SYLLABUS

I. COURSE TITLE

ART 6551 Ceramics: Hand-Built Methods 3 Semester Hours

II. PREREQUISITES

ART 351 or the equivalent

III. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Various hand-built methods, such as coil and slab, will be used to create a body of work that reflects experimentation and advanced craftsmanship.

IV. RATIONALE

This course offers the student an opportunity to explore hand-building methods as vehicles for artistic expression. While wheel throwing offers immediate results to the ceramist, hand-building offers the student an opportunity to participate more fully in the creative process. As more time is invested in the creation of each piece, the ceramist has an opportunity to reflect on what and how to best communicate his/her ideas. End results of hand-built pieces are many times more expressive than wheel thrown works because of the additional reflection that occurs during the creation process and the extra time needed to apply various methods of construction and surface decoration. Hand-building techniques may also benefit the ceramist as they explore possibilities of synthesizing methods of hand-building to wheel thrown forms and ceramic sculpture in other learning environments. For centuries ceramists have used hand-building methods for utilitarian purposes. Today, however, there is a growing movement in the field of ceramics towards creating hand-built forms for decorative and expressive purposes. Hand-building can provide the student with a unique and powerful vehicle for artistic expression beyond mere utility. It is an art form like no other, with limitless possibilities.

V. LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

A. Realize the expressive potential behind hand-building methods and techniques
B. Engineer creative support systems that are either temporary or built into the structural framework or a hand-built project in order to control the exterior lines (contour) of a clay form.
C. Understand the characteristics of clay during each stage of the drying process so as to maximize the expressive potential of the medium
D. Avoid cracks, slumping, and warping on creative hand-built pieces by controlling the cross-sectional thickness of clay walls in the process of constructing a form.
E. Manipulate clay using the traditional pinch and extended pinch techniques of forming hand-built pieces.
F. Apply various coiling techniques (such as vertical and spiral units, horizontal rings, open loops, woven strips, etc.) as a way of enhancing the textural and design qualities of hand-built form.
G. Incorporate extruded forms into hand built projects in a complementary manner.
H. Create complex hand-built forms using various slab techniques.

I. Apply various surface decoration techniques on hand-built forms in such a manner that the decoration complements the appearance of the form.
J. Apply various glazing methods as a way of enhancing the overall aesthetic qualities of a hand-built form.
K. Research hand-building methods and techniques in the library and record relevant information in a ceramic journal
L. Demonstrate the ability to hollow out solid clay sculptural forms using the "honeycomb" method without sacrificing the strength or integrity of the piece.
M. (Graduate) learn how to make a press-mold relief sprig that can be added to a hand-built form.
N. (Graduate0 Write a brief paper (4-5 typed pages) on a hand-built topic including visuals and photograph of an applied techniques.

VI. COURSE TOPICS

The major topics to be considered are:

A. Introduction: Why Hand-Building?
B. Getting Started: Basic Tools (Set up) and Materials
C. Work Space Tips
D. Exploring the Nature of Clay
    1. Wedging
    2. Recycling clay
    3. Selecting clay
    4. Firing temperatures
    5. Hardness and porosity
    6. Texture, strength, and plasticity
    7. Shrinkage
    8. Controlling stresses
    9. Keeping clay moist
    10. Drying the clay
E. Hand-building Techniques
    1. The Potter's Language
    2. Moisture Chart
    3. Traditional pinching
    4. Extended pinching
    5. Pinch and coil
    6. Coiling methods
        a) Vertical units
        b) Horizontal rings
        c) Spiral coils
        d) Snail units
        e) Woven coils
        f) Open loop
        g) Curvinlinear rings with geometric fill-ins
    7. Slab techniques
        a) Rolling pen
        b) Slab roller

c) Thrown slabs
d) Hammock draped slaps (hump mold)
e) Geometric construction

8. Modeling techniques
    a) Solid for method
        i. Splice and hollow technique
        ii. Honeycomb technique
    b) Temporary core method (flexible armature for firing)
    c) Armature method (for making mold)
9. Repairing cracks and breaks (adhesive)
10. Methods of finishing (sealants, patinas, and stains)

F. Surface decorations
    1. Colorants (oxides, carbonates, stains)
    2. Colored clays
    3. Colored slips
    4. Glazes (ash, salt, majolica, raku, etc.)
G. Brief history of hand-built pottery
H. Aesthetics: what makes a pot work?
I. Projects:
    1. Extended pinch pitcher or two pinch pot combo
    2. Coil planter with extruded shapes
    3. Slab windowsill planter project or slab geometric construction
    4. Slab and extruded tea pot
    5. Sculptural form with buckles and latches (slab-coil-pinch combo) or sculptural form tea pot
    6. Figurative ceramic sculpture
    7. Table fountain (base section: slab, coil and pinch, top section: "honeycomb" method from a solid form

VII. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES

Methods and activities for instruction will include:

A. Lecture
B. Demonstrations
C. Lab assignments
D. Visual examples from various sources (personal, other student work, and books)
E. Critiques

VIII. ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

A. **Ceramic Notebook:** Each student will be required to keep a ceramic journal/notebook that should include: lecture notes, sketches for ceramic projects, glazing notations, oral report notes, photocopies of wheel thrown examples, etc.

Method of Evaluation: The ceramic notebook will be graded on content (inclusion of lecture notes, glazing notations, library research, sketches, examples, etc.), legibility, neatness, and organization. 10%

B. **Oral Report**: One day during the semester will be dedicated to giving oral reports on surface enrichment topics. Each student will research a wheel throwing topic in the library and give a 5-8 minute oral report of his/her findings. Topics will be related to surface enrichment topics.

Method of Evaluation: The report will include a bibliography, central thesis, main points, visuals, conclusion, and a practical application. Outline and notes should be recorded in a ceramic journal or notebook.

10%

C. **Projects** (Two dozen surface enrichment exercises followed by a Body of Work with Applied Research): Surface enrichment exercises are designed to allow students the opportunity to experiment with different techniques prior to creating a finishing a body of work with appropriate surface decoration.

Method of Evaluation: At the beginning of each assignment students will receive a critique sheet outlining the criteria and assessment for the glaze formulation assignments.

a. 20-24 Different Surface Enrichment Exercises
b. 12-15 Wheel Thrown Pot Decorated with Best Results of Research

Method of Evaluation: Each assignment will be graded according to a specification checklist. The spec (critique) sheet will be handed out at the beginning of each assignment so that students are aware o applying certain techniques/principles. 70%

D. Final Examination: A comprehensive examination will be required at the end of the semester. The test will be graded according to objective information given in class related to oral reports and lecture notes. 5%

TOTAL 100%

IX. GRADING SCALE

A. = 93-100
B. = 85-92
C. = 76-84
D. = 65-75
F. = 0-64
I. = A incomplete may be given to a student who has been providentially hindered from completing work required in a course, provided that:

1. Semester attendance requirements have been met;
2. Most of the required work has been done;
3. The student is doing passing work and the student has made prior arrangements with the faculty member to complete the remaining work at a later date.

The grade of I must be removed promptly or it becomes an F; it cannot be removed by repeating the course."

X. REFERENCES

Available by request from the professor.