

NAME:

CERAMICS ONE

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WELCOME TO CERAMICS ONE! I am very glad that you decided to take this Ceramics class. This semester, we will be exploring **clay** as a **material**, as an important element of **history** in many cultures, as a **process** from mixing to firing, and as a **product**, both in sculptural and functional terms. As with any course, you will get out of your studies in art what you put into them. I hope you are as excited as I am to begin our explorations in the ceramic arts!

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Clay is one of the oldest and most universal media. Throughout history, it shows up in the art of almost every culture. During this semester long course you will explore this fascinating medium through hand building and the pottery wheel. You will become acquainted with the techniques that allow you to throw pottery on the wheel and make sculpture with hand building techniques such as coil building and slab building. You will study this medium's history and learn about its limitations and possibilities. Some outside class work required.

GOALS

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Use the potters' wheel with a basic level of proficiency, and apply basic handbuilding and decoration techniques.
2. Understand clay terminology and other elements and principles of art.
3. Create functional and non-functional pieces of pottery.
4. Identify applicable aesthetic and historical aspects of clay and the ceramic arts.
5. Appreciate the arts through the medium of clay.
6. Give and receive constructive criticism appropriately.

TEXT

1. **HANDOUTS** and resource materials will be required reading for course. Handouts and resource materials must be attached and kept in the sketchbook.
 2. **SKETCHBOOKS** will be provided and used as textbook, workbook, and idea book for this class. This is a visual course, so references from books, the internet, and your own drawings will be required for most assignments. Reference materials should be collected in your sketchbook; this will usually be assigned as homework, but additional research may be necessary for certain projects.
 3. **HOMEWORK SITE** should be checked regularly for resource materials, handouts, and project deadlines.
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EVALUATION

Grades in Ceramics I are based on the following criteria:

Projects – 30%

Criteria for each project will be presented – your products must show effort to meet these criteria. Products must be finished and fired on time.

Research, Homework, & Evaluations – 30%

Homework/sketchbook assignments will typically be presented weekly. These must be submitted on time and indicate effort according to criteria. Most projects will include a written self-evaluation as part of assessment; these also must be submitted on-time and reflect effort according to criteria.

Class Participation – 30%

You must work in the ceramics studio for the entire class period – too much socializing will lower your grade in the course. Additional work time outside of class will be recorded. This work time can boost your grade, since the more time you put into your ceramics work, the more your work will improve. You must be on time to class – three or more unexcused latenesses could result in the drop of a whole letter grade. You are expected to actively participate during class studio time, discussions, demonstrations, and critiques, and to follow the rules of the studio.

Festival Participation – 10%

You must show your work in the Fine Arts Festival, attend the festival, and complete an assessment of the exhibit.

RULES

You will be sharing the ceramic studios at Malvern Prep with **nearly a hundred other ceramic artists**. Out of **respect** to our studio community and to each other, our studio has a set of basic requirements that are very important. The list of rules below is our starting point. We will spend some class time clarifying these rules.

1. Arrive to class prepared, on time, and begin working immediately.

A sketchbook is required for this class, and you must bring it to class each day.

Don't wait to work! You will quickly learn that 45 minutes is barely enough time to work with clay. After our introduction to the studio at the beginning of the course, I expect that you will get your supplies and begin to work immediately each day. Once everyone has arrived, I have taken attendance, and everyone is ready to work, we will pause for a moment of reflection and a summary of the day's work. Some days, you should expect a demonstration or instruction early in the class period; other days we may clean up a little early for a closing demonstration or wrap-up discussion. I will also post instructions each day.

You are responsible for homework and project deadlines.

2. RESPECT – safety, self/participation, others, materials, process

Follow all safety guidelines presented in class – and use common sense.

Be fair to yourself – give all projects your best effort, complete sketchbook assignments on-time, participate and pay attention in class. Extra work in the studio will be required to master the skills you will learn in this class.

You will often be expected to work in collaboration with other artists, and you are expected to give 100% to these team/group activities. Profanity, insults, and language or behavior demonstrating intolerance are unacceptable.

A mature level of responsibility is expected at all times.

Please take care of your materials and the studio space. This includes being economical in the use of materials, taking care of both works-in-progress and finished works (yours and others'), and cleaning up. We will be doing cooperative clean-up in this class. This means you may sometimes be cleaning up shared areas of the studio, in order to maintain our space.

Any project work done for other students during this class is considered cheating, and both parties will be subject to the consequences. (Refer to your student handbook.)

Clay is a teacher. Pay attention to what you learn from your successes and challenges with the medium.

3. Listen to directions the first time, and ask questions appropriately when necessary.

4. Suspend your disbelief and TRY! Keep a positive attitude.

We will also review additional **technical guidelines** for ceramic art, which will help you to be successful with your work!

ABSENCE POLICY

One-week notice to the teacher is required if you have a planned absence that does not fall during the scheduled school calendar vacation. Work missed in any class by any student must be made up as directed by his teacher, and it is the student's responsibility to see the teacher immediately upon his return to school for such direction. Assignments must be completed to the teacher's satisfaction within a mutually-agreed time period. Failure to do so constitutes incomplete work and may result in a failing grade for the marking period. No student may graduate or be promoted unless all work is satisfactorily completed.

You will quickly learn that success in ceramics depends on daily 'maintenance' of your work - maintaining moisture levels, applying decoration or attachments at specific stages, keeping things wrapped appropriately, and so on. As we progress with projects, I suggest finding a 'backup' peer in your class on whom you can rely to re-wrap, spray, or otherwise maintain your work if you do miss class.

OTHER NOTES...

- Occasionally, free homework passes may be given for stellar work, studio citizenship, or just because your teacher has a kind heart. Extra credit options will be provided regularly.
- In recognition of the many connections between music and art, our studio is music-friendly. I have an iPod stereo in class, and will consider appropriate music requests from artists who are participating fully in class. We will go over guidelines for use of headphones during our studio introduction.

SKETCHBOOKS: CERAMICS ONE

Think ceramic artists don't draw?

Think again! Ceramic artists draw *all the time...* in fact, drawing is very important to your success as a student of ceramics!

Your sketchbook will be your notebook, textbook, and idea book for this class.

You must bring your sketchbook to every class! Sometimes you will be asked to take notes in your sketchbook or do other assigned sketchbook work during class. You may finish an assignment early or have some free time in class. If you ever find yourself with extra time, put some extra effort into your sketchbook assignments. You are never limited to just your class assignments - extra effort in your sketchbook demonstrates that you are learning to think as an artist. Boredom is not allowed in this studio - boredom is only for boring people! **Make your sketchbook assignments fun for yourself!**

If you happen to forget your sketchbook, you will be given paper and you will be expected to securely attach any 'loose paper' work in your sketchbook for submission.

- 1. Your sketchbook is graded, but there are no 'good' or 'bad' sketchbook drawings! It is not necessary that you draw well in order to get a perfect score in your sketchbook – all that is required is that you follow directions and put forth some effort!** However, I promise that your drawing and ceramics/sculpture skills will improve if you work in your sketchbook as assigned. The requirements for your sketchbook are explained in detail below.
- 2. Sketchbook Scores are 100 points weekly and your sketchbook is 30% of your grade.** Most ceramics projects take longer than a week. So... think about it this way: a thoughtful, insightful sketchbook is essential for you to do well in this class!



- 3. Ceramics I sketchbooks will be collected weekly for evaluation at the start of the class period on most Thursdays and will be available for pickup in class on most Fridays.**
- 4. Each week, there will be a new sketchbook assignment presented on Friday.** Assignments are posted to the homework site and to our board in class.
- 5. If you submit a sketchbook late, an automatic 20 points will be deducted.**
The last time a sketchbook assignment will be accepted is one week from its original deadline. I do not accept make-up sketchbook work at the end of an interim or semester. Sketchbook work is relevant to current assignments, and therefore the relevance is outdated when 'crammed' in at the end of a term.
- 6. Your sketchbook grade may also include in-class sketchbook work.** An example: You may be expected to complete sketches for a project in your sketchbook.

Do THIS FIRST:

- Your name and class should be clearly visible on the front cover of your sketchbook.**
- Please date each page/assignment you complete in your sketchbook!**

HOW TO USE A CERAMICS SKETCHBOOK

Your sketchbook assignments will usually be any one or combination of three different 'sketchbook uses.' These categories comprise how many artists use their sketchbooks. As you become more comfortable keeping a sketchbook, you may come up with other purposes for it! We will review these uses and do a sample assignment in class at the beginning of the course. The sketchbook assignment will be posted on the board and on our website each week.

①. DRAWING/PLANNING

When you are going to create a work of art that may take an extended period of time, it is important that you have a good plan for your design. A planning assignment will often ask you to do a series of 'thumbnail sketches' – an artist's brainstorm – for a project. You can do many thumbnail sketches on one page of your sketchbook! Thumbnails can be used to work out ideas for content, composition, color schemes, or other aspects of your project. *You do not have to draw well in order to complete Ceramics sketchbook assignments.* Just try your best!

Samples:

- *In class, we're working on a sculpture based on organic forms. Sketch five organic forms you find in your kitchen or backyard.*
- *In class, we will be working on designing a city – each of you will be creating city buildings using slabs. Sketch four ideas for city buildings in your sketchbook. Choose your favorite and develop it in detail, including its projected size, areas of texture, colors, etc.*
- *We're working on wheel thrown cups in class. In your sketchbook, work out four ideas for a matching set of at least three thrown cups. How will your cups relate to each other in terms of design?*

②. RESEARCH

Sometimes you may need some visual references for your project. For instance – if you want to do a sculpture of a tree, you will need some pictures or drawings of a tree to help you evoke realism. We will be looking at some periods and movements in art history, and some of our projects will be based on these. So, for instance, you may need to collect some works by an artist and/or some information about an artist whose work you may want to emulate. Any visual images or reference materials you collect must be secured with a glue stick in your sketchbook.

Samples:

- *We will be working on a project in class involving sculpting an animal. Collect 8-10 images of animals you may be interested in sculpting and paste them in your sketchbook.*
- *Choose one of the artists whose work we viewed in class. Write a brief paragraph about this artist, and find three ceramic works by this artist and include them in your sketchbook.*

B. RESPONSE

You will be required to read some articles relating to art history, contemporary issues in art, and/or societal issues. We will be having class discussions, and may also watch an occasional relevant video in class. When you are asked to respond to a reading, discussion, or video, your response can include drawing, writing, research, or any combination, and should comprise at least a whole page in your sketchbook. Your response should present your perspective and/or personal thoughts on the content, in either writing or drawing. Simply copying/pasting images is not enough!

Handouts that are distributed in class (including this one) must be kept in your sketchbook. The folder will be checked periodically, and assigned a homework grade. It must be brought to class every day... you may leave yours on your shelf if you like.

Your individual and creative responses are valuable.

These guidelines are a starting place - they represent the minimum expectations.

Alternate solutions that demonstrate extra effort, creativity, and learning are encouraged and expected!

GOOD LUCK & HAVE FUN!