



EAST TEXAS A&M

UNIVERSITY

ART450 (Section 01E): CERAMICS III, 20281

COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2026
EAST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Instructor: Christy Wittmer

Office Location: Room101 Wathena Temple Fine Arts

Office Hours: Mondays from 10-11am and by appointment

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Class Information

Spring 2026: 1/12/2026 through 5/8/2026

Credits: 3.00

Meeting times: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00-4:50pm

Location: WTFA 116

Preferred Form of Communication: Email

Response Time: 24-48 hours during weekdays

Course Description

This course offers further exposure to ceramic forming processes; surface treatment; and firing processes. This will include both; throwing on the wheel and hand-building or mold making projects. Increased attention will be given to the conceptual and aesthetic aspects of ceramics and the development of an expressive, individual direction. Increased emphasis on critical research in contemporary and historical ceramics.

Catalogue Descriptions

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

ART 450 - Ceramics III

Hours: 3

This course offers further exposure to ceramic forming methods, surface treatment, and firing processes that include oxidation, reduction, raku and cold-finishes.

Increased attention will be given to the conceptual and aesthetic aspects of the ceramics medium and the development of an expressive, individual direction. Increased emphasis is placed on critical research in contemporary and historical ceramics.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate advanced wheel throwing and hand building skills
- Demonstrate excellent craftsmanship
- Discuss how objects embody meaning
- Discuss historic and contemporary ceramics and the issues that pertain to ceramics as an art form
- Demonstrate an understanding of clay and glaze chemistry
- Demonstrate an understanding of mold making and slip casting
- Use and maintain studio equipment properly
- Demonstrate the development of a personal direction in their artwork
- Demonstrate the development of a solid, sustained work ethic and time-management skills
- Demonstrate the ability to benefit from the critiques of one's own work and the work of others

Course Requirements

Textbooks, Technologies and Materials

Textbook(s) Required: No textbook is required.

Software Required: You will need a camera or cell phone to take photographs of your work. You will also use Google Slides, Microsoft Powerpoint or similar program to create your artist presentation.

Please contact the instructor if you have questions or concerns about using the technology.

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Suggested Text Books And Resources

- Contemporary ceramics: <https://cfileonline.org/>
- Contemporary ceramics: <https://www.ceramicsnow.org/>
- Ceramics techniques and videos: <https://ceramicartsnetwork.org/>
- Contemporary art: <https://hyperallergic.com/>
- Artwork images: [Artstor](#)
- Historical ceramics: <https://www.metmuseum.org/>
- Textbook Recommended: *Clay and Glazes for the Potter*, Revised, Expanded Edition, written by Daniel Rhodes, Revised by Robin Hopper.

Required Materials

Please purchase supplies and bring them to the second day of class.

Basic Pottery Tool Kit - sponge, metal rib, wire clay cutter, ribbon tool, loop tool, aluminum needle tool, modeling tool, potters rib

Small container with lid for storing your own slip

Sumi brush for decorating

Large towel for wheel throwing (optional)

Spray Bottle

Plastic trash bags

Exacto knife

Ruler with centimeters

Optional Materials:

Fettling knife

Serrated ribs

Rubber ribs

Small containers with lids for storing slip and glaze

P100 Respirator

Write your name on all your tools and supplies. The ceramic tools are available in the campus bookstore and others can be found at: Amazon, Wal-Mart, the Dollar Store, art stores, kitchen stores, or hardware stores.

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Instructional Methods

This course is 16 weeks long. It will consist of:

Lectures: The instructor will present examples of historical and contemporary ceramic artwork related to the ceramic techniques being taught.

Demonstrations: The instructor will demonstrate hand building, wheel throwing, decorating and glazing techniques.

Projects: In hands-on projects working with clay you will have the opportunity to practice the skills that were learned during the lectures/demonstrations.

Presentation: You will give a presentation on your project research, including images of work by a contemporary ceramic artist who is inspiring your project, sketches of your project and a week-by-week timeline for completing the project.

Sketches and Research: In preparation for more involved clay projects you will be expected to do your own visual research and draw out a plan for your project.

Critiques: During critiques we will discuss the work you have made intellectually. This is an opportunity to receive feedback on your work and provide feedback to your classmates about their work.

Expectations

1. Working outside of class is required. Expect to spend at least 6 hours per week outside of class. Access to the studio at night and on weekends will be through the swipecard system. Use the east entrance to the building. **Work out of class is not a substitute for in-class work and participation.**
2. Timely completion of required work by the critique dates is required.
3. Criticism and discussion are important aspects of artistic activity and development. Attendance and active, thoughtful verbal participation at all critiques is mandatory.
4. Participation in loading, firing, and unloading the kilns is required. Students should be aware that these activities sometimes take place outside of class time. Studio Policy on quality control: Any work that is defective or damaged (such as too heavy, cracked, broken, etc.) will not be fired. Extra work must meet the standards of the studio.
5. Students in the advanced class are required to help with the maintenance and the running of the ceramics studio. This includes mixing the communal batches of slips and glazes, cleaning and re-coating kiln shelves, and other tasks that contribute to

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maintaining a clean and appropriate work environment. Technical information and an explanation of “best practice” will be given relating to these tasks.

6. Students are expected to engage in personal research on ceramics websites and in the university library where there is an extensive collection of books on ceramics as well as the periodicals *Ceramics Monthly*, *American Craft*, and *Studio Potter*. You can also see ceramic work in person in nearby museum collections, especially the DMA, The Crow Collection of Asian Art, and the Kimbell Art Museum.
7. Students are expected to attend all exhibitions in The University Gallery as well as other events hosted by the Department of Art such as visiting lecturers and visiting artist workshops.
8. General Studio Rules:
 - **The ceramics studio is a pet-free, child-free zone 24/7.**
 - Do not touch or move other people’s work.
9. Remove all work and tools at the end of the semester. Your instructor is not responsible for work left behind when the course ends.

Grading

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

90-100% A | 80-89% B | 70-79% C | 60-69% D | 0-59% F

Assignment Grading Details:

Grading is based on a completion of course assignments, quality of individual technical and critical development, personal commitment and ability to work in a community studio setting. Personal commitment involves regular attendance, consistent effort, completion of work and participation in group critiques and the willingness to try new things and take creative risks. There are multiple required group critiques throughout the semester of in-progress and finished work.

Assignments : Series Project, Material Testing, Mold Making/Casting, Final Project	90%
Critiques, Research, Presentation	<u>10%</u>

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100%

Late Work:

Assignments may not be turned in late unless there is a legitimate documented emergency. You must contact me before the due date and ask for an extension. I will consider each request on a case-by-case basis. Late assignments will automatically lose 20% of the grade and must be submitted by the final critique.

Assignment Submission & Format:

All work is due by the due date listed in the assignment. **Images of your finished projects should be posted in the assignment in D2L to receive full credit.**

Assessments

Projects will be graded as follows:

A (Excellent) will be given to ambitious projects that demonstrate superior conceptual, expressive, and technical abilities. A sustained and committed work ethic must be evident.

B (Good) will be given to those projects that complete the requirements of the assignment in a creative manner, display a good level of technique, and in which a good work ethic is evident.

C (Average) is given to those projects that satisfy the specifications of the assignment on an adequate level. Reasonable effort has been demonstrated in order to complete the assignments.

D (Passing - Minimum) will be given to those projects which attempt to address the assignments but which fall short in understanding, creativity of solution, quality of technique, and effort.

F (Failure) is given to projects that show a complete lack of understanding, creativity, and effort.

Course Procedures and Policies

1. **Attendance Policy:** Attendance is critical for your success in this course. Students are expected to be present in each class, for the entire class period. If you arrive 15 minutes late or leave more than 15 minute before class ends, it will be considered an absence. **After the fourth absence of the semester, the instructor may lower the**

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student's final semester grade by one letter grade for each subsequent absence. No distinction will be made between excused and unexcused absences. Please contact the instructor in advance of any absence.

A student who misses a class or is late for class is responsible for any material discussed and any announcements made during class. Demonstrations will not be repeated for excused or unexcused absences. The student is also responsible for making up the missed work time.

Studio culture and cell phone usage

For the next 16 weeks we will be working together in the shared space of the studio. You are expected to treat your instructor and your classmates with respect at all times. In this spirit, **cell phones should be muted during class.** If you must receive a call during class time please leave the studio before answering it. To be considerate of others working in the studio there should be no phone conversations, text messaging, movie watching, etc. in studios. Online web searches related to course assignments may be done during studio work time, not during lectures and demonstrations. You may also use your phone to document your work. You may use your phone to watch the demonstration videos from D2L during class, but you may not watch or listen to other programs, video games, series or movies during class.

For the health and safety of everyone, please clean up your workspace, table, floor and all tools and equipment that you used before you leave the studio. **Throwers should mop around their wheel at the end of every work session. Hand builders should mop around their table.** Leave the space cleaner than you found it.

Headphone policy: You may wear headphones while you are working in the studio during class time. For the safety of yourself and consideration of your classmates, the volume must be low enough that you can still hear what is happening in the studio. Also, you are still responsible for any announcements that are made while wearing headphones. **You may not wear headphones during lectures, demonstrations or critiques.**

Video/audio recording is prohibited without permission.

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Firing policy: Smoking/drug paraphernalia, including but not limited to pipes, ashtrays, images or slogans will not be fired.

If you want to make clay projects beyond course assignments, you may make up to the equivalent of eight cups. This would be equivalent to a few medium sized pieces or one large piece beyond the course assignments.

Safety

Always wear a mask when working with dry materials and while spraying glaze. If you are pregnant you will need to take caution in the glaze area and be sure to wear gloves while glazing. Everyone should wear gloves when working with glazes containing a high metal content and glazes marked "Not Food Safe". For safety while sanding and sweeping we recommend you wear a mask. You may want to purchase a P100 Particulate Respirator Mask.

There is no roller skating, roller blading or skate boarding in the studio.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

Technology Requirements

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

Access and Navigation

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

Communication and Support

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

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Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

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Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

[http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/
studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/](http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url: <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit

www.tamuc.edu/counsel

Department of Art, Health and Safety Guidelines: All students enrolled in face-to-face art courses are required to comply with the procedures and policies of the Department of Art's Health and Safety Guidelines. The Guidelines cover activities in all East Texas A&M University art facilities on both the main campus and off-campus sites. Please report any safety issues immediately to your instructor(s), per health and safety guidelines outlined, studio/lab assistant, or the Department of Art, studio technician & health/safety liaison.

https://inside.tamuc.edu/academics/colleges/humanitiesSocialSciencesArts/departments/art/documents/DOA_health_safety_handbook.pdf

Health and Safety Form (to be signed online by all students)

<https://dms.tamuc.edu/Forms/ArtLabPolicy>

Please, click on the following link to access East Texas A&M University Covid 19 Information, <https://new.tamuc.edu/coronavirus/>

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COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Week 1: 1/12

Monday: Introduction to Course,

Ceramics II: Wheel throwing demo: Cylinder refresher, Assignment: 8 thrown cylinders, at least 6" tall, due 1/21

Ceramics III: Introduce mold making project, Research 4 design ideas, due 1/19

Wednesday:

Ceramics II: work on cylinders

Ceramics III: Mold making demonstration, Design ideas due, Start making model, Models due on 1/21

Ind. Study: Research Plan due for Project 1 uploaded into D2L, we will discuss in class

Week 2: 1/19

Monday: No Class, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Wednesday: Ceramics II: 8 thrown cylinders due for critique cylinders at 3:30pm

Ceramics III: Prepare models for mold making, start pouring molds, work in small groups to make casting slip

Week 3: 1/26

Monday:

Ceramics II Demo: Throwing a plate

Ceramics II Assignment: 5 Thrown plates with surface design, plates must be at least 7" wide, due 2/4

Ceramics III: Pour molds, work in small groups to make casting slip

Wednesday:

Ceramics II Demo: Plate trimming and surface decoration refresher, including underglaze

Ceramics III: Pour molds, work in small groups to make casting slip

Week 4: 2/2

Monday:

Ceramics II: Trim plates, add surface decoration

Ceramics III: Start slip casting, 10 objects, 5 with surface decoration, due 2/16

Wednesday:

Ceramics II: Critique plates, Due: 5 Thrown and trimmed plates with surface design, upload images into D2L

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Ceramics II: Glaze mixing lecture and demonstration, test tile making demonstration
Ceramics II Assignment: Mix two glazes and fire on test tiles, due for firing on 3/2,
recipes due on 2/9

Ind. Study: Research Plan due for Project 2 uploaded into D2L, we will discuss in class

Week 5: 2/9

Monday:

Ceramics II Demo: Throwing vases

Ceramics II Assignment: 5 Thrown vases, any size or shape, due 2/19

Ceramics II Assignment: 5 Sketches of vase designs, due 2/12

Ceramics III: Convergence Assignment due in greenware for critique

Ceramics III: Introduce Clay body building and read Ch. 5 "Kinds of Clay" in *Clay and Glazes for the Potter* by Daniel Rhodes on D2L and clay body building article, upload notes to D2L for credit by 2/11

Wednesday:

Ceramics II Demo: Vase trimming, Work on throwing vases

Ceramics II: Due 5 Sketches of vase designs

Ceramics III: Discuss clay body building, demonstrate clay mixing, begin mixing clay body recipes, clay bodies due 2/18 for firing

Week 6: 2/16

Monday:

Ceramics II: Surface decoration demonstration, as needed, Work on trimming vases

Ceramics III: Critique of slip cast objects, Introduce Series Project, Sketches/Ideas for project due 2/18

Continue developing, mixing clay bodies

Wednesday:

Ceramics II: Critique vases, Due: 5 thrown and trimmed vases, images uploaded into D2L

Ceramics III: Review ideas for Series Project, Continue developing, mixing clay bodies, clay body tests due in greenware

Ceramics II: Introduce Tile Project and demonstration

Ceramics II: Assignment: Mold making, 13 Tiles, due in greenware on 3/18

Sketches/plans for tiles due 2/23

Week 7: 2/23

Monday:

Ceramics II: Plans due for Tile project, review plans as a group

Demo: Tile making

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Begin building model
Ceramics III: Work on Series Project

Wednesday:

Ceramics II: Mold making demonstration
Finish building model and prepare for mold making

Ind. Study: Research Plan due for Project 3 uploaded into D2L, we will discuss in class

Week 8: 3/2

Monday: Ceramics II: Make molds and begin casting

Glaze work

Ceramics III: Work on Series Project

Wednesday: Ceramics II: Make molds and begin casting

Glaze work

Ceramics III: Work on Series Project

Independent study: Critique project 2, discuss ideas for project 3

3/9-3/13 Spring Break, No classes

Week 9: 3/16

Monday: Ceramics II: Cast tiles

Glaze work

Load cone 10 kiln

Ceramics III: In-progress critique of Series Project

Wednesday: Ceramics II: Cast tiles

Tiles due in greenware by end of class

Ceramics III: Series Project due by the end of class

Fire cone 10 kiln

Ceramics II + III: Introduce Grand Theft assignment, due in greenware on 4/13

Presentation of ideas/research due 3/23

Week 10: 3/23

Monday: Ceramics II + III: Present ideas/research for Grand Theft project

Load tiles into bisque kiln

Wednesday: No class, Glaze tiles

Ceramics II+III: Begin working on Grand Theft project

Week 11: 3/30

Monday: Ceramics II+III: Continue working on Grand Theft project

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Load tiles into glaze kiln

Wednesday:

Ceramics II: Create template for wall tile installation

Continue working on Grand Theft project

Week 12: 4/6

Monday: Install exhibition

Ceramics II+III: Continue working on Grand Theft project

Wednesday: Ceramics II+III: In process critique of Grand Theft project

Continue working on Grand Theft project

Week 13: 4/13

Monday: Last day to throw

Ceramics II+III: Continue working on Grand Theft project

Wednesday:

Ceramics II+III: Complete work on Grand Theft project

Last day to work in clay

All pieces must be on the cart to be bisque fired by the end of the day.

Week 14: 4/20

Monday: Deinstall exhibition, Glaze, load cone 10 kiln

Wednesday: Glaze, fire cone 10 kiln

Week 15: 4/27

Monday: Final Clean up, mandatory (one letter grade lower for not attending)

Load final cone 6 kilns

Wednesday: Final critique

Document your work

Week 16: 5/4

Monday: Finals Week, Documentation Assignment due, Take your work home

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