ART 597-002  Graduate Advanced Ceramics  
Spring Semester 2015  MW 2:00 - 4:50 pm  
Instructor: Barbara Frey  
(903) 366-1946  email: Barbara.Frey@tamuc.edu  
Office hours: MW 1:00-2:00pm and TR 11:00am – Noon. And by appointment – contact me through email to schedule an appointment. Office Hours Location: WTFA 101

Course Description
Students will continue to explore the basic techniques of working with clay: forming methods, glazing and other surface treatments and finishing processes; and electric, gas, and wood kiln firing. Increased attention will be given to the conceptual and aesthetic issues involved with the use of clay as a fine art medium to create formally and conceptually expressive objects that are knowledgeable, sophisticated, and resolved.

The particular focus of this semester will be on the use of porcelains and its special place in the history of ceramics. We will explore the particular characteristics of this clay body through the forming techniques of hand building, throwing, and slip casting; and the firing techniques of reduction, soda, and wood.

The graduate student will be expected to engage in the creative production of ceramic objects that demonstrate an advanced level of knowledge of ceramics as a fine art medium and an advanced ability to render ideas through forms that are sophisticated in technique, design, and concept.

Course Objectives
Demonstrate increased ability, knowledge, and awareness in the following areas:
- the acquisition of technical knowledge and the development of excellent craftsmanship
- the conceptual understanding of how objects “contain” or “embody” meaning
- the understanding of both the historic and contemporary ceramic context and the issues that pertain specifically to ceramics as an art form
- the knowledge of art in general and especially contemporary art
- the definition and development of a personal direction
- the development of a solid, sustained work ethic and time-management skills
- the ability to benefit from the critique of one’s own work and the work of others
  - the ability to explore an idea in breadth and depth through a cohesive body of work
  - the ability to write about one’s work in an articulate and insightful way.

Course Requirements, and Policies
1. Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to be present in each class, for the entire class period. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class at 2:00pm. A student who is not present when roll is taken will be counted as absent. No distinction will be made between excused and unexcused absences. If you arrive in class after the roll has been taken but within the first 15 minutes of class, you will be marked tardy instead of absent. A tardy counts as ½ an absence. Therefore, for every two late arrivals to class, an absence will be counted. After the third absence of the semester, the instructor may lower the student’s final semester grade by one letter grade for each subsequent absence.

   A student who misses a class or is late for class is responsible for any material discussed and any announcements made during class. The student is also responsible for making up the missed work time.

2. Working outside of class is required but is not a substitute for in-class work and participation. Access to the studio at night and on weekends will be through the swipcard system. Use the east entrance to the building.

3. Timely completion of required work by the critique dates is required.

4. Criticism and discussion are important aspects of artistic activity and development. Attendance and active, thoughtful verbal participation at all critiques is mandatory.
5. Participation in loading, firing, and unloading the kilns is required. Students should be aware that these activities must often take place outside of class time. Every student in the advanced class is responsible for firing his/her own work. 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.

6. 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.

7. Students are expected to engage in personal research 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. Many other resources are available online (See: handout of recommended websites) and in Metroplex museum collections, especially the DMA, The Crow Collection of Asian Art, and the Kimbell Art Museum.

8. Each student is required to maintain a three-ring binder for organizing handouts, glaze notes, and other materials.

9. 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.

10. General Studio Rules:
- The ceramics studio is a pet-free, child-free zone 24/7.
- Do not mess with other people’s stuff. Look but don’t touch.
- All cell phone (or other personal electronic device) use is prohibited during class time.
- Smoking, including e-cigarettes, is not allowed in WTFA including the kiln court areas of the ceramics studio.

11. Positive Social Work Environment
In addition to being responsible for the proper use of facilities and equipment, all students are responsible for maintaining a positive social work environment. Advanced students are expected to model good studio practice to students in the beginning classes. A baseline expectation is that all students will be civil and cooperative in their dealings with other students. The necessity of sharing workspace and equipment requires that cooperation take place. A positive sense of community will foster productivity and the creation of good work.

12. The Clay Club
The Clay Club is a student organization chartered to promote interest in the ceramic arts and contribute to the cultural life of the university. The Clay Club is open to any student on campus but students enrolled in ceramics classes may have a special interest in joining and participating in extracurricular ceramic activities and events. The Clay Club sponsors visiting artists, workshops, fieldtrips, attendance at the annual national ceramics conference, and hosts fundraising events to help finance these activities.

13. Please note that the following University policies are in effect:
- “All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.” (See: Student’s Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)
- Students requesting accommodations for disabilities should contact the Office of Student Disability Resources and Services located in Gee Library, Room 132, (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835, StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

Assessment
The following criteria will be used in evaluating work during critiques and in grading the work. Please note that only completed work will be critiqued.
- the finished work must show evidence of an understanding of the technical, aesthetic, and conceptual aspects of the assigned projects
- the degree of effort and involvement apparent in the work
- the degree of innovativeness and creativity shown in the work
- the quality of technique (craftsmanship), emphasizing improvement over the course of the semester
Taking the above criteria into account, projects will be graded as follows:

**A** (Excellent) will be given to those projects which undertake and successfully resolve creative and challenging solutions; which 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.

A midterm evaluation will be based on the completion of all course assignments and an individual body of work and accompanying Artist Statement. The final, semester grade will be based on the completion of all course assignments since midterm, a second body of work and Artist Statement, and all work produced prior to midterm.

35%: Class assignments and individual body of work produced prior to midterm

5%: Artist Statement accompanying the body of work

35%: Class assignments and individual body of work produced after midterm

5%: Artist Statement accompanying the body of work

15%: class performance and attitude throughout the semester; studio maintenance and cleaning; participation in loading, firing, and unloading kilns; participation at critiques; participation in installing and de-installing the end of semester group exhibition.

5%: Assigned essay on the exhibition “Edge” in The University Gallery, January 20 – February 13, 2015

***Remember that your final grade will be subject to the attendance policy stated above***

**Extra credit** is given for volunteering as a student monitor in The University Gallery, first floor Art Building. For extra credit to impact your final grade, a minimum of five hours must be logged as a volunteer. There is a sign up sheet in the Art Office across the hall from the Gallery.

**Assignments**

As our introduction to working with porcelain, we are first going to “play around.” “Let’s see what happens” is an important mindset to engage in and, in fact, is the basis for the creative process. Everyone will participate in two collaborative group projects before embarking on the individual handbuilding projects. In the second half of the semester when we will be slip casting, we will also have a group exercise prior to doing the individual assignment.

**First Half of the Semester: to be completed (glazed or otherwise finished) by midterm**

- Sculptural Cups
- Organic Coil
- Functional cups – altered forms
- Throwing raw material: constructed wall relief
- Assigned essay addressing our exhibition: *Edge*

  **Individual body of work**

  **Artist Statement**

**Second Half of the Semester: completed by the final critique**

- Plaster mold making. (2) two-part plaster of Paris drain molds: one made from a found object the other made from a clay prototype
- Slip casting project
- Individual project
- Wood Kiln: Participate in gathering wood, prepping the kiln, loading, firing, and unloading. Plan on having at least four pieces for the wood firing. The work you designate for the wood kiln can be extra work from assigned projects or specifically designed pieces for wood firing or both!

  **Individual body of work**
Graduate assignment: Two individual bodies of work exploring a concept in breadth and depth. A detailed, written proposal accompanied by visual material such as sketches, plans, maquettes, and samples must be submitted to the instructor for discussion and revision prior to commencing the body of work. The proposal must include a detailed discussion of all aspects of the proposed body of work: concept, intended meaning, design parameters, appropriate forming, finishing, and firing techniques, and the predicted quantity of pieces necessary to adequately explore the idea. Historical and contemporary references that inform your work must be cited from the history of ceramics, the general history of art, and from non-art sources.

Graduate assignment: An Artist Statement accompanying each individual body of work. The Artist Statement must address both theory and practice. The first part of the statement will establish the conceptual framework for the work and contextualize the work in both historic and contemporary art practice. The second part of the statement will address how you have engaged in the creative process to create the work, your intentions in how the meaning is encoded in the work, and how you expect the viewer to approach and access the work.

NOTE: the work due at Midterm must also be present at the final critique to complete your semester's body of work. A group exhibition of work produced during the semester will be installed in the WTFA second floor critique space during finals week. This exhibition will serve as the basis for the final class critique.

Spring Semester 2015 Events

- Patrick Dougherty, Artist in Residence, Department of Art, January 16 – February 6, 2015.
- Edge: Brian Molanphy, Colby Parsons, Merrie Wright, The University Gallery, TAMUC. Tuesday, January 27, 4pm Artists’ panel discussion, Art 111, 5pm Gallery Reception.
- 2015 University of Dallas Regional Juried Ceramic Exhibition, Juror’s lecture and reception Friday, February 13, Irving, TX.
- 16th Annual Empty Bowls fundraiser benefitting the North Texas Food Bank. Bowls delivered to Trinity Ceramic Supply by Friday, February 13. The event is March 6 at the Meyerson Symphony Hall between 11am and 1pm.
- A&M Commerce Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition, March 31 - April 17.
- Art Teacher Workshops, Department of Art, A&M-Commerce, Friday, April 10.
- Clay Club Activities and Spring Fundraiser: TBA
- Check for spring exhibition schedules on the websites for the DMA, the Crow Collection of Asian Art, the Nasher Sculpture Center, the Amon Carter, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, and the Kimbell.
**Tools and Supplies:** You will need all the tools in the basic tool kit and the supplies required in the beginning class. You will also need the following:

- one each of the four colored plastic ribs made by Mud Tools – variety of shapes and sizes
- large serrated metal rib
- a Mud Tools serrated metal rib with fine teeth
- 6 plastic bats (12”)
- LARGE KITCHEN SPONGE
- LARGE TOWEL

Not required but strongly recommended:

- Surform tool(s)
- Canvas covered board and rolling pin
- Small wooden handled needle tool

**Second Semester Tools and Supplies: Beyond the basic tool kit!**

Ribs – different kinds, sizes, applications
Serrated rib for scoring
Smaller needle tool – easier to use on the wheel
Rolling pin, dowel, small wooden roller, canvas-covered board
Lid Master calipers for covered jars, teapots, sectional pieces, etc.
Spray bottle
Banding wheel
Bats
Paint scraper
Surform tools
Respirator with changeable cartridges
Slip trailers
Carving / loop tools – specialized uses
Handmixer for small batches of slips and glazes
Hole makers
Scalpel
Sponge-on-a-stick
Chamois leather
Hairdryer
Paint brushes
Foam pad
Assorted buckets / plastic containers
General supplies: magic marker, ruler, mat knife, scissors
Three ring binder / glaze notebook

**And, of course, Mr. Sponge and Ms. Towel**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ART 450</th>
<th>Spring 2015</th>
<th>COURSE SCHEDULE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>January</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>19 M</td>
<td>Holiday: Martin Luther King Jr. Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 W</td>
<td>Course introduction: syllabus, PPT on porcelain</td>
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<tr>
<td>26 M</td>
<td>Mix porcelain as a group</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 T</td>
<td>“Edge” ceramics exhibition. Panel discussion 4pm. Reception 5pm.</td>
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<td>28 W</td>
<td>Throwing demonstration: cylinder. Collaborative handbuilding project: “Food for thought.”</td>
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<td><strong>February</strong></td>
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<td>2 M</td>
<td>Collaborative throwing project: “Totems.”</td>
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<td>4 W</td>
<td>Sculptural Cups PPT. Demo: handbuilding review</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 M</td>
<td>Sculptural cup prototype due: discussion and workday</td>
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<td>11 W</td>
<td>Throwing project #1: the altered cylinder. Demo and PPT</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 M</td>
<td>Workday</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 W</td>
<td>Workday</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 M</td>
<td>Leatherhard critique: sculptural and functional cups</td>
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<td>25 W</td>
<td>Coil demonstration: organic forms</td>
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<td><strong>March</strong></td>
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<td>2 M</td>
<td>Workday</td>
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<td>4 W</td>
<td>Throwing project #2: moving the clay inward and outward</td>
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<td>9 M</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 W</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 M</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 W</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 M</td>
<td>Glazing</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 W</td>
<td>(NCECA Conference)</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 M</td>
<td>Loading kilns.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>April</strong></td>
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<td>1 W</td>
<td>Demonstration: Making a two-part plaster drain mold</td>
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<td>6 M</td>
<td>Midterm Critique</td>
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<td>8 W</td>
<td>Workday</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 M</td>
<td>Demonstration: slip casting</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 W</td>
<td>Discuss Individual Project proposals</td>
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<td>20 M</td>
<td>Slip casting group exercise</td>
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<td>22 W</td>
<td>Workday</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 M</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 W</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>May</strong></td>
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<td>4 M</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 W</td>
<td>Last Class Day</td>
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<td>10 Sun</td>
<td>Load final Cone 10 kilns</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 W</td>
<td>Install ART 450 exhibition, WTFA second floor</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 R</td>
<td>Final Critique</td>
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Keep this schedule and up-date it throughout the semester. Demonstrations, kiln loading and firing dates, and critiques-in-progress, will be scheduled as necessary.