

ART2346 (Section 01E): CERAMICS I, 81314

COURSE SYLLABUS: FALL 2026

EAST TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Instructor: Christy Wittmer

Office Location: Room 101 Wathena Temple Fine Arts

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2-3pm and by appointment

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Class Information

Fall 2026: 8/20/2026 through 12/11/2026

Credits: 3.00

Meeting times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00am-1:50pm

Location: WTFA 116

Preferred Form of Communication: Email or D2L Inbox

Response Time: 24-48 hours during weekdays

Course Description

This course provides an introductory exposure to the history of ceramics and a beginning level experience in the use of clay as a fine art medium. Forming techniques, surface development, glazing, and kiln firing practices will be introduced. Students will explore both the functional and sculptural traditions of the medium.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

- Discuss the history of ceramics
- Discuss contemporary ceramics in the United States
- Demonstrate the basic hand building techniques of pinch, slab and coil
- Demonstrate throwing clay on the pottery wheel
- Decorate the surface of ceramic work using slips and glazes
- Load and unload ceramic objects from the kilns
- Discuss during class critiques the meaning, design and technical processes used to create ceramic art objects

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

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.

Suggested Text Books And Resources

- [Cfileonline \(Contemporary ceramics\)](#)
- [Ceramics Now: Contemporary ceramics](#)
- [Ceramics techniques and videos](#)
- [Contemporary art](#)
- [Images on Jstor](#)
- [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#)

Required Materials

Please purchase tools and 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

Sumi brush for decorating

Large towel for wheel throwing (optional)

Spray Bottle

Plastic trash bags

12 inch Ruler

Optional Materials:

Fettling knife

Exacto knife

Sharpie

Serrated ribs

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Rubber ribs
Small containers with lids
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.

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.

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.

Presentation: You will give a presentation on a ceramic artist, including images and descriptions of their artwork and your opinion of it.

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.

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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 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,

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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: Historical Vessel, **90%**

Self-Portrait, Pinch Pots,

Throwing Cylinders, Cups, Bowls

Critiques, Research, Presentation **10%**

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 completed 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.

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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

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 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.

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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 to listen to music. 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.

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.

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

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Department of Art's Health and Safety Guidelines. The Guidelines cover activities in all East Texas A&M 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's Covid 19 Information,
<https://new.tamuc.edu/coronavirus/>

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Week 1: 8/20

Thursday: Introduction to Course

Lecture and Demo: Pinch pots

Assignment: Two different pinch pots with carved texture, due 8/27

Complete the syllabus quiz, the Getting to Know You survey and the Strengths Learning Lab Unit, Due 9/3

Week 2: 8/25

Tuesday: Intro to clay, introduce coil building, work on pinch pots

Lecture: Historic Vessels

Assignment: Historic Vessel: Large coil built piece with carving or slip decoration, greenware, at least 14" high

Due by next class: Pinch pots, 3 images of historic vessels and a plan

Thursday: Pinch pots due at beginning of class, Historical Vessel research due, bring 3 photocopies of historic vessel to class

Demonstration: Coil building
start building coil vessels

Week 3: 9/1

Tuesday: Extruder demonstration, vessel should be 4 inches tall by the end of class, Syllabus quiz due

Thursday: Strengths Learning Lab Discussion Board Due

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Historic vessel should be **10 inches tall** (at the beginning of class)
Surface decoration demonstration: Slip decoration, sgraffito, inlay, stencil

Week 4: 9/8

Tuesday: In progress critique of Historic vessel, vessel should be **14 inches tall** (at the beginning of class)

Surface decoration demonstration: Hydro-abrasion, slip trailing, carving

Thursday: Work day

Week 5: 9/15

Tuesday: Critique of Historical Vessel, due in greenware

Introduce slab building project: Expressive Self-Portraits,
Glazing and Firing lecture and demonstration, glaze pinch pots

Thursday: Research for slab building project due, soft slab building demonstration, Roll out slabs for project

Week 6: 9/22

Tuesday: Demonstration: Sculpting facial features and hair
Start building slab project

Thursday: Work Day

Week 7: 9/29

Tuesday: In-progress critique, head should be built with facial features and hair started

Thursday: Finish fine details and slip decoration on self-portraits

Week 8: 10/6

Tuesday: Critique of Expressive Self-Portraits in greenware

Introduce Artist Presentation assignment, 5-10 minute presentation on an artist, sign up for a day/time

Thursday: Fall Break, No Classes

Week 9: 10/13

Tuesday: Introduction to throwing, Throwing practice

Thursday: Demonstration: How to throw a cylinder

Assignment: Six thrown cylinders, at least 6" tall, due 10/22

Week 10: 10/20

Tuesday: Work on cylinders

Thursday: Critique for six cylinders at the beginning of class

Demonstration: How to throw a bowl

Assignment: Six bowls, thrown and trimmed, at least 6" wide, due 10/29

Week 11: 10/27

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Tuesday: Artist Presentations

Trimming demonstration

Thursday: Artist Presentations, Bowls due by the end of class

Demonstration: How to throw a cup

Assignment: 6 thrown and trimmed cups with handles, due in greenware 11/12

Week 12: 11/3

Tuesday: Artist Presentations

Cup trimming demonstration, Work on cups

Load Cone 10 Kiln

Thursday: Artist Presentations

Handle making demonstration

Fire Cone 10 Kiln

Week 13: 11/10

Tuesday: In progress critique of cups, must have at least 3 cups with handles ready for the critique, **Last day to throw**

Thursday: Throwing and trimming and cups, glazing bowls, **Last day to work in clay**

All work must be finished in clay and on the shelf to be fired by the end of class.

Week 14: 11/17

Tuesday: Glaze bowls

Thursday: Photographing Artwork Lecture and Demonstration, Introduce documentation assignment, Glaze

Week 15: 11/24

Tuesday: Glaze! Load kilns.

Thursday: No class. Thanksgiving Break - Campus closed.

Week 16: 12/1

Tuesday: Final exam review, **Mandatory clean up** (one grade down if not attended)

Last Cone 6 Firing

Thursday: Final exam, Final critique and removal of all work and tools.

Finals Week: Documentation assignment due, meet as needed

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

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

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@etamu.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 TAMUC 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.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

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>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

CWID and Password

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Technology-Related Issues

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.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

Learning Management System (LMS) - D2L

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 the technical requirements:

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).
- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

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 on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

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COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

Include the Following in Emails with Instructor:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
- Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
- Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
- Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

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.

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 online in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#)

Academic Integrity

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

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

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Use of Artificial Intelligence

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources

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@etamu.edu

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

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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 ETAMU Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

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

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 - Counseling Services

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

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



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