



**ART/ARTH 350: Introduction to Ceramics Traditions in Umbria and Central Italy**  
**Course Syllabus**  
**Spring Semester 2022**

**Instructor:** Philippa Stannard, MFA, ATR

**Credits:** 3

**Contact Hours:** 45

**Prerequisites:** None

**Class Hours:** TBA

**Office Hours:** TBA

**Course Type:** Standard Course

**Lab Fee:** TBA

**Course Description**

This is a beginning-level ceramics course that will introduce you to the technical and conceptual sensibilities inherent in clay. You will learn about the ceramic traditions in Italy and Umbria as a springboard for learning various hand-building techniques including coil, slab, and pinch methods, as well as the glazing and firing processes. These include learning about prehistoric pottery in central Italy, Etruscan figurative work, and the Maiolica Method from Deruta, as well as the classic terra cotta and black slip glazed urns that are so popular and are often associated with the Mediterranean. We will explore the ceramics of the region of Umbria first hand, taking trips to archeological museums, visiting local ceramics studios, and viewing work made by local ceramicists using the Maiolica method.

**Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Assessment Measures</b>
	<b>Course requirements that will be used to assess students' achievement for each learning outcome</b>
<i>Summarize and apply</i> technical skills, vocabulary, processes and materials related to using clay	Readings, Quizzes, Assignments
<i>Provide</i> examples of the historical and sociological role of ceramics in Umbria from	Readings, Quizzes, Assignments

Neolithic to the Renaissance.	
<i>Integrate</i> design concepts including form, structure, space, surface, color, proportion, composition and function into their work.	Assignments
<i>Differentiate</i> between ceramic traditions or methods in contemporary and historical contexts.	Oral presentation and written report

## Course Materials

### Readings

Please consult Moodle for links to your readings.

### Assessment

Ceramic Assignments	75% (three total, 25% each)
Quizzes and class participation	9%
Oral report / presentation	8%
Written report	8%

### Grading

Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A A-	93% - 100% 90% - 92%	Exceptional Excellent
B+ B B-	87% - 89% 83% - 86% 80% - 82%	Superior
C+ C C-	77% - 79% 73% - 76% 70% - 72%	Satisfactory
D+ D D-	67% - 69% 63% - 66% 60% - 62%	Low Pass
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

## Course Requirements

Grades are based on class attendance, class participation, quizzes, the quality and punctuality of turning in written and ceramic assignments, and overall improvement. Assignments are due on the assigned date. For every

class that your assignment is late, your grade on the assignment will drop by one letter grade, unless you have a written note from a doctor. Please see Moodle for up to date information.

#### *Ceramic assignments (75%)*

Students are requested to finish all assignments given in the assigned time. We will regularly make work that requires drying time between various stages (such as waiting for a pot to be “leather-hard” before applying a handle). This means coming into the studio outside of class to cover or uncover work to control drying and finish work begun earlier. You might even want to consider taking your work home if you will not be coming to the studio for a few days. Your success in developing skills will be directly proportional to the time spent on your work outside of scheduled class times.

You will have three ceramic assignments due during the semester. Each assignment will be graded three times.

**1<sup>st</sup> Grading – LEATHER-HARD/CONSTRUCTION** – 50% - 70% of each assignment, depending on the assignment. The date your assignment is due, you will be graded based on the quality, time spent, level of challenge, concept/aesthetics, and craftsmanship of your work. You should be at the proper drying stage: LEATHER-HARD. This way, changes can be made if needed without starting your work again from scratch. Once your work is at the bone-dry stage, additions and corrections are almost impossible to do well.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Grading – BISQUE** – 10% - 15% of each assignment, depending on the assignment.

Your pieces will be graded again based on how well they fired. Did they dry properly (slowly and evenly, otherwise cracks may appear...)? Did they crack during firing? How sound was your construction?

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grading – GLAZED/FINAL PRODUCT** – 15% - 40% of each assignment, depending on the assignment. You will glaze or decorate your work using different techniques such as slip painting, Maiolica painting, waxing, etc. You will be graded on your piece as a finished product. Did you apply the glaze evenly? How much time and effort did you put into painting and/or finishing your work?

Work will be evaluated in individual and group critiques throughout the semester. Grading will be based on the *quality* of your work, achieved through your productivity, specifically:

- *Level of Challenge:* How far did you go beyond the minimum requirements of the assignment to produce more numerous and challenging pieces? How thoroughly did you explore the required techniques?  
Note: Quantity alone will not raise your grade unless you use the pieces to arrive at a higher quality, such as to work through ideas or improve handling of materials.
- *Concept/Aesthetics:* How original and personal is your solution? How effectively did you use principles of design to communicate your concept? How far did you reach beyond the obvious?
- *Craftsmanship:* Is your construction sound? Did you take time to finish and resolve surfaces, joints, edges, and other details in an appropriate manner for your design?

#### *Assignment 1: Pinch Technique – Prehistoric Ceramics in Central Italy*

- Two pots: one beaker, the other an urn (made by attaching two beakers) pinch technique. Pinch, squeeze, turn. Pinch, squeeze, turn...

#### *Assignment 2: Sculptural Coil Technique – Black Figure Vase*

- One vase made using the coil technique.
- Design your motif and decoration, paint with colored slips while leather hard (not bone dry).

#### *Assignment 3: Maiolica Technique – Inspired by Deruta*

- We will learn the Maiolica method that includes creating a motif or design, making a stencil, and using carbon to “pounce” the design onto the ceramic work, after it has been glazed. Once our glazed work has been “pounced”, we will paint the motifs using the Maiolica technique.

#### *Quizzes and Class Participation (9%)*

You will be given quizzes on your readings and on what we have learned in class. Class participation refers to active participation during class time. This includes studio time, critiques, discussion of readings, keeping the

studio clean, and helping during firing and any other activity during class time.

✕ <b>Perceived Interest in material</b> ↓ 📄	Usually seems uninterested in what others/professor has to say <b>1 points</b> ✕	Because of the material covered in this course, we will be discussing subjects that may be disturbing to some students. Some of the arguments discussed in this course contain violence and/or murder in their historical contexts. Some images displayed during lectures might be disturbing. <b>2 points</b> ✕	Sometimes displays lack of interest <b>3 points</b> ✕	Usually actively and respectfully listens to peers and professor <b>4 points</b> ✕	Usually actively and respectfully listens to peers and professor <b>5 points</b> ✕
↑ <b>Perceived Preparation</b> ✕ ↓ 📄	Tries to respond when called but does not offer much. Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion <b>1 points</b> ✕	Usually demonstrates some preparation. Offers straightforward information without elaboration. Demonstrates sporadic involvement in discussion <b>2 points</b> ✕	Demonstrates adequate preparation. Tries interpretation and analysis. Tries to respond to other students constructively. Demonstrates some involvement <b>3 points</b> ✕	Demonstrates very good preparation. Offers interpretation and analysis. Responds to other students constructively. Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement <b>4 points</b> ✕	Always Demonstrates excellent preparation. Offers analysis and synthesis. Puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches. <b>5 points</b> ✕
↑ <b>Impact on Class Success</b> ✕ ↓ 📄	Comments do not advance the conversation, are off topic . Questions are repetitive and have already been answered. <b>1 points</b> ✕	Comments and questions do little to advance the conversation and are often off topic or show little thought. <b>2 points</b> ✕	Comments and questions sometimes move the conversation forward but sometimes do not advance the discourse <b>3 points</b> ✕	Comments and questions usually contribute and move class discussion forward. <b>4 points</b> ✕	Comments and questions always contribute and move class discussion forward. <b>5 points</b> ✕
↑ <b>Frequency and appropriateness of Class Participation</b> ✕ ↓ 📄	Seldom participates and displays little engagement. <b>1 points</b> ✕	Appears "tuned out" more than present more often than not. <b>2 points</b> ✕	Sometimes participates but others times is "tuned out". <b>3 points</b> ✕	Usually actively participates at appropriate times. <b>4 points</b> ✕	Always actively participates at appropriate times. <b>5 points</b> ✕

↑ Respectful Interaction and Acceptance of Critique	Is disrespectful towards fellow students when critiquing their work or does not accept critique of own work given respectfully.	Appears to show lack of awareness and/or empathy in choice or words and/or tone when critiquing others work. Is adverse to accepting critique of own work, even when given respectfully.	Sometimes but not always respectfully and appropriately critiques the work and ideas of fellow students. Sometimes but not always accepts critique own work with an open mind (when such critique is respectfully given).	Usually respectfully and appropriately critiques the work and ideas of fellow students. Usually accepts critique own work with an open mind (when such critique is respectfully given).	Always respectfully and appropriately critiques the work and ideas of fellow students. Always accepts critique own work with an open mind (when such critique is respectfully given).
	1 points	2 points	3 points	4 points	5 points

### *Oral reports and presentations (8%)*

Everyone will research a ceramicist/artist that incorporates ceramics into their work, technique, or style/period and give an oral and written report on their chosen artist/technique/style/period. Make sure that the ceramicist/technique/style/period that you choose has enough information available to write 1500-2000 word paper. ***Your paper and your oral report are both due on the day that you sign up to give your presentation.***

The *oral report* will be given to our class as a projected presentation, basically explaining the life and work of your ceramicist, what you think about their work, and should include about 20 examples of their work. If you choose to give a report on a technique/style/period, you should explain the history, influences, and process, etc. The images in your presentation should be of a higher resolution since they will be enlarged on the monitor. (Use Google→ Image search→ tools→ image size→large.) Please talk about your ceramicist's life, artistic style, techniques, etc. We are interested in your creative analysis and interpretation. The oral report should last about 15 minutes.

Be prepared to give your oral presentation at the beginning of class. Your preparation will be included as part of your grade. Be prepared to give your oral presentation at the beginning of class. Your presentation should be uploaded to the appropriate Google Drive folder with appropriate sharing permissions to present it from my Google Drive account. Logging into and out of your personal email during your presentation time will affect your grade.

### *Written report (8%)*

The *written paper* on your chosen artist/technique/style/period should be at least 1500-2000 words, typed, and double-spaced. You may insert images into your paper, if desired. *I am interested to know what YOU think about your chosen artist/technique/style/period.* Tell me why you chose the artist/technique/style/period and describe the process, history, career, etc. I do not want to read a paper that is half quotations. Limit the number of quotes to a minimum (no more than three). If you are doing your report on an artist, how did they get into ceramics? What contributions did they make to the world of ceramics? What is unique about their work? Is there a subject or theme that ties their work together? If you are doing a report on a technique, where and how did it evolve, why? Why are you interested in it? If you are doing a report on a style or period, research pertinent historical information and exemplary work from that period. I am interested in your creative analysis and interpretation. Your bibliography should include at least 5 sources.

### Additional Course Information

#### *Clean up*

You are REQUIRED to clean and pick up after yourself. This includes cleaning up your work space by moistening and returning all unused clay to the clay bins, wiping your workspace with a wet sponge, returning all tools to their appropriate places on the tool shelves, etc. Any clay on the floor should be wiped or swept up. Spilled glazes need to be wiped up, and the lids should be put back on the containers. Store all artwork in

designated areas. Leave it cleaner than you found it!

### Attendance Policy

Absences for Covid-related circumstances: in order to keep the entire Umbra community healthy and to comply with local laws, you may not enter the Umbra premises if you have a temperature of 37.5 °C (99.5 °F) or higher. For all students who display any relevant symptoms, the procedure will be the following:

1. avoid going to class;
2. immediately notify the Student Services staff;
3. be prepared to get tested for COVID at a local pharmacy within the day.

The following additional conditions apply:

- Students may attend classes remotely and without academic penalty via Zoom or Skype *but only* if they are waiting for the test to be scheduled or performed.
- Students with a positive test result (or who have been in close contact with someone who tested positive) must follow all applicable quarantine or isolation requirements and may attend classes remotely, *without academic penalty*.
- Students with a negative test result are allowed to attend class in person.

It is Institute policy that students with symptoms be tested. Any student refusing testing will not be admitted to the Institute under any circumstances and any absences will not be considered eligible for an extra absence for any classes missed. In other words, refusing a test and staying in one's apartment is considered an unexcused absence.

Class attendance (in person or through live connection) is mandatory. Students are allowed two "free" absences, which do not need to be justified. However, it is considered common courtesy to inform the instructor of your absence when possible. It is the students' responsibility to keep them in case of real necessity (sickness or any other unforeseen inconvenience that may prevent students from being in class).

**Additional absences relating to illness may be approved by the Academic Director but only if a medical certification is provided.**

Each additional absence, unless for a very serious reason, will lower the students' grade by one grade level (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B). If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. It is also the policy of the Institute that any student who has eight or more absences automatically fails the class.

Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

### **Academic Integrity**

All forms of cheating (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and plagiarism (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

### **Classroom Policy**

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate respect for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that cell phones must be turned off before the beginning of each class. Computers and other electronic devices cannot be used during class lectures and discussions.

Feel free to email me if you run into any problems, BUT before you email (1) read the syllabus and all other previous correspondences, (2) Check Moodle, (3) Ask a friend, (4) Google. Read requirements well in advance so that you are not faced with a problem the night before or just hours before submission.



## Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

### WEEK 1

#### **Clay: Origins, Stages, Processes**

Day 1 Course overview, stages of clay

Day 2: Archeological Museum visit

Readings for the week:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardium\\_pottery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardium_pottery)

<https://potterycrafters.com/the-7-stages-of-clay/>

### WEEK 2

#### **Prehistoric Pottery : Construction**

Day 1 Pinch pots: Construction

Day 2: Pinch pots: Refining shape and surface

Video for the week:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P96VZqa6OPU>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardium\\_pottery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardium_pottery)

### WEEK 3

#### **Prehistoric Pottery : Cardium or Impressed ware**

Day 1 Terra decantata and decorative techniques

Day 2: Assignment 1 due, Critique

### WEEK 4

#### **Etruscan Pottery : History, Form and Function**

Day 1: Student Reports

Day 2: Choosing shape, making a guide

Coil method making base

Readings for the week:

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/etru/hd\\_etru.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/etru/hd_etru.htm)

<http://www.mysteriousetruscans.com/art/pottery.html>

### WEEK 5

#### **Etruscan Pottery : Coil Method**

Day 1 : Coil method making base

Day 2: building height

Readings for the week:

[https://www.worldhistory.org/Etruscan\\_Civilization/](https://www.worldhistory.org/Etruscan_Civilization/)

### WEEK 6

#### **Etruscan Pottery: Red and Black figure, painting with slips**

Day 1 Finishing construction and adding decorative elements.

Day 2: Creating design, transferring to vases, decorative slips

Readings for the week:

[https://www.worldhistory.org/Etruscan\\_Pottery/](https://www.worldhistory.org/Etruscan_Pottery/)

## **Semester Break**

### **WEEK 7**

#### **Assignment 2 Due, Student Reports**

Day 1 Assignment 2 due

Day 2: Student Reports

Readings for the week:

Heins, Frances Ingraham *Majolica Pottery has a Long History* Chicago Tribune. October 8, 2000

### **WEEK 8**

#### **Maiolica Method: History and Process**

Day 1 Origins of Maiolica, choosing pattern, creating a stencil

Day 2 Glazing, Pouncing and painting

### **WEEK 9**

#### **Assignment 3 Due, Glazing and Firing All Work**

Day 1 Assignment 3 Due, Critique. Glazing Assignment 2 if desired.

Day 2: Loading Kiln, Studio Clean up

### **WEEK 10**

#### **Student Reports**

Day 1 Student Reports

Day 2: Final Grading of all projects

### **WEEK 11**

#### **Special Academic Events Week**

TBA