a binding legal contract. It may be modified by the instructor when the student is given reasonable notice of the modification.*
*Course Content Note: Some of the images, topics, readings, or presentations in this course may include material that conflicts with the core beliefs of some students. While students and faculty are expected to maintain a strong degree of mutual respect for individual beliefs in this course, we will not be able to avoid talking about things that may be uncomfortable with some. Discomfort and exposure to new ideas is an essential part of the practice of making art. Please consider the nature of the course before committing to take it. If you have a concern, please discuss it with me at your earliest convenience.

*Documentation: At certain points throughout the semester, I may ask your permission to keep exceptional work past the date on which I return graded projects so that it may be photographed. If you do not wish for me to use images of your work in future classes or in a public documentation of teaching and learning, please let me know.

*ADA Statement: The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services. www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/ada/guide/faculty/

*Wellness Statement: Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student’s ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources, contact the Center for Student Wellness; www.wellness.utah.edu; 801-581-7776

TIME INVESTMENT:

Ceramics takes, above all else, patience and time in order to excel.

This is a 4 credit class, and as such requires at least 6 hours of in studio time per week. Since we meet together only 4 hours once a week, you must plan on being in the studio at least two more hours weekly. To satisfactorily complete assignments, you should expect to spend at least 2 to 4+ hours per week outside of class working in the studio. Please see the schedule on the door for open studio times.

ATTENDANCE:

*Daily attendance is required; Attendance is taken into consideration as a part of your participation grade. Important demos/instruction/slide presentations and other essential information is given daily in class. I will not make these up for you as it would be unfair to other students to take away from their time with me to repeat instruction already provided. If you miss a class, it is YOUR responsibility to ask another student what you missed. If you know in advance that you are going to miss class, you should request that a friend take notes for you. If you
are dealing with a long-term illness or personal issue that requires frequent absences, you should inform me of this so I can take your circumstances into consideration.

If you miss a critique, 20 points will automatically be deducted from your grade on that project. You will then have a week to make up the critique. During that time, you may complete your project, place it in a designated area for view by me, and send me an email notifying me of such. You will not receive a verbal critique on a late project. After 7 days, if you have not turned in your project, you will receive a 0. You may then resubmit your finished piece for that project at any time before the last day of class and a new grade for that project will be averaged in with your 0; in other words, the absolute most you can get for a redo on a missed project is a 50.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

- Engagement in the course including consistent preparation for class

- Occasional written exams and quizzes

- Written essays

- Quality completion of assignments by the provided deadlines (see guidelines below)

Assignments may be discussed in a group or individual critique and will be given a letter grade on canvas after the due date. It is your job to ask me for additional feedback regarding your grade. Each assignment will be evaluated in accordance with the specific objectives set out in demonstrations and on assignment sheets.

Assignments will be graded on:

- Craftsmanship

- Conceptual Strength/creativity

- Effort/demonstration of interest in and exploration of the medium

- Development/improvement of abilities

- The extent to which the work addresses the terms of each assignment.

If a student is planning on deviating drastically from the terms of the assignment, I ask that they provide me with a ½ to 1 page written explanation for why they are doing so. If the project deviates naturally, but the piece or pieces are still successful, students will not be penalized.
In short: you will be rewarded for your interest and experimentation throughout the course. You should not be afraid to challenge the expectations laid out for in each assignment, but you should also be prepared to explain your choices in deviating from those assignments.

40% Long-Term Assignments (major projects)

30% Short-Term Assignments (test tiles, sketchbook assignments, written assignments, glaze completion, etc.)

20% Final Project
TBA

10% Class Participation
Show up mentally, physically, and emotionally. Be respectful. Be thoughtful. Be curious. If I give you something to read, read it and be ready to discuss it in class. Complete sketchbook assignments, clean up after yourself.

Extra Credit: Up to 1 point can be added directly to your final grade by watching any of the films listed on canvas and writing a 1-3 page response paper. Additionally, you may see a work of art in person (at a gallery, museum, or public exhibition) and write a 1-3 page response paper describing and evaluating the work based on the ideas and themes we have discussed in class. You can earn .5 points per paper. Extra credit must be turned in on or before the final day of class (EXTRA CREDIT TURNED IN ON THE FINAL EXAM DATE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED). If you have perfect attendance throughout the course (no tardies and no leaving early), your grade will be bumped up to the next grade scale (B+ to A-, A- to A). If this grade increase is earned, it is the only extra credit that you may receive.

My Grading Scale Cypher:

I will assign a letter grade to each assignment in the class. If you would like to know your current grade point average, please give me one day’s notice. The correspondence between letter grades and numbers is listed below as well as an outline of expectations for each iteration of a letter grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94 - 100</td>
<td>A, A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>90 - 93</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87 - 89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83 - 86</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80 - 82</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>77 - 79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>73</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>62</td>
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<td>&lt;60</td>
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a+ remarkably good
a  extremely good
a- very good

"a" characteristics: exceeding requirements of assignment, contributing to class, showing independence in and out of the studio (classroom), leading in group activities, showing spontaneity and enthusiasm, demonstrating marked and growing improvement

b+ pretty good
b average
b- below average

"b" characteristics: accurate and complete in meeting requirement of assignments, good when pushed and stimulated by success, helpful attitude in class, good in a group, showing signs of progress and listening to instruction

c + squeaking by
c  subpar
c- seriously subpar

"c" characteristics: barely meets requirements of assignments, uncertain and difficult to provoke, neutral attitude, lack of enthusiasm in group assignments, no dramatic signs of improvement

"d" things are bad: we need to talk

"f" things have been bad: we need to talk more

**MATERIALS:**

A Lab fee of $75 will cover all firings, most glazes, and some supplies that we’ll be using. You will be responsible for purchasing the following additional ceramic supplies and having them with you at every class:

- a small bucket that you can call your own
-a needle tool
- a few basic trimming tools (loop tools, carving tools)
-an x-acto knife
-a wire tool
-at LEAST 1 ceramic sponge, preferably a round yellow sponge and a softer “elephant ear” or natural sponge
-1 flexible plastic rib
-ruler of at least 12”
-a range of paintbrushes – multiple types and sizes, 3-5
-a medium to large tupperware container with a lid (ie. a large yogurt container over an individual one)
-a hand towel that you will get dirty
-pencils that you always bring to class

You must purchase 1 metal toothed rib directly from me for $3 or from Capital Ceramics or Ceramic Supply USA for $3 or $2.60 respectively.

Clay may be purchased at the cashier’s desk of the student services building. Pay for the number of boxes you will want and then bring your receipt to me at the ceramics studio where I will provide you with the clay. You must do this in advance of requesting clay.

Additional fairly reasonably priced materials (tape, cardboard tube, newspaper, etc.) MAY be required as needed.

recommended but not required supplies:

-small hand rolling pin
-small tip squirt bottle or hair dye bottle
-a slip-trailer, fine point
-a scoring tool
-relief carving tools
-a plastic rib

CALENDAR OF ASSIGNMENTS / TECHNIQUES TO BE COVERED IN THIS CLASS:

WEEKS 1-4
1)  Cups: *pinch *coil *slab & Test Tiles: 20 pinch, 20 slab

2)  Vessels: introduction to concept through functional and non-functional vessels *geometric *organic *non-functional

WORKOUT: found object replication/variation, 10 under 2

WEEKS 5-8
3)  Uncanny Object: recreate a found object with one major alteration *pinch & coil-
building *surface *trompe-l'oeil

**WORKOUT:** engineering structures to maximize weight support, bridge to somewhere

**WEEKS 9-11**

4) Psychological Architecture: construct an architectural space to house an emotion/memory/spirit *slab-building *metaphor *spirit house

**WORKOUT:** texture/surface/scale, 1 : 1

**WEEKS 12-15**

5) Historical Reinterpretation: *coil-building *narrative

*Artist Comparison Essay, Terms/Techniques Quiz, Glazing*

Note: All assignments are subject to change, and additional assignments may be added. Additionally, writing assignments may accompany or supplement material assignments. More specific calendars of upcoming assignments, critiques, slideshows, and demos will be given out over the course of the semester. You will receive ample notification of due dates as they are determined, but the exact nature of assignments as well as time per assignment is subject to change. It is your responsibility to keep up with the class calendar and talk with me and/or other students if you have missed a class and/or an announcement about schedule changes.

### General Calendar Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class schedule available</td>
<td>Monday, September 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr. Day holiday</td>
<td>Monday, January 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presidents’ Day holiday</td>
<td>Monday, February 16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spring break</td>
<td>Sun-Sun, March 15-22</td>
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### Term Length Classes

<table>
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<th>Events</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<td>Event</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classes begin</td>
<td>Monday, January 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to add without a permission code</td>
<td>Monday, January 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to drop (delete) classes</td>
<td>Wed., January 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to add, elect CR/NC, or audit classes</td>
<td>Monday, January 26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to withdraw from classes</td>
<td>Friday, March 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last day to reverse CR/NC option</td>
<td>Friday, April 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classes end</td>
<td>Tuesday, April 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Day</td>
<td>Wed, April 29</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Final exam period</strong></td>
<td>Thurs-Wed, April 30-May 6</td>
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