

Foothill College
Division of Fine and Performing Arts
Art 45A Beginning Ceramics Section 1
Winter 2004
TTh 1230-320pm

Course Syllabus

Instructor: Tom Decker
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General description: *"What can I say that hasn't already been said before by so many others in much better ways?"*

This introductory course should expose you to contact with a material which encourages an exploration of form in space. Use of the hands and simple hand tools as an expressive forming devices will be emphasized in this course. You will engage in physical activity to produce ceramic objects. You will reflect upon these objects as evidence of your activity. This reflection will lead to further development of skill for the sake of expressing your concerns through the medium. Interpret the projects originally, do historic research, become inspired, explore creative possibilities, and try to express yourself fully.

Project assignments: *"Given the intensity of process and limitations of materials, how can I be expected to express myself if I don't already have the skill?"* There will be three projects assigned and a schedule to follow towards the accomplishment of skills. You are required to work in series, i.e., making multiple objects related to the resolution of formal problems and conceptual issues. Within the requirements of the assignments, you will exercise your ability to resolve conceptual issues appropriate to each formal investigation. Each project will have a critique of work in progress, and all projects will be due as finished work for the final critique.

Grading: *"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."* (Aristotle) Grades in this class will be assigned as a result of your expressive development through exploration in the medium. You must participate in the class by coming into the studio and working with the class. The presentation of your work during critiques is mandatory. If you complete all assignments on time and present your work to the class in critique then you will earn a good grade. If you don't have your work done by the critique date, continue to work on the project until you are done and then present it for critique. You will then receive a grade for that work but it will be one letter grade lower than it might have been if you had completed it on schedule. You may continue to work on a project after it has been critiqued (up to but not after the date of the final critique) in order to demonstrate your ability to critically analyze your work and improve it.

Materials and equipment: Tools you'll need include a ceramic tool kit that you can purchase at the student store. You should purchase clay here in the studio. The average amount you'll use is about 75 pounds. You are required to clean up your work area and lab equipment after each use. To ensure safety use consideration and respect for other students and their work. There is equipment in the studio which requires training to use safely and efficiently. Ask for instruction before using any unfamiliar equipment. If you feel that you will be unable to safely undertake the physical activity required in this course please address these concerns to the instructor during your first week of class. Lockers are available to store your clay, and tools, but you must provide a lock and vacate the locker at the term's end.

The ceramics lab is open for your use from 12:30-3:20 pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays. If you would like to use the lab at other times you must enroll in an additional lab class, Art 45L, for 1/2 unit (22 total hours per quarter minimum), or Art 45LX, for 1 unit (44 total hours per quarter minimum). Please respect the right of other instructors and students to use the ceramics lab during their regularly scheduled meeting times.