

# ART 45A: BEGINNING CERAMICS HANDBUILDING

## Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
<b>Effective Term:</b>	Summer 2025
<b>Units:</b>	4
<b>Hours:</b>	3 lecture, 3 laboratory per week (72 total per quarter)
<b>Advisory:</b>	This course is included in the Ceramic Handbuilding family of activity courses.
<b>Degree &amp; Credit Status:</b>	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
<b>Foothill GE:</b>	Non-GE
<b>Transferable:</b>	CSU/UC
<b>Grade Type:</b>	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
<b>Repeatability:</b>	Not Repeatable

## Student Learning Outcomes

- The student will be able to demonstrate technical competency in basic handbuilding techniques including coil, slab, wafer and pinch methods.
- A successful student will demonstrate technical competency in glazing these works by implementing glazing techniques demonstrated in class.
- A successful student will be able to demonstrate increased visual awareness by presenting and discussing three dimensional ceramic projects.

## Description

An introduction to basic ceramic hand-building techniques, and its historical and contemporary significance. This course introduces ceramic hand-building techniques, including pinching, coil, and slab construction, as well as examine various high and low-fire glazing techniques. In addition to sculpting and constructing hand-built vessels, students will examine, critically discuss, analyze, and write about clay, glaze, and hand-building techniques, tools, ceramic terminology, and processes of historical and contemporary clay hand-built vessels. Students will learn ceramic vocabulary and participate in verbal and written class critiques.

## Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate technical competency and understand the process in hand-building construction and clay materials
2. Demonstrate competency and understand the process of glazing and various surface treatments
3. Use a variety of hand-building ceramic tools and equipment skillfully
4. Solve technical construction issues, such as slumping and cracking, that arise with hand-building processes
5. Integrate diverse cultural, historical, and contemporary styles and iconography effectively when applying carving, slip, and glaze decoration and patterns

6. Integrate diverse cultural, historical, and contemporary clay forms as ideas for ceramic projects
7. Discuss and be exposed to contemporary guest ceramic artist from various diverse cultural backgrounds
8. Communicate, discuss, identify, critically think about, and write about the personal and cultural differences in a class critique
9. Discuss and write about the tools, processes, and content of "great works" from diverse cultures, historical, and contemporary ceramic sculpture and hand building
10. Write a one to two page paper about a ceramic sculpture or hand-build ceramic vessel from a art gallery or museum

## Course Content

1. Demonstrate technical competency and understand the process in hand-building construction and clay materials
  - a. Pinch pots
  - b. Coil construction
  - c. Slab construction
2. Demonstrate competency and understand the process of glazing and various surface treatments
  - a. Pouring, spraying, dipping, brushing
  - b. Wax and latex resist
  - c. Mishima and sgraffito
  - d. High and low firing
  - e. Raku and pit firing
  - f. Under-glazes and slip painting
  - g. Stains
3. Use a variety of hand-building ceramic tools and equipment skillfully
  - a. The different kinds of clay
    - i. Stoneware clay
    - ii. Porcelain clay
    - iii. Raku and sculpture clays
  - b. Ceramic extruder
  - c. Slab roller
  - d. Applying glaze and slip
  - e. Clay sculpting tools
    - i. Carving tools
    - ii. Wooden and rubber rib tools
    - iii. Plaster hump molds
    - iv. Slump molds
    - v. Needle and sgraffito tools
    - vi. Wire tools
    - vii. Sponges
  - f. Banding wheels
  - g. Spray booth
4. Solve technical construction issues
  - a. Slumping clay
  - b. Cracking that arise with hand-building processes
  - c. Drying and firing process, greenware
    - i. Wet
    - ii. Leather-hard
    - iii. Attaching clay, scoring and slipping
    - iv. Bone-dry

- v. Bisque-ware
  - vi. Glaze applied to bisque-ware
5. Integrate diverse cultural, historical, and contemporary styles and iconography effectively when applying carving, slip, and glaze decoration and patterns
    - a. Greek or Roman decorative patterns
    - b. Asian or Eastern decorative patterns
    - c. African decorative patterns
    - d. Mesoamerican decorative patterns
    - e. Egyptian decorative patterns
    - f. Native American decorative patterns
    - g. American decorative patterns
    - h. European decorative patterns
    - i. Contemporary and abstract decorative patterns
    - j. Contemporary decorative patterns from our culture
  6. Integrate diverse cultural and historical clay forms as ideas for ceramic projects
    - a. Greek or Roman vessel forms
    - b. Asian or Eastern vessel forms
    - c. Mesoamerican vessel forms
    - d. Contemporary vessel forms from our culture
    - e. Egyptian decorative patterns
    - f. Native American decorative patterns
    - g. American decorative patterns
    - h. European decorative patterns
  7. Discuss and be exposed to contemporary guest ceramic artists from various diverse cultural backgrounds
    - a. Artist that use a variety of different slab construction
    - b. Artist that use a variety of different coil construction
    - c. Artist that use a variety of different surface treatments, slip painting, and glaze applications
    - d. Artist from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds
    - e. Artist that make ceramics that is abstract or uses new trends in ceramics arts
  8. Communicate, discuss, identify, and write about the personal and cultural differences in a class critique
    - a. Using ceramic terminology in the class critique
      - i. Leather hard
      - ii. Bone-dry
      - iii. Bisque-ware
      - iv. Stone-ware
      - v. Glaze
      - vi. Slip
      - vii. High-fire
      - viii. Kiln
      - ix. Molds
    - b. Discussing the cultural and personal difference of work present in a critique
    - c. Critically discussing construction issues during the process of creating the ceramic piece
  9. Discussing and writing about the tools, processes, and content of "great works" from diverse cultures, historical, and contemporary ceramic sculpture and hand building
    - a. Lectures and discussions related to historical styles and techniques of classical ceramic vessels
    - b. Lectures and discussions related to contemporary styles, trends, and techniques in ceramic hand-building and vessel
    - c. Lecture and discussion showing a brief overview of the history to the present of great works of ceramics from various cultures
    - d. Lecture and discussion about the human relevance of hand-building as it applies to our early cultures. Slide lectures will look at early archeological artifacts
    - e. Lecture and discussion about functional and non-functional hand-build ceramics
  10. Writing a one page paper about a ceramic sculpture or hand-build ceramic vessel from a gallery art or museum
    - a. Writing and discussing the ceramic tools, stylized textured line applications, cultural decorations or applied patterns, surface treatment, glaze or slip treatment, ceramic form or shape, the cultural symbolism or content, and the subject matter in the ceramic piece
    - b. Writing and discussing the personal point of view from examining the ceramic piece
    - c. Writing the "first impression" the student gets from viewing the piece
    - d. Writing about the content in a design
      - i. Understanding the expressive meaning in a design
      - ii. The hidden metaphors, symbols, and meaning in a ceramic vessel
      - iii. The artist intention in ceramic vessel
      - iv. The cultural meaning, function, or symbolism in a ceramic vessel

## Lab Content

1. Sketchbook notations, generating ideas and problem solving sketches, thumbnail sketches for ceramic forms from diverse cultures, historical time periods, and contemporary ceramics.
2. Ceramic projects focused on varied ways to use diverse cultural symbols, iconography, and pattern.
3. Ceramic projects focused on varied ways to create visual or actual texture.
4. Ceramic projects that focus on using a variety of ways to apply slip and glaze with a brush, dipping, pouring, and spraying.
5. Ceramic projects that focus on the forms influenced by looking at ceramic vessels from different cultures.
6. Ceramic projects that focus on pinch pots.
7. Ceramic projects that focus on coil pots.
8. Ceramic projects that focus on slab construction.
9. Ceramic projects that deal with learning various ways to attach clay.
10. Ceramic projects that deal with creating a personal approach to a project.
11. Research historic and contemporary ceramic forms through in-class video and text library.

## Special Facilities and/or Equipment

1. Clay, ceramic extruder, slab roller, kilns, glaze materials, sculpting tools, banding wheels, spray booth.
2. When taught via Foothill Global Access: ongoing access to computer with email software and capabilities; email address; JavaScript-enabled internet browsing software.

## Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Each project will be judged on its success in fulfilling the stated goals of the assignment

Demonstration of involvement and understanding of the course material through self-critiques written or verbal by the student about projects and assignments

Verbal or written participation during discussion and class critiques demonstrating knowledge of and ability to use ceramic terminology

Written or verbal responses about images, methods, techniques as assigned in class

Portfolio of hand built ceramic projects completed during the course and submitted at requested intervals or at the end of each quarter

Weekly verbal or written participation in class discussions about historical or contemporary hand-built ceramics

## Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture

Discussion

Laboratory

Demonstration

Field trips

## Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Cobb, Sunshine. Mastering Hand Building: Techniques, Tips, and Tricks for Slabs, Coils, and More. 2018.

Although this text is older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, it remains a seminal text in this area of study.

## Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Weekly reading/viewing assignments from the selected contemporary ceramic magazines.
2. Weekly reading assignments from the ceramic historical and contemporary textbook.
3. A one to two page paper written about a historic or contemporary ceramic object at a local museum.

## Discipline(s)

Art