ARTZ 131A.01: Ceramics for Non-Majors

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Course Information
School of Visual and Media Arts
ARTZ 131A-01
Ceramics for Non-Majors
Number of Credits: 3 Credits
Prerequisites: None
Spring Semester

Class Times & Location
T/TH 11:00 – 12:50
Art Annex, Room 121/128

Instructor Information
Instructor: Megan Foster
Email: megan2.foster@umconnect.umt.edu
Office Location: Art Annex, Room TBD
Office Hours: T/TH 1:00 – 2:00

CERAMICS FOR NON-MAJORS

Course Description: Offered Autumn and Spring. A general introduction to ceramics for non-art majors. Learn a variety of techniques working with clay and glazes. No Art experience required. Not for B.A, B.F.A majors or art minors.

Course Objectives: The purpose of this course is to acquaint the student with clay as an art-making material, and to introduce fundamental techniques of the ceramic process. We will cover various methods of building with clay including solid construction, coiling, slab building, carving and press molds. We will also investigate surface decoration using slips, stains, and glazes. Please note – we do not teach the wheel throwing technique in this course – this is a very difficult skill and is offered in Ceramics 1 and Ceramics 2.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students will be able to:
- Implement and identify various ceramic techniques
- Utilize critical and creative thinking skills to turn ideas into three-dimensional objects
- Engage in thoughtful discussions about art

Course Format: This is a studio-based course in which students will be shown demonstrations and presentations to inform the development of technical skills and creative ideas. Students will work hands-on in the studio and learn through the making. Time in the classroom will be spent learning how to take an idea and turn it into a three-dimensional work of art.

Materials: The lab fee for this course covers all the clay, glaze and firings you will do in this class. It also provides you with a storage tub and access to communal tools and material including rolling pins, paddles, forks, stains, paints, brushes, etc. Students are required to purchase a basic ceramics kit that includes a needle tool, a metal rib, a loop tool, a sponge, and a wire tool. Links to where these kits can be purchased will be emailed to you and posted on the Moodle page.

Grading Criteria: You will be graded against yourself and your own progress in this course. Everyone comes to this class with different skills, so I am most interested in seeing your ideas and how you implement different skills and techniques to make those ideas happen. Attendance, participation, and studio cleanliness are also important parts of your grade. This is a hands-on course,
so it is critical that you attend class and are actively involved. Studio cleanliness is an integral part of studio health and safety, and, as about 150 students use this space every semester, cleanliness keeps the space ready to use for whoever needs it next.

Grades will be broken down as such:

Projects: 200 points
   Project One: 50 points
   Project Two: 50 points
   Project Three: 50 points
   Project Four: 50 points

Attendance/Participation: 50 points
Cleanliness/Studio Cleans: 50 points

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS: 300

Grading Scale: University of Montana Grading Table:

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<th>Grade</th>
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Attendance Policy: As a studio class, attendance is particularly important as demonstrations will occur during class time and much of the work has to take place within the studio. You may have three excused absences from this course. If you are late or leave early three times, that counts as an absence. Any additional absences will result in a half a letter grade deduction per absence. If you need to miss class, leave early, or come in late, please send me an email as soon as possible to let me know. And, please reach out to me if you have an emergency or health issue that will prevent you from attending class for an extended period of time so that we can troubleshoot how to handle your participation in the course.

Course Workload: The workload for this class is reasonable, and if you attend class and stay focused you can get much of your assignments during class. There will be occasions when you will have to come outside of class. Please note that most of work for this class will need to be completed in the studio. The studio will be open daily from 7am to 9pm. Please refer to the schedule posted by the door to check when the room will be in use for other classes. If you need to work and there is class in session, please check with the professor before working in the studio space. Often during a class, you can work at a table in the glaze room. Keep in mind, there is limited space in the glaze room, so if there are no spaces at the worktable or three or more people in the glaze room you will need to come back another time. Please note: Both rooms will be unavailable to work in during scheduled cleaning times. Cleanings are every Thursday and Sunday starting at 7 pm and run for about an hour.

Class Communication: I will communicate important information in person as well as through email and the Moodle page. Email will be used for any communications I need to get to you outside of class time. Please check your email frequently for important updates and reminders. I will post assignment information and resources on the Moodle page as well as important deadlines. The deadlines are also in this syllabus, but they are subject to change. In the event of any changes, I will let you know as soon as possible and make updates to the Moodle page. If you need to reach me, please do so via email. I am also available during my office hours if you would like to talk about something face-to-face outside of class time.

Cell Phone Policy: No use of cell phones for calls or messaging during class. (Possible exceptions can be made with prior permission from instructor.) Cell phones may be used during work time for reference images, music/media, and the camera as appropriate. If you are listening to music or other media you must use earbuds or headphones. One earbud is to remain out or the volume kept low so you can still hear the instructor and fellow classmates. Please speak with me early on if you need accommodations in this area. No media use is permitted during demonstrations or presentations.
Studio Etiquette: About 150 students are working in this studio over the semester. Here are some ways to help the studio run smoothly:

- Clean up after yourself. Make sure your workspace and storage space are clean. Clean and return any communal tools.
- Learn the studio and where materials and tools belong and how to take care of them.
- Make sure no clay is left uncovered and take care to conserve materials. Reclaim clay and other materials whenever possible and do your best to minimize the amount of materials that make it in the sink or down the drain. If you are unsure how to take care of a particular material, please ask.
- If you see uncovered clay, cover it.
- Use proper cleaning practices. Ceramic dust can be harmful. Use sponges and scrapers rather than brooms to avoid producing dust. Turn on overhead fans when necessary.
- Plan for clean up time when working in the studio. Leaving yourself enough time before you need to leave will help make sure the cleaning is done properly.
- If you are wearing buds, keep one ear open, or the volume low enough that you can hear your peers and teacher.
- Please don’t talk on the cell phone or play music/media out loud when working in the studio.
- Only interact with another’s property or artwork with their permission. Respect personal space and boundaries.
- There can be no unattended children or animals in the classroom.

Safety Issues in the Ceramics Studio: Some of the materials used in ceramic glazes are heavy metals and should be handled with care. In addition, long-term exposure to ceramics dust is hazardous. Always use water when cleaning clay dust and never dry sweep the floor. If a dusty area needs attention, please pick up any large pieces by hand and use a wet sponge to clear the dust or debris. And, when working or cleaning, make sure the ventilation system is on. Materials Hazard Book (SDS) is located in gray binder, attached to the glaze area. Also, please refrain from eating on or at the worktables.

When in the kiln room, be aware of hot kilns and use gloves if handling hot materials.

If you are feeling ill, particularly if you have any flu or cold-like symptoms, please stay home.

Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code
All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the professor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code.

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- Disclosing exam content during or after you have taken an exam,
- Removing exam material from the classroom or professor’s office without permission,
- Copying any material from another student, or from another source such as the Internet, that is submitted for grading unless the instructor gives you explicit permission to do so,
- Plagiarism, including use of Internet material without proper citation,
- Using cell phones or other electronics to obtain outside information during an exam without explicit permission from the instructor,
- Submitting your own work in one class that was completed for another class (self-plagiarism).

Accommodations
The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and the Office for Disability Equity (ODE). If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability, please contact the ODE at: (406) 243-2243, ode@umontana.edu, or visit www.umt.edu/disability for more information. Retroactive accommodation requests will not be honored, so please, do not delay. As your instructor, I will work with you and the ODE to implement an effective accommodation, and you are welcome to contact me privately if you wish.
Information for Students

Land Acknowledgement
The University of Montana acknowledges that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people. Today, we honor the path they have always shown us in caring for this place for the generations to come.

Inclusion Policies
The University of Montana values leadership, engagement, diversity, and sustainability, because our institution is committed to respecting, welcoming, encouraging, and celebrating the differences among us.

As members of the University of Montana community, we aspire to:
• Respect the dignity and rights of all persons.
• Practice honesty, trustworthiness, and academic integrity.
• Promote justice, learning, individual success, and service.
• Act as good stewards of institutional resources.
• Respect the natural environment.

College of Arts and Media Equality Statement
The College of the Arts and Media at the University of Montana, has chosen to actively pursue equity and access for all persons. In this charge we will be researching, planning, and implementing ways in which our culture can be more accessible, inclusive, equitable, sustainable. It is not enough to be anti-bias in principle without being equitable in action. We will implement these actions organized by a group of students, faculty, and staff across the entire College in an ongoing way.

The SVMA Images Statement
Art scholarship and art practice along with teaching and learning involve a critical exploration of ideas, theories, art-making practices, and art movements that encompass such things as the human body, sexuality, race, gender, religions, and cultures. This course can touch upon any of the above categories with an expectation that students will actively participate in all course assignments, discussions, and tests. Given this information, it is the student’s obligation to determine that the requirements conflict with his or her core beliefs. If the student determines that there is a conflict with his or her beliefs, one of the following actions needs to be taken: 1) drop the class before the last day to drop a course without penalty; 2) meet with the instructor within the first week of classes to determine if an accommodation can be made.

Cultural Leave Policy
Cultural or ceremonial leave allows excused absences for cultural, religious, and ceremonial purposes to meet the student’s customs and traditions or to participate in related activities. To receive an authorized absence for a cultural, religious or ceremonial event the student or their advisor (proxy) must submit a formal written request to the instructor. This must include a brief description (with inclusive dates) of the cultural event or ceremony and the importance of the student's attendance or participation. Authorization for the absence is subject to approval by the instructor. Appeals may be made to the Chair, Dean or Provost. The excused absence or leave may not exceed five academic calendar days (not including weekends or holidays). Students remain responsible for completion or make-up of assignments as defined in the syllabus, at the discretion of the instructor.

Food & Housing Insecurity
Any student who faces challenges securing food or housing, and believes that this could affect their performance in this course, is urged to contact any or all of the following campuses resources.

Food Pantry Program
UM offers a food pantry that students can access for emergency food. The pantry is open on Tuesdays from 12 to 5 PM and Fridays from 10 AM to 5 PM. The pantry is located in UC 119 (in the former ASUM Childcare offices). Pantry staff operate several satellite food cupboards on campus (including one at Missoula College). For more information about this program, email
umpantry@mso.umt.edu, visit the UM Food Pantry website or contact the pantry on social media (@pantryUm on twitter, @UMPantry on Facebook, um_pantry on Instagram).

ASUM Renter Center
The Renter Center has compiled a list of resources (https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog) for UM students at risk of homelessness or food insecurity. Students can schedule an appointment with Renter Center staff to discuss their situation and receive information, support, and referrals.

TRiO Student Support Services
TRiO serves UM students who are low-income, first-generation college students or have documented disabilities. TRiO services include a textbook loan program, scholarships and financial aid help, academic advising, coaching, and tutoring.

Students can check their eligibility (www.umt.edu/triosss/apply.php) for TRiO services online. If you are comfortable, please come see members of the teaching team. We will do our best to help connect you with additional resources.

The Writing and Public Speaking Center
The Writing and Public Speaking Center provides one-on-one tutoring to students at all levels and at any time in the writing process.

The Math Learning Center
The Math Learning Center has in-person, drop-in tutoring to help students with homework and test preparation needs. Check their website for drop-in hours and location.

UM Information Technology
Get the technology, tools, and services you need, whether you are a student, faculty, staff, or someone partnering with the University of Montana. Visit the UM IT webpage for services and self-help articles, or contact the help desk directly by calling 406.243.HELP (4357) or emailing ithelpdesk@umontana.edu.

Supporting Mental Well-Being of Students at UM
At UM, we value every student’s wellbeing and believe that taking care of yourself is imperative to your success as a student. College students often experience issues that may interfere with academic success such as academic stress, sleep problems, juggling responsibilities, life events, relationship concerns, or feelings of anxiety, hopelessness, or depression. If you or a friend is struggling, we strongly encourage seeking support. Helpful, effective resources are available on campus.

- If you are struggling with this class, please visit during office hours or contact me by email.
- Check-in with your academic advisor if you are struggling in multiple classes, unsure whether you are making the most of your time at the University of Montana
- Reach out for Counseling Support at Curry Health Center Counseling. To make a counseling appointment call 406-243-4712 or go online to the Curry Health Portal to schedule an appointment
- If you feel you need accommodations for a mental health concern, reach out to the Office of Disability Equity (ODE) at 406-243-2243
- If you feel that you would benefit from general wellness skills to support your overall stress reach out to CHC-Wellness at 406-243-2809
- If you have experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, bullying, intimidation, or discrimination contact the Student Advocacy Resource Center (SARC) 406-243-4429 *24/7 support line 406-243-6559
- If you are experiencing a mental health crisis and seeking immediate help, call 911, go to the nearest hospital emergency room or call Campus Safety at 406-243-4000

Please join SVMA social media to stay informed about events at our school. Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/umt_svma/
SEMMER CALENDAR

Thursday, January 18th: Meet and Greet, Studio Orientation, Syllabus Review, First Project Introduction

Tuesday, January 23rd: DEMO Wedging, DEMO Solid Construction, Start Chickens
Thursday, January 25th: Continue to work on Chickens, Surface Decoration Complete by End of Class

Tuesday, January 30th: Continue to work on Chickens, Hollowed and Reattached by End of Class
Thursday, February 1st: Introduce Majolica Project, DEMO Dishes – If not yet completed, finish Chicken over the weekend

Tuesday, February 6th: Continue to work on Dishes
Thursday, February 8th: Continue to work on Dishes – First bisque kiln over weekend, minimum of three dishes ready to fire

Tuesday, February 13th: DEMO Glaze, Continue to work on Dishes
Thursday, February 15th: Continue to work on Dishes

Tuesday, February 20th: Continue to work on Dishes
Thursday, February 22nd: Continue to work on Dishes

*Tuesday, February 27th: Continue to work on Dishes
Thursday, February 29th: Introduce Metamorphosis Project, Idea Development – If not yet completed, finish Dishes over weekend

Tuesday, March 5th: Project Idea Ready at Start of Class, Start on Metamorphosis Project
Thursday, March 7th: Continue to work on Metamorphosis Project

Tuesday, March 12th: Continue to work on Metamorphosis Project
Thursday, March 14th: Continue to work on Metamorphosis Project

SPRING BREAK: March 18th through March 22nd

Tuesday, March 26th: Continue to work on Metamorphosis Project
Thursday, March 28th: Continue to work on Metamorphosis Project

Tuesday, April 2nd: Continue to work on Metamorphosis Project
Thursday, April 4th: Introduce Final Project, Sketching and Idea Development – If not yet completed, finish project over weekend

Tuesday, April 9th: DEMO Coil Building, Continue to work on Final Project
Thursday, April 11th: Continue to work on Final Project

Tuesday, April 16th: Continue to work on Final Project
Thursday, April 18th: Continue to work on Final Project – Last Day to Work in Clay! All Work Must Be Ready to Fire This Weekend!

Tuesday, April 23rd: Continue to work on Final Project – Glaze Only
Thursday, April 25th: Continue to work on Final Project – Glaze Only

Tuesday, April 30th: Raku Firing
Thursday, May 2nd: Last Day of Class: Clean Up and Critique

Tuesday, May 7th: Exam Week: Clean Up and Critique (Time TBD)
Thursday, May 9th: Exam Week: Clean Up and Critique (Time TBD)
CLAY TERMS GLOSSARY:

Bisque: A preliminary firing in which the clay remains porous but will no longer break down in water. A bisque firing is typically done prior to a glaze firing.

Bone Dry: The stage when all visible moisture from the clay has evaporated. Bone dry clay is unfired clay at its driest and most delicate. A drop of water applied to bone dry clay will absorb immediately.

Clay: A broad term for any number of formulations of clay and other materials that can be fired into mature ceramic.

Cold Finishing: Any surfacing materials applied after all firings of the work are complete.

Coil Building: A type of handbuilding technique in which coils of clay are layered and joined.

Cone: A cone is a temperature measurement guide for ceramics. Cones are numbered and each one corresponds to a specific temperature. Different types of clays and glazes are formulated to mature at different cones.

Firing: The process of heating clay in a kiln.

Glaze: A material formed of silica, clay, flux, and often other materials that is applied to clay and fired. In the kiln, the glaze melts and fuses with the clay. Glazes are the finished surfaces most associated with ceramics.

Handbuilding: Any process of making with clay that is not done on the wheel or through casting.

Kiln: A specialized oven used for ceramics and glass.

Leatherhard: The stage when the clay is about halfway dry and resembles to pliability and texture of stiff leather. Leatherhard is often the ideal stage for applying slip or other decoration and is a safe stage to join pieces together.

Press Mold: A mold typically out of plaster or bisque-fired clay into which clay is pressed, allowed to firm up, and removed to create shape.

Majolica: A decorative process for lowfire earthenware in which an opaque glaze is painted with stains and then fired.

Raku: A firing process in which work is removed from the kiln at bright red heat and subjected to post-firing reduction (or smoking) by placing in containers of combustible materials, which blackens raw clay and creates cracks in glaze.

Slab Building: A making process in which rolled out slabs (or sheets) of clay are used to construct the work.

Slip: A sort of liquid clay, sometimes with colorants, that is often used for decoration. Sometimes, slip can refer to liquid clay that is used to help join clay components together.

Sgraffito: An ancient decorating technique that takes its name from Latin words meaning to scratch or to write. With sgraffito, a layer of slip or other pigment is applied and then scratched or carved through to reveal an image.

Solid Construction: A making process in which a form is created out of a solid mass of clay and then hollowed out to remove excess weight, moisture, and air pockets.

Surfacing: Any action made to the surface of a work to alter its appearance.
CLAY FAST FACTS:

Clay behaves differently as it dries: When exposed to air, clay begins to dry. You can slow or speed up this process, but the key thing to remember about clay is that it has its own timeline separate from your own. Certain techniques can be used to keep the clay at the right consistency as you work, but you have to be attentive to the changing needs of your clay in order to be successful. To that point, it is important that you do not let your clay dry out too much while making. Dry clay is brittle, delicate, and often difficult to rehydrate, so it is important to maintain the appropriate level of moisture at each step of the process.

Dry clay dust can be a safety hazard: Clay contains silica. Silica is perfectly safe when wet but can pose a safety hazard if dry and inhaled, particularly with repeated exposure. For this reason, it is important that care be taken when cleaning clay dust. Always use water when cleaning clay dust and never dry sweep the floor. If a dusty area needs attention, pick up any large pieces by hand and use a wet sponge to clear the dust or debris. And, when working or cleaning, make sure the ventilation system is on. Also, please refrain from eating on or at the worktables.

Clay is fickle, but recyclable: Clay can be a finicky material, but it can also be really forgiving. Prior to firing, the only true change in clay is its moisture content. This means that until clay is fired, it can be recycled! Accidentally dry out some clay? Got a piece you can’t fix? Don’t throw it out! This can go into a reclaim bucket to get turned back into clay later! Once the clay is fired though, the structure of the clay has changed, and it can no longer be reclaimed.

Not all clays are created equal: What we generally call clay can refer to any number of clay bodies (or formulations of clay and other materials). Each one is tailored to a specific way of making, and, most importantly, a specific temperature for firing. The firing temperature for a clay body is determined by the point at which all moisture has been removed and the platelets of clay have fully fused together. Underfired clay will retain some absorbency and have a weaker structure, and any glazes that were applied will have poor fusion and have a different appearance or texture than desired. Overfired clay can blister, warp, or even melt if fired too high and glazes will have sometimes volatile and messy reactions! For this reason, it is important that work that is ready for the kiln be placed on the proper shelf to ensure it is fired in the correct kiln.

Not decorative materials are created equal: For similar reasons, materials used for decoration also need to be handled with care and applied at the right stages. There are a number of surfacing materials we can explore in this class including: slip, glaze, and cold finishes such as paint. Slips are essentially liquid clay with or without colorant. Since slip is basically still clay, it needs to be applied early in the process while the clay of the piece still contains much of its moisture. This will allow the clay and the slip to dry together which will prevent cracking and flaking. Glazes are formulated from a mixture of silica (glass), clay, and a flux (helps with melting and fusing). Since glazes contain much more silica than clay, glazes are applied later in the process. Typically, glazes are applied after a preliminary bisque (biscuit) firing and before a final firing to the clay’s final temperature. Cold finishes are decorative techniques that are done after the clay has completed its final firing. They are referred to as “cold” finishes because these materials do not go into the kiln. Some examples of cold finishes would be acrylic paint, spray paint, glitter, and flocking.

Kilns are hot, even on the outside: Kilns, unlike an oven at home, will be hot to the touch on the outside. If you are in the kiln room, be mindful of your surroundings and do not leave any combustible materials (such as paper, wood, coffee cups, notepads, etc.) on or around the kilns.