

**San José State University**  
**Department of Art and Art History**  
**ART 134, Topics in Advanced Ceramics, Section 01, FALL 2021**

**Course and Contact Information**

Instructor: Adam Shiverdecker  
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Email: adam.shiverdecker@sjsu.edu  
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 12:00 – 12:30 pm, 3:30 – 4:00 pm  
Class Days/Time: MW 4:00 – 6:50 pm  
Classroom: IS 124  
Prerequisites: ART 46

**Additional Contact Information**

- \* E-mail is generally the best method of contact during non-office hours.
- \* Please allow 48-hours for an e-mail response.
- \* Emergency: 911
- \* Campus Escort: 42222
- \* Individuals with disabilities may contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC), Administrative Building 110, 408/ 924-6000, for a variety of formats such as Braille, large print, sign interpreters, assistive listening devices, audio tape and accommodations for physical accessibility.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Focus on personal stylistic development, individual critiques and portfolio preparation. Includes gallery and studio visits. Students are expected to be self-directed, explore new ideas, and take risks while developing a body of work. Students are strongly encouraged to complete all processes for finishing their work, including: making your own clays, slips, and glazes; loading, programming, firing and unloading kilns; maintaining a clean and safe studio practice.

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 (virtually/online and/or in-person when appropriate) and attend Tuesday Night Lectures (virtually/online).

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 Format: HYBRID**

We will be utilizing the on-campus facility throughout the semester, beginning with the second class meeting on August 25, 2021. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor regarding protocols if you choose to work remotely.

## Program Information

This course fulfills upper division requirements in the following majors: BA, Studio Practice; BFA, Spatial Art.

This course fulfills upper division requirements in the following minors: Minor in Ceramic Art; Minor in Sculpture.

### Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

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

CLO1 - conceptualize and complete sculptures that demonstrate mastery of various fabrication/handbuilding techniques

CLO2 – successfully research and respond to non-traditional approaches to clay

CLO3 – properly schedule, load, fire, and complete gas/electric kiln firings

CLO4 – demonstrate an understanding of the physical characteristics and potentials of clay/ceramics

CLO5 - research, select, and apply appropriate surface treatments

CLO6 – safely use ceramics lab equipment and observe general lab policies

CLO7 – apply a general knowledge of historical and contemporary ceramic art to class assignments (studio and written)

CLO8 – practice and develop critical skills (critiques, class discussions)

## Texts/Readings

### Textbook

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

### Other Readings

Art & Today by Eleanor Heartney

Confrontational Ceramics by Judith Schwartz

Ceramics In The Environment by Janet Mansfield

“The Handle” essay by Georg Simmel

“Pirates and Farmers” essay by Dave Hickey

*cFileOnline.org*

### Required Materials

There is no textbook required for this course, but you are required to purchase your own tools and clay. You will 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. 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-\$90**

### **Library Liaison (Delete if not applicable)**

Gareth Scott, email: [gareth.scott@sjsu.edu](mailto:gareth.scott@sjsu.edu)

King Library 4th Floor

Phone: (408) 808-2094

Art and Art History Resources: <https://libguides.sjsu.edu/Art>

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

Completion of Creative Projects: 70 points

Contemporary artist paper: 5 points

Presentation: 5 points

Participation: 20 points

Total possible points: 100

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

### **Final Examination (Final Critique)**

We will hold a Final Critique and class meeting on **Wednesday, December 8, 2:45 pm – 5:00 pm.**

“Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment.”

### **Grading Information**

**Assignment Format and Submission:** 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.

### **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 5 points per day. Be prepared to work outside of class to meet deadlines.
- 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.

### **Participation Grade**

Because of the nature of this individualized course, you are required to check in with me once a week. This weekly “check-in” constitutes your Participation Grade and is worth 20% of your final grade.

### **GRADING SCALE (Numeric Grade Equivalents):**

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

**Please note:** Except in cases of documented emergencies, incomplete grades are not given in this course.

“All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.” **See University Policy F13-1 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details.**

### **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.

## Classroom Protocol

### Demonstrations

Demonstrations and presentations will occur at the beginning of class. Due to the nature of the material and flow of the class, most demonstrations cannot be repeated; rather, some demonstrations will be recorded and uploaded to Canvas and my YouTube channel.

### 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 or zooms in from their whatever. 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.

If you are not physically present for critique, you will need to “zoom in” instead.

### University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](#), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

### Additional Information

#### 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.***

#### Cell Phones/Music

Once the demonstrations and presentations portion of each class is finished, you will then be able to work on your own. We will listen to music during these work periods. At this time in the class meeting, you are permitted to listen to your own music on your headphones; however, you may (will) be asked to remove them when you need individual instruction from the professor or TA. You are welcome to listen to whatever music/podcasts/books that keep you motivated and working.

**Please do not play music out loud using your device's speakers.**

**Additional Note:**

This syllabus is subject to change, in the event of unforeseen circumstances, or in the case that changes will significantly enhance the quality of the course. Students will collectively have the opportunity to shape the ways in which the course unfolds.

## ART 134: TOPICS IN ADVANCED CERAMICS, FALL 2021

*\*The schedule is subject to change with fair notice. You will be informed in class and via email in advance.*

### COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/23	Course introduction; "Pirates and Farmers"
1	8/25	COLOR Project Introduction; Make clay
2	8/30	DUE: Project Proposal #1; Review sketches, class discussion; Process demo: large coil
2	9/1	Individual Meetings; Workday
3	9/6	<b>NO CLASS – LABOR DAY</b>
3	9/8	Kiln demo; Surface/glaze demo; Workday
4	9/13	Individual Meetings; Workday
4	9/15	Press-molding Introduction; Plaster demo
5	9/20	Individual Meetings; Workday
5	9/22	Presentations Discussion
6	9/27	Individual Meetings; Workday
6	9/29	Research day
7	10/4	Individual Meetings; Workday
7	10/6	Research day
8	10/11	CRITIQUE: COLOR Project
8	10/13	Individual meetings; workday
9	10/18	PRESENTATIONS (Group A)
9	10/20	PRESENTATIONS (Group B)
10	10/25	Individual meetings; workday
10	10/27	Research day
11	11/1	CRITIQUE: Slip-casts
11	11/3	Individual Meetings; Workday
12	11/8	Discussion: "The Handle"; Unfamiliar Territory Introduction; Mixed media presentation/discussion
12	11/10	Individual Meetings; Workday
13	11/15	Research day

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
13	11/17	<b>FINAL DAY OF WET CLAY – ALL WORK UNCOVERED</b>
14	11/22	All classwork in Bisque kilns
14	11/24	<b>NO CLASS – CAMPUS CLOSED – THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>
15	11/29	<b>FINAL GLAZE DAY</b>
15	12/1	FINAL CRITIQUES
16	12/6	FINAL CRITIQUES; <b>STUDIO CLEAN-UP DAY</b>
Final Exam	12/8	IS 124, 2:45 PM – 5:00 PM; FINAL CRITIQUES

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

- **NOVEMBER 17 – FINAL DAY OF WET CLAY**
- **NOVEMBER 29 – FINAL DAY TO GLAZE WORK**
- **DECEMBER 6 – STUDIO CLEAN-UP DAY**
- **DECEMBER 8 – FINAL CRITIQUES**

### **STUDIO HOURS**

M: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm  
T: 12:00 pm - 7:00 pm  
W: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm  
R: 12:00 pm - 7:00 pm  
F: 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Students are permitted to use the SJSU Ceramics facilities while classes are in session and instructors are present. If you arrive to work outside of your scheduled class meeting time and your classroom is in use, please use one of the other classrooms within the facility (IS 165, IS 166, IS 124). The studio will be closed on weekends and holidays (9/6/21, 11/11/21, 11/24/21) when the campus is closed. Please be respectful and clean up your workspace and leave the facility before the scheduled times above.