



Art 865 Problems: Ceramics I

Fort Hays State University
College School of Visual and Performing Arts
Department of Art and Design
Linda Ganstrom

1. COURSE INFORMATION

1.1. Credit Hours	1-3 hours
1.2. Semester and Year	2026 Fall
1.3. Course Prerequisites	Graduate School Acceptance required
1.4. Location of Class	AD 115 Ceramics Lab
1.5. Class Time	5:30 pm – 7:30 pm TTH Zoom

2. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

2.1. Instructor Contact Information

- Name: Linda Ganstrom
- Title: Professor
- Office Location: AD 115
- Office Hours: 8:30 am – 11:30 am TTH, 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm MW
- Email Address: imganstrom@fhsu.edu
- Phone Number: 785-342-3584
- Other contact information: Landline 785-628-4273

2.2 Contact Procedure and Policy:

The best way to contact me is by email. You are welcome to reach me by phone or schedule a meeting with me during office hours.

2.2. About the Instructor:

- BA, MA, MFA in Ceramics from FHSU.
- 32 years at FHSU. 7 years at Barton CC, 5 years USD 350
- Research Areas of Interests: Contemporary and Historical Ceramics

2.3. Graduate Teaching Assistant or Department Secretary Contact Information

- Paige Hyatt, Graduate Teaching Assistant, pehyatt@mail.fhsu.edu
- Lauren Sargent, Office Admin. Assistant, lsargent@fhsu.edu



3. TEXTBOOK AND COURSE MATERIALS

- 3.1. Required Textbook(s): None
- 3.2. Supplementary Book(s) and Article(s): **Blackboard.**
- 3.3. Computer Requirements: Please refer to the [TigerTech webpage](#) to check the requirements. If you have any technical issues, contact FHSU TigerTech 785-628-3478, notify to the instructor.

4. COURSE DESCRIPTION

4.1. Course Description: **Research and experimentation in Ceramics as a major or minor concentration.**

4.2. Regular and Substantive Interaction:

Face to face interaction in a collaborative ceramics' studio offers experiential learning in the materials and processes of ceramics. Presentations, demonstrations, guided practice and constructive conversations help student learn and build conceptual and physical skills.

This course is designed to be taken as many times as necessary to develop a body of work involving ceramics and the professional skills needed by a creative entrepreneur. This course focuses on **artistic production, research, communication, audience engagement and communication.** The study of **ceramic art history and contemporary ceramics** builds a strong visual vocabulary. **Demonstrations and assignments build a broad base of technical skills** related to an understanding of materials and processes in Ceramics. **Professionalism and communication** are fostered. Community and group projects teach cooperation and collaboration.

The student should be increasing independent while expanding and developing his or **her personal voice in clay.** The student should be **designing, researching, and solving problems in concept, form, surface, iconography, glaze, firing and self-expression.** Experimentation, research, and **extensive ceramic production are vital to artistic growth.** Students are required to develop a body of work reflecting a personal style and content, that is worthy of exhibition. Students should be developing professional skills for life as an artist.

The course is tailored to meet the needs of individual advanced ceramics students.



4.3. Recommendations for Success:

Class attendance is key to success. **Independent work outside** of class time is essential growth and developing a studio practice. **Collaborative** work, especially with the kilns is necessary to offer a wide variety of firing opportunities and is dependent on students being prepared and participating during class and throughout the firings. The inability to follow the weekly course structure may distress and overwhelm students due to the **scaffolding nature** of the course structure. This course requires consistent efforts from students to master competencies while achieving personal and professional goals.

Building a **mind life and visual vocabulary** through watching videos, exploring links, personal research, sketching, thinking and writing are needed to prepare for **focusing making** during class time.

5. COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

5.1. Course Learning Outcomes/Objectives:

1. **Concept Research and Development.** The student will learn to research and develop **ideas** for ceramic artworks by viewing professional ceramic art, reading current articles, viewing web sites and books dealing with ceramics and by discussing their personal ideas.
2. **Art Production.** The student will develop a Personal Style, **their way with clay**. The student will develop ideas, concepts, style moves and techniques leading to a significant body of work. The student should be confident in mixing their own glazes and developing new glazes and firing their own work. The student should engage an audience through exhibitions and actively participate in the cultural life of their community.
3. **Knowledge.** The student will become familiar with ceramic technology, terminology, design, equipment, and processes by actively working with the entire process of ceramics. Students need to organize handouts, notes, and sketches. Students will be exposed to ceramic art history; discover ceramic art they connect with and develop expertise in facets of ceramic art history and contemporary art. Students are expected to **integrate this knowledge into their art practice**.
4. **Safety.** The student will be shown the **proper use of ceramic equipment and taught safe ways of interacting with materials and equipment used in ceramics**. The student is expected to use common sense when dealing with **heat, dust, and electricity**. The student is expected to use materials and



equipment in ways that do not harm others. Questions regarding ceramic safety and health issues are encouraged.

5. **Insight.** Students will participate in research, reflection and discussions about their ideas and artwork to develop a **deeper understanding** of what they are creating and **communicating** through their work. Critical conversations will focus on evaluating art production, identifying the strengths and motivations of the artist, imagining ways of improving the technical and artistic value of the student's artwork and discussing future projects.
6. **Inspiration. Ceramic art history and contemporary ceramic art provide inspiration and offers options for solving design and aesthetic problems.** Examples of student and professional work will add to the student's visual vocabulary and develop the ability to see deeply as an artist sees, express oneself and to connect with others through art. Looking to nature for inspiration, defining personal passions as the subject for art, art **travel and attending workshops and conferences** will be encouraged.
7. **Communication.** The student should learn and employ many forms of communication including oral presentations using PowerPoint, written reports, video presentations, and Zoom conversations. Reviews, blogs, articles, social media, and a professional website should be developed by the end of the program. Communicating and connecting to various audiences is a professional cornerstone.
8. **Professional Development.** Students will develop skills needed for a **career in art and a lifetime of creative activity.** Students will be taught to build community and connect with audiences through written, oral, and technological communication. Students will be introduced to the business of art and practice business skills in personal and class opportunities.

5.2. Prerequisites:

Acceptance into FHSU Graduate School (10 hours undergraduate Ceramics minimum)

Art 260: Ceramics I is advised.

Art 360: Ceramics II is advised.

Art 460: Ceramics III is advised.



6. TEACHING, LEARNING METHODS, AND COURSE STRUCTURE

6.1. Delivery Method:

Students should meet each week on Zoom. **Class time should be utilized for demonstrations, presentations, group interaction, critical conversations, artmaking and building a class community through presentations and discussions.** Students should have access to computer technology and will use e-mail, Zoom, Blackboard to assess information and communication. Dropbox, WeTransfer, and Google+ are good applications for sharing large files. A final face to face meeting at FHSU is required.

6.2. Instructional Approach:

Active learning is highly encouraged. The instructor will assist students in learning about the **place of art in self-care and self-expression.** Projects will teach about ceramic materials and processes, outline projects and give demonstrations, then lead students through **hands on projects that develop skills and encourage experimentation.** Students will be instructed in project design and write **personal projects** that expand on the material understanding and processes in the unit. **Collaboration** in developing projects, assessing project success and areas for improvement, firing kilns and studio management is integrated into the course. Students will communicate about art as if **presenting, marketing, or applying for a competition.** Students will assemble their writing and images into a report and develop an on-line presence. Students and instructor will evaluate the success of projects. Community is essential as sharing a laboratory requires each person to be responsible and co-operate while, working, glazing, loading, or cleaning. Communication skills are practiced. **We are a team and a rising tide raises all boats.**

6.3. Course Structure:

Personal series artmaking dominates the course, with **assessment and integration of knowledge and communication through speaking and writing about art** supporting the production phase and the building of an exhibition record. Work outside of class is required to complete personal series and participate in the arts community. The course is divided into two main units, each with a personal series plan and class projects. Class usually begins with a **lecture or demonstration**, followed by **guided practice** then time to go in-depth with the technique or **work on personal series projects.** Students are encouraged to **focus deeply** and get into the **flow** of their work. The lab is open after class Monday, Wednesday and Friday, all day Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. Clay is in barrels in the main lab. Students have 24/7 access to the Ceramics Lab main workroom, the glazing room and the staging room.



Students are **responsible** for cleaning up all areas they used, including their workspace, floor, sinks, clay and glaze rooms, kiln room. If you use something, please return it to its spot. Any artwork or other items such as tools remaining in the lab after class will become the property of FHSU and will be disposed of after the final class meeting. We have an abundance of materials, tools, and equipment if everyone shares and puts things in their proper place. If we keep the lab clean, we can do everything from terra cotta to porcelain, even molding with plaster. Think of the lab as a **medical lab or professional kitchen**. It will get messy and dirty, remember to plan time to clean before you leave.

7. COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is tentative and might change during the semester depending on how the course evolves. The content is subject to change depending on students' interest and progress. Students will be notified of the changes through announcements either in the class or at the Blackboard course site. If time is mentioned in the course, it refers to the Central Time Zone.



Week # & Range of Dates	Topics	Learning Resources	Assignments	Due Date
Week 1 (Aug. 17-21)	Classical Ceramics Personal Series 1,2,3 First Half Pitfire Clay	Presentations Demonstrations Booklet	Personal Plans PS First Half	12-5
Week 2 (Aug. 24-28)	Identity	Workshop Guided practice	MaP	12-5
Week 3 (Aug. 31-Sept. 4)	Origins, Soda work	Workshop Guided practice	MaP	10-6
Week 4 (Sept.9 - 11)	Personal Series MaP	Guided practice	MaP Pit firing	10-6
Week 5 (Sept. 14-18)	Pit firing MaP, PS	Demonstrations Guided practice		10-6
Week 6 (Sept. 21-25)	Soda Fire	Demonstrations Guided practice	MaP Soda Firing	12-5
Week 7 (Sept. 28 – Oct. 2)	Soda Firing Begin second half Personal Series	Guided practice		12-5
Week 8 (Oct. 5-9)	PS1, 2, 3 first Half, MaP Midterm	Guided practice		
Week 9 (Oct. 12-16)	PS Second half, Wood	Demonstrations Guided practice	PS second half	12-5
Week 10 (Oct. 19-23)	PS, Wood	Demonstrations Guided practice	Wood Firing	12-5
Week 11 (Oct. 26-30)	PS, Wood	Demonstrations Guided practice		12-5
Week 12 (Nov. 2 - 6)	PS, Wood, Report	Demonstrations Guided practice		12-5
Week 13 (Nov. 9 - 13)	Bisque, Wood, Glaze	Demonstrations Guided practice		12-5
Week 14 (Nov. 16-20)	Fire and Photograph Wood	Guided practice	Professionalism Report	12-5
Week 15 (Nov. 30 – Dec. 4)	Presentations, Final Reports, Critiques	Presentation. Reports, Crits	Communications Report	12-5
Week 16 (Dec. 7)	PS Second Half, MaP, Pro, Comm Clean, Final	Critiques. Reports		12-5



8. ASSESSMENT METHODS AND GRADING SCALE

There are 1000 points for this course. The grade you earn for this course depends on the total number of points you earn throughout the semester. The assessment methods and grading scale are as follows:

Assessment Methods	How Many	Unit Points	Total Unit Points	Percentage
Personal Series Art: Critique, Report	3	200	600	40
Materials and Processes: Art, Research, Report	1	100	100	10
Professionalism Report	1	100	100	10
Communication Report	1	100	100	10
Ancient Ceramics Presentation	1	100	100	10
Total Points			1000	100%

900 – 1,000 = A (90.00% and above)
800 – 899.99 = B (80.00%–89.99%)
700 – 799.99 = C (70.00%–79.99%)
600 – 699.99 = D (60.00%–69.99%)
<600.00 = U (below 60.00%)

9. STUDENT ASSISTANCE AND RESOURCES

- 9.1 [FHSU Blackboard Student Tutorials](#)
- 9.2 [Student Accessibility Services](#)
- 9.3 [Health and Wellness Services](#)
- 9.4 [Career Development](#)
- 9.5 [Technology Services](#)
- 9.6 [Tebo Library Research Help and Tutorials](#)
- 9.7 [Academic Tutoring](#)
- 9.8 [Writing Center](#)



10. COURSE POLICIES

10.1. Class Attendance:

Class attendance is required. Attendance is the most important factor in improving skill, completing projects and making personal art. **It takes time to learn to make art. It takes time to make art.** If a student must be absent, it is their responsibility to inform the instructor and if excused make an appointment to make up the time and activity missed. School related absences should be discussed in advance. Appointments should not be made during class-time. Illness should be documented with Student Affairs or a doctor's note. Three absences may result in one grade lowered. Attendance will be taken in the first 5 minutes of class. Three tardies will be counted as one absence.

If you are experiencing an issue that is impacting your attendance, please visit with the instructors and work on a resolution. We are here to help you be successful. Communication is key.

10.2. Class Participation:

Do your work to the best of your ability. You get out of your education what you invest in it. No amount of talent can replace hard work. Prepare for projects by doing personal research and sketching. Prioritize your goals and time. Come in and work in the lab when necessary to create excellent art. Set up a studio and work at home. Be persistent.

This course makes the **transition into personally designed and self-motivated art production.** While every effort is made to tailor the course to meet students' needs, their goals may vary greatly, so students will be learning to research materials and skills, as well as finding content for their art together. **We will do class projects in materials and processes. Group activity will revolve around critical thinking and learning to speak about art and working together on loading and firing kilns.**

10.3. Assignment Due Date: Midterm and Final Critiques and Reports

Procedures for Assignment Submission: **Actual artwork** is submitted for discussion and critique at the leather-hard, bisque and glazed stages. **Sketchbooks** are gathered at grading periods. **Reflection Reports** are due at Midterm and Final.

A written illustrated midterm and final **reflection report** includes the **evaluation rubrics filled out, images of completed artwork, caption and text for marketing and reflection, sketchbook.** This report is used in the assessment, communication and reporting phases. Reports are due to the instructor on a Word.doc send by e-mail for



grading before mid-term and finals. A final presentation of all artwork and a PowerPoint is due near the end of the semester.

10.4 Collaboration: Be present and prepared to participate in class activities.

11. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

- 11.1. [Academic Honesty](#)
- 11.2. [Attendance](#)
- 11.3. [Withdrawal](#)
- 11.4. [Title IX Policy](#)