

Empty Bowls Level 1

Spring 2023

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Overview

Do we have an obligation to help others in the community? How can art be part of how we help each other? Despite the wealth we have in this country, there are still many people who do not have their basic needs met. One of those basic needs is food.

Students will learn basic ceramics skills including throwing, hand building, and surface treatments. Students will construct a body of work that will begin to show their artistic voice through clay. Students will be expected to contribute bowls and a pottery lottery item to the Empty Bowls' event at the end of the course.

This course will also inform students about the problem of hunger in their community, health implications that result from a lack of food, the larger social justice paradigm, possible solutions to the problem, and finally, how to organize and execute a community charitable event here on campus, and ultimately, benefitting from the Empty Bowls experience to help them address the issue in their own community.

Texts/Articles

'A Potter's Book' by Bernard Leach

'Finding One's Way with Clay' by Paulus Berensohn

TBD - Each guest teacher may assign a text or readings prior to their visit to the class

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding and application of basic throwing skills through completed thrown bowls.
2. Demonstrate an understanding and application of basic hand building skill through completed pieces, larger or smaller.
3. Demonstrate an understanding and application of ceramic surface treatments through completed ceramic pieces.
4. Focus on the selected theme and the relation of their ceramics work to that theme. The theme might be Civic Life and Ethics, or Diversity and Social Justice.
5. Organize and execute a successful Empty Bowls event.

Theme Criteria

According to the theme selected.

Course Expectations

Students are required to attend class, ready to discuss assigned readings. There will be no make-ups for exams or flexibility on assignment deadlines without prior clearance from the instructors.

Course Requirements

Students are required to:

- Attend all class meetings as scheduled
- Participate in class discussions
- Complete ceramic bowls and pottery lottery artworks
- Participate in the organization of the event, the marketing of the event, and the review of the outcome with an eye towards next steps
- A 3-to-5 page paper on the relation of art to the selected course theme

Weekly Schedule

- Each session will include a lesson from a guest on a topic pertaining to the problem of hunger in our community, solutions, and practical information regarding hosting/creating a charitable event, in addition to technical ceramic instruction and studio time. The approximate breakdown of the session will be 1-hour civics' lesson, and 2-hour studio/ceramics instruction.

Week 1

Lesson Topic: History of Empty Bowls – Context for the annual event which is the goal of the class and will be held when agreed upon.

Event planning: Venue for the EB event must be selected now.

Ceramics Skills: Basic Wheel Throwing, wedging, entering, opening and pulling walls

Week 2

Lesson Topic: Local Hunger Statistics - What are the demographics and hunger statistics in the local area and the state? How are those related to the problem of hunger on the campus?

Ceramics Skills: Review basic throwing skills/student sharing, manipulation of forms and throwing off the hump

Week 3

Lesson Topic: Brain Science and Hunger - Examining the physical, developmental and social/emotional impacts of hunger/inadequate nutrition.

Event planning: Students select which of the 5 areas of the event they want to help with: pots, food, volunteers, marketing, and coordination with the development team

Ceramics Skills: Individual wheel instruction, slabs, construction techniques, and finishing

Week 4

Lesson Topic: History of Social Justice - Examples of the ways in which acknowledgement and identification of a social problem have sparked social justice movements in this country

Ceramics Skills: Individual wheel instruction, pinch and coil techniques

Week 5

Lesson Topic: Art History - Overview of the history of pottery and ceramics, and the ways in which art has reflected the life of the community in which it was made

Event planning: Organization of the 5 areas – assignments made. Estimate size of event and needs in each area. Strategies for outreach to potential contributors for pots, soup, volunteers, and cash contributions; branding and marketing/advertising strategies for engaging the campus and public

Ceramics Skills: footing, trimming, and surface decorations with the wheel

Week 6

Lesson Topic: Guest Artist

Week 7

Lesson Topic: Solutions to the Problem of Hunger - Local food pantries and charities share about their missions and impact in the community

Event planning: Check in on event progress by each area.

Ceramics Skills: Surface treatments - glaze

Week 8

Lesson Topic: Solutions to the Problem of Hunger – Campus Food Pantry, ideas about a soup kitchen on campus, agricultural information about food production and a garden on campus

Ceramics Skills: Surface treatments - underglaze, sgraffito, embossing

Week 9

Lesson Topic: Legal Considerations and 501c3 - How to follow the law

Event planning: Check in on event progress by each area. Confirm the detail of money collection at the event, charitable deduction, etc. in coordination with the university development team.

Ceramics Skills: Pottery Lottery - larger, more complex, and multi-part pieces

Week 10

Ceramics Skills: Basic modeling, continued throwing, decorating, and completion of bowls

Week 11

Event planning: Check in on event progress by each area.

Ceramics Skills: Artistic Critiques - framework and critique the works of students in the class

Week 12

Event planning: Check in.

Ceramics Skills: Refining skills/Individualized instruction

Week 13

Event planning: Check in.

Ceramics Skills: Refining skills/Individualized instruction

Week 14

Lesson Topic: Getting Involved - Resources for finding opportunities to give back

Ceramics Skills: Refining skills/Individualized instruction

Grades

Your final grade for this course is based on the following:

- 50% Ceramic items
- 25% Participate in organizing and executing the event
- 25% A 4 to 6 page paper on one of either theme: The Role of Art in Diversity and Social Justice or Civic Life and Ethics.