

Introduction to Ceramics
HMS Workshop/Lesson Plans
(page 1.)

1st Session:

Theory: “The Nature of Clay”

Students are introduced to the basic structural components of clay. Where clay comes from and how it was formed. The two broad geological categories of primary and secondary clay are discussed. A variety of clay bodies are examined including earthenware, stoneware, & porcelain as well as the ability to customize formulas for specific needs.

A general overview of the working processes that clay demands, wedging, forming, drying rates, & firing. Students learn the difference and importance of such states as plastic, leather-hard, and bone-dry.

Hands on: The basics of wedging are covered. Simple Pinch and Coil methods are explored through the completion of assigned projects.

2nd Session:

Theory: “Getting Centered”

Mental preparation and breath control as a necessary and productive work habit. Demonstrated through centering on the wheel. Students gain familiarity with the philosophy, practice, and tools associated with centering, throwing, and trimming on the wheel.

Note: Students are offered individual instruction on the wheel through scheduled sessions throughout the course.

Hands-on. Template design for slab built work.

3rd Session:

Theory: “Forming and Assembly”

Students are introduced to a variety of forming techniques, including methods that involve supports, molds, & armatures. Joining techniques are discussed and demonstrated in the construction of pieces that are comprised of multiple components.

Hands-on: Students apply these principles and techniques to individual projects.

Introduction to Ceramics
Lesson Plans (pg. 2)

4th Session:

Theory “Plaster as Friend and Foe”

Understanding the value and drawbacks of working with plaster in the studio. Mold making processes and the importance of water to plaster ratios are discussed. Simple negative relief molds are demonstrated.

Hands-on: Students prepare mock-ups for negative relief plaster molds and pour them.

5th Session:

Theory: “Atmospheric Science & Firing ”

Students become familiar with the history of firing and the evolution of kiln design in several cultures. The advantages and limitations of several firing options are examined. Students are introduced to the concept of the three major firing atmospheres 1. Neutral 2. Oxidation and 3. Reduction Specialty atmospheres such as those involving fly-ash and or soda are also discussed.

Hands-on: Students pursue projects of their own intent and are given guidance in these individual pursuits.

6th Session

Theory: “How to get Glazed”

Basic glaze chemistry is discussed. Students are directed to resources on existing glaze formulas and how to adjust them. The role of both the oxide and carbonate forms of various metals is examined in the formation of color in glazes. The advantages and disadvantages of firing to various temperatures in a variety of atmospheres is discussed and how this affects color and overall glaze quality.

Group Hands-on: Glazes for class use are formulated from their mineral components and tested. Students learn methods of application of glaze materials and the various roles wax resist can play within this process.

(cont.)

Introduction to Ceramics
HMS Lesson Plans
page 3

7th Session

Theory:

“Loading & Firing the Electric Kiln”

Introduces an understanding of programmable computerized kiln controls as well as considerations for mechanical kiln setters. An overview of small and large pyro-metric cones, what they indicate and how they are used. A look at kiln furniture how it is selected, prepped for use, and maintained after use. Spacing, Stacking, and Ventilation options are discussed and demonstrated.

Hands on: Students assist in the loading of a bisque firing and the programming of the kiln.

8th Session: “Finishing Up”

A timeline is established to accommodate work to be fired during the final week of the course.

Hands-on: Students work to complete projects.

9th Session:

“You've Done It!”

A group look at what we've done, what worked and what needs work. Options for continued learning are discussed. Students pick up their completed projects.

Tuition is \$250.00 for the nine week course and may be paid for in the Heartwood Store. The Store is open Monday through Saturday from 12:00 -5:00pm. Tuition includes materials and the firings directly associated with class assignments.

With instructor approval and as space allows, additional materials and firing may be purchased through the studio. Inquiries regarding this should be directed to either the instructor or studio monitor.

For further information or to schedule a visit contact: George Lea at art@heartwoodhub.com or by phone at 707-923-5001.