

**San José State University**  
**Department of Art & Art History**  
**ART 46: Introduction to Ceramics, Section 03, Spring 2018**

**Course and Contact Information**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Adam Shiverdecker
<b>Office Location:</b>	IS 124C
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	TR, 8:30 AM – 9:00 AM; R, 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	TR: 12:00 pm – 2:50 pm
<b>Classroom:</b>	IS 165
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	None
<b>Department Office:</b>	ART 116
<b>Department Contact:</b>	Website: <a href="http://www.sjsu.edu/art">www.sjsu.edu/art</a> Email: <a href="mailto:art@sjsu.edu">art@sjsu.edu</a>
<b>Course Format:</b>	Studio

**Course Description**

This course is designed for beginning students in ceramics. Through demonstrations, discussions, and lectures, you will be provided a general introduction to a wide range of ceramic techniques and concepts, including hand-building, introductory wheel-throwing, slip casting/press molding, low and high-fire surfaces and glazes, and firing procedures.

Powerpoint presentations will provide an overview of both historical and contemporary ceramics. Studio assignments will vary in length and involvement and will be followed by group critiques. Engaged participation in critiques is mandatory and essential for your progress. Additionally, there will be a quiz on ceramics terminology and a short reading response/written assignment.

Basic studio maintenance and cooperative kiln loading/unloading is considered part of the class. In addition to studio work, students might occasionally be asked to visit on-campus galleries.

Other Requirements: Ceramics is a medium that demands long hours and constant attention so expect to spend significant additional time outside of class working on your projects (three hours per week is baseline, will vary week to week.)

**Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)**

Students will gain understanding of:

1. the language of ceramic vessels and forms
2. the nature and experience of ceramic vessels and forms

3. objects in relation to the spaces they occupy
4. vessels in relation to the body and user
5. the relationship between technology and conceptualization in clay
6. the possibilities and limitations of materials in relation to form and concept
7. additive and subtractive processes for generating form and space
8. equipment, safety, and certain fabrication methods
9. Craft vs. craft, and its position in fine arts
10. highly refined craftsmanship

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. a rapport with certain materials, tools, and processes fundamental to the understanding of ceramic form and space
2. an understanding of the role of materiality and tactility in visual experience
3. a vocabulary based in the fundamental principles of the potter's wheel
4. an understanding of criticism as an essential component of artistic development
5. a strong sense of craft and the ability to execute well-crafted work
6. facility thinking and working with the elements and principles of art/design
7. strong work habits and safe studio practice

## **Required Texts/Readings**

### **Textbook**

There is no required textbook for this course; however, several texts will be read and discussed.

### **Other Readings**

[The Ceramics Process](#) by Anton Reijnders

[The Ceramic Glaze Handbook](#) by Mark Burleson

[Postmodern Ceramics](#) by Mark Del Vecchio

[The New Age of Ceramics](#) by Hannah Stouffer

[Mastering the Potter's Wheel](#) by Ben Carter

[Understanding Greek Vases](#) by Andrew Clark et al

[Ceramics: Contemporary Artists Working in Clay](#) by Kate Singleton

[Art & Today](#) by Eleanor Heartney

[Thinking Through Craft](#) by Glenn Adamson

*cFileOnline.org*

*Ceramics Monthly* magazine

*Ceramics: Art & Perception* magazine

### **Required Materials**

There is no textbook required for this course, but you are required to purchase your own tools and clay. You'll need an assortment of tools (needle tool, trimming tools, ribs, fettling knife, small sponge, cutting wire, etc.). Normally sold as a kit, these items are available through the SJSU Ceramics Guild, the Student Union, or Clay Planet (Clay Planet is a local supplier located at 1774 Russell Ave., Santa Clara. Hours are M-F 9-5 and Sat 10-3, 408-295-3352, clay-planet.com.) Additional carving tools will be helpful and can be purchased at most craft stores or Clay Planet. You will also need to provide a lock for your locker, a metal fork (this will get

gnarly, so don't bring in the good silver), lightweight trash bags (tall kitchen bags work well), small plastic containers (quart size yogurt or a little larger), cheap paint brushes of various sizes. You have the options of purchasing clay as needed through the SJSU Ceramics Guild (\$10 per bag) or mixing up free recycled clay. Consult me before bringing in other types of clay as it may or may not be suitable for the project and/or the studio and/or the firing technique for the project. A sketchbook is a must (nothing smaller than 5"x7" and you will need approximately 20-30 pages for this class).

**Estimated Cost: \$70**

### **Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT)**

Many materials for use in this course require special handling. A HAZMAT tutorial and training will be conducted by instructor and staff. More information, including recognition and procedure for following a healthy and clean lab (studio) can be found at the following link:

**<http://www.sjsu.edu/fdo/docs/hazmatandlabsafetyguidance.pdf>**

### **Library Liaison**

Aliza Elkin

email: [aliza.elkin@sjsu.edu](mailto:aliza.elkin@sjsu.edu)

phone: [\(408\) 808-2043](tel:(408)808-2043)

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Library

4th Floor Administration Offices

Website: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/collectiondevelopment/CDhumanities>

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

Hand-building projects:	60 points
Wheel-throwing projects:	20 points
Contemporary artist paper:	10 points
Participation:	<u>10 points</u>
Total possible points:	100

### **Final Critique**

Thursday, May 17, 9:45 AM – 12:00 PM

### **Grading Information**

Grading in this course will be determined by a point system. There are a total of 100 possible points that can be earned. At the end of the semester these points will be totaled, and your final grade will then be impacted by participation as outlined above. You will receive a grade upon completion of each project. At midterm I will let you know where you stand in terms of class participation.

### **GRADING SCALE**

98-100 = A+

94-97 = A

90-93 = A-

87-89 = B+

83-86 = B

80-82 = B-

77-79 = C+

73-76 = C  
70-72 = C-  
67-69 = D+  
63-66 = D  
60-62 = D-  
59 and below = F  
A= Excellent work  
B= Above average work  
C= Average work  
D= Below average work  
F= Unsatisfactory work

### **Deadlines**

You are required to meet deadlines for your work. Due to the timing of kiln firings involved in a robust facility such as SJSU, it is extremely important to meet deadlines. If your work is not ready at a deadline, show up for class with the work you have and speak to me.

### **Determination of Grades**

Grades for each project will be determined by the following criteria:

- Willingness to explore, experiment and **take risks**
- Creative thought process and problem solving
- Understanding of materials and process and their relationship to your finished work
- Your ability to evaluate yourself and others
- Fulfillment and understanding of the assignment's criteria and objectives
- Deadline- please note missed deadlines will result in a loss of 2 points per day. You will have to work outside of class time to meet deadlines, be prepared.
- Projects may be reworked for a higher grade at my sole discretion and will be determined on a case by case basis. Please be aware this is a privilege, not a right; this option may not be available to you.

Pinch: 15%  
Coil: 15%  
Slab: 15%  
Combo: 15%  
Cups: 10%  
Bowls: 10%  
Presentation: 10%  
Participation: 10%

### **Classroom Protocol**

#### **Critiques**

Critical inquiry is vital in the studio arts process, which is why we hold group critiques for each finished project. Occasionally we will hold impromptu mid-project critiques. The purpose of the critique is to engage in constructive evaluation and is not synonymous with “judgment day.” That is to say that we are all responsible for removing ourselves from our work and look at it critically from the outside. We will address formal and craftsmanship concerns while investigating concept, content, context, meaning and interpretation. Everyone’s opinion is valuable in this process so it is essential for your participation in group critiques.

It is very important to me that everyone can come to class and participate to their fullest level of comfort and ability. Making ceramic wares and ceramic art requires a degree of questioning what you know, taking risks and embracing challenges. I will do my utmost to promote an environment where mutual respect, constructive criticism, and creative exploration are valued, and I expect the same from everyone who comes in the door. Since active critique of work is a vital part of this class, disrespect towards peers (or yourself) is not acceptable. I ask that you have the courage to speak your ideas and respect the ideas of others.

### **Attendance/Lateness**

You are expected to come to class awake, fed, and ready to make, think and talk. Your timely and engaged presence is expected at every class meeting. Several topics will receive only one day of attention and by missing class you run the risk of coming out of the class with an incomplete set of skills.

Arriving late or leaving early disrupts the flow of class and undermines your own success. Please make every effort to arrive on time and prepared for class. Please let me know before class if you will need to leave early.

If you arrive after I have already taken roll, please let me know of your presence so you will be marked as late and not absent.

### **Room Care**

Please be courteous. If we establish a common courtesy in the studio, everything else will take care of itself. At the end of each day, the studio should be in as good, if not better, condition than when we started. Everyone has responsibility for cleaning up their workspace and putting away or removing their work at the end of each day. At the end of the semester, all work must be removed from the room. Work that remains into the next semester will be thrown away. This is a messy business; failure to clean your workspace is not acceptable and will negatively affect your grade. **CLEAN UP** begins 20 minutes before the end of class. All areas you have used must be cleaned before you leave the studio. Per a healthy studio, cleaning up clay is best done with a wet sponge (it helps keep dust from dispersing throughout the studio). *A clean studio is a happy studio.*

### **No Cell Zone**

Cell phones are wonderful devices that must be put away when you walk in the door. You can rejoin them later over break or at the end of class. Absolutely **NO TEXTING** during class.

### **Visiting Artist**

This term we are pleased to announce that our visiting artist will be **KEVIN SNIPES** on Tuesday, MAY 1. He will demo 10:00 am – 12:00 pm, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm in IS 124 and deliver the Tuesday Night Lecture, 5:00 – 6:00 in Art 133.

### **University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

## ART 46 / Introduction to Ceramics, Spring 2018, Course Schedule

*\*\*\*This calendar is subject to change. You will be notified in class and via email in advance.*

### Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/25	Course introduction and tour facility
2	1/30	Pinch method demo; Construction exercise; Pre-Columbian Ceramics lecture
2	2/1	Joining multiple parts demo; review sketches; begin first project
3	2/6	Mid-process critique
3	2/8	Raku glaze demo (exercise 1); Workday
4	2/13	DUE: Pre-columbian project (bone-dry stage); Raku; Terra Sigillata demo
4	2/15	Raku; Terra Sig workday
5	2/20	DUE: Pre-columbian (surface); Rhyton lecture; coil-building demo; Planet Earth RESEARCH video
5	2/22	Roundtable discussion; Begin Rhyton project
6	2/27	Detail demo/exercise; Workday
6	3/1	Detail work; mid-process one-on-ones
7	3/6	Rhyton demo/workday/
7	3/8	DUE: Rhyton (beginning of class); <b>CRITIQUE: Pre-Columbian project</b>
8	3/13	Underglaze/surface demo
8	3/15	DUE: Rhyton (underglazed); HB3 intro; Wheel demo: cylinders/cups
9	3/20	Cups lecture; HB3 sketches/discussion; Wheel demo: Trimming/finishing techniques
9	3/22	BLUE DAY: last names beginning w/ A-K on wheel, L-Z hand-building
10	3/26-3/30	SPRING RECESS – NO CLASS
11	4/3	YELLOW DAY: last names beginning w/ L-Z on wheel, A-K hand-building
11	4/5	Wheel demo: mugs/handles; Spray low-fire glaze on Rhyta
12	4/10	<b>CRITIQUE: Rhyton project</b>
12	4/12	BLUE DAY
13	4/17	YELLOW DAY
13	4/19	DUE: HB3
14	4/24	DUE: 5 Cups/Mugs; Demo: Bowls
14	4/26	<b>FINAL DAY OF WET CLAY – ALL WORK UNCOVERED</b>

15	5/1	<b>VISITING ARTIST:</b> Kevin Snipes. Demo in class. Lecture @ 5 in Art 133.
15	5/3	DUE: 3 Bowls; ALL GREENWARE LOADED IN KILN; Glaze workday
16	5/8	<b>FINAL GLAZE DAY</b>
16	5/10	FINAL CRITIQUES; <b>STUDIO CLEAN-UP DAY</b>
Final Exam	5/17	IS 166, 9:45 am – 12:00 pm; FINAL CRITIQUES

**\*\*\*IMPORTANT DATES\*\*\***

- **VISITING ARTIST—KEVIN SNIPES: May 1**
- **FINAL DAY OF WET CLAY: April 26**
- **FINAL DAY TO GLAZE BISQUE: May 8**