

Edmonds Community College
Visual Arts Department
Ceramics Procedures and Practices for Students

Summary/Scope

The purpose of the Ceramics studio program at Edmonds Community College is to create an innovative environment aimed at promoting creativity and imagination. The program offers classes for both credit degree seeking students and non-credit students. The Ceramics studio is managed by the Visual Art Department in the Humanities Division. The studio and equipment are designed to support instructions and to help students reach their course objectives.

Edmonds Community College Visual Arts Department strives to maintain a safe work environment by minimizing the exposure of hazardous materials for everyone. The studio contains no known carcinogens and limits any chemicals that can be absorbed through the skin. The following procedures are in place to ensure the studio is a safe and inclusive environment for all participants and staff.

Intended Usage of Art Department Facilities and Equipment

Edmonds Community College Visual Arts Department studios and equipment are maintained solely for educational use. The studios and or equipment are intended for use in the fulfillment of course objectives, class assignments, preparation for classes, or for individual practice to reach course objectives.

Requirements for Usage

Students who use the studios and equipment must be currently registered for, and maintain regular attendance in a class that is based in the studio. All students must abide by the established rules and practices of the studio and Edmonds Community College code of ethics and code of student conduct.

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=132Y-125-001>

Limitations on Usage

Work created in the studio should be for the intended purpose of individual practice to reach course objectives. Students should use materials supplied by Edmonds Community College to ensure studio safety. Completed work shall be considered the property of the student for his or her personal use.

It is against college policy for college facilities, equipment, and or materials be used for the purpose of profit or personal financial gain.

Edmonds Community College Health and Safety

<https://www.edcc.edu/safety/ehs/>

1. Ceramics Etiquette

- a. Clean the wedging table after each use.

- b. Clean the wheel after each use.
- c. Bats and wear boards should be returned and cleaned after they have been used.
- d. Molds and tools must be cleaned and stored in the appropriate place.
- e. Clay must be kept in lockers or in designated areas.
- f. When pieces are completed they should be signed and put on the green ware shelf to be bisque fired.
- g. Please do not move or disturb other people's artwork. If something needs to be moved, ask an instructor or staff person.
- h. In general, leave your work area cleaner than you found it and be considerate of others.

2. Departments and Reporting: The credit courses reside with the Art Department in the Humanities Division, which reports to the Executive Vice President of Instruction. The non-credit courses reside with the Continuing Education Department, which reports to the Vice President of Workforce Training and Development.

3. Ceramics Lab: Students have the opportunity to practice the skills taught in class at their own pace.

- a. This open lab is only for students enrolled in the current quarter in a ceramics class.
- b. Please wait until after your first-in-class meeting to attend the open lab sessions.
- c. Please note that the open lab schedule varies each quarter. Check with your instructor or the Ceramics studio.
- d. Students must sign in and out of open lab sessions and follow the direction of lab monitors.
- e. Assigned workspace and equipment should be cleaned put in order at the end of open studio and class times.

4. Studio Access:

- a. Students are only allowed in the Ceramics Studio during the class in which they are enrolled or during their specific assigned lab time.
- b. Credit and non-credit students will have assigned lab hours. The studio is a shared space and is utilized by many classes and participants.
- c. There are certain restricted areas in the lab that require additional training before access is allowed by students.
- d. Students are required to sign in each time they use the studio.
- e. Students will be required to clean their own workspace at the end of the lab time.

5. Studio Fair Use Procedures: The ceramics studio is a shared space.

- a. Students will be assigned one shelf during the first day of the class each quarter. Students are responsible for cleaning their assigned shelf on the last day of class each quarter.
- b. Students may not use space outside of the shelf to store personal work or belongings.
- c. Students and participants using the Ceramics studio must adhere to the Edmonds Community College Student Code of Conduct.
<https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=132Y-125-001>

6. Cleaning: Ceramics Lab will have annual cleaning between spring and summer quarters or by end of the fiscal year. Anything left in the lab will be deemed as garbage and thrown out or donated to the lab materials/supplies. Students will be required to clean their own workspace as part of the class and/or lab time.

The Ceramics Lab will undergo extensive cleaning at the end of each Quarter. Any belongings left in the studio after the end of the class will become the property of Edmonds Community College and will be disposed at the discretion of the Instructor or staff. The studio is a shared space and a community state resource so please leave things the way you found them or better. Treat the studio equipment with care and respect and this will help us to keep the studio running smoothly. We all share in cleaning the studio and maintaining a clean and healthy environment.

- a. Clean up of work areas should be done with a wet sponge. Avoid sweeping in the ceramics lab as it raises dust that will remain airborne. Water is the best solution for cleaning. Be aware of floors that may be slippery.

7. Firing: Kilns are potentially hazardous and should only be operated by authorized staff and Instructors.

- a. Only Edmonds Community College staff are permitted to fire, load or unload the kilns unless following a class instruction.
- b. All bisque and glaze firings are operated by the EDCC Pottery studio staff.
- c. Firings schedules will be coordinated by EDCC Visual Arts Faculty and schedules will be posted within the studio and announced by Instructors.
- d. Instructors may schedule a time to use the kilns as a part of the educational course outcomes with the Ceramics staff and Visual Arts Faculty.

8. Glazes and Materials Safety: To maintain a safe and hazard free studio there are no outside glazes, underglazes or clay bodies permitted in the studio.

- a. Edmonds Community College staff and instructors keep a stock of lead-free glazes and clay bodies to create hundreds of varieties of color and finish.

9. Safety

- a. Jewelry, loose ties, and clothing which are loose and can catch in machinery must not be worn while working on the wheel, using kilns or making clay.
- b. Close-toed shoes are required, no sandals in the ceramics lab.
- c. Long hair should be tied back when operating machines with moving parts.
- d. Use the buddy system for pedestrian travel at night to and from the studio.
- e. If you have allergies or are pregnant please inform your instructor.
- f. Wear a HEPA filter mask that fits well when mixing clay or cleaning the studio.
- g. Clean work area before clay scraps have a chance to dry out. Never sweep your studio.
- h. Use a wet sponge or mop to clean the studio to avoid creating dust.
- i. Provide good fresh air exchange in your work area.
- j. Shared clay in a group setting could potentially be a medium for bacteria transfer.
- k. Maintain a clean studio to prevent the growth of mold, bacteria, and excessive dust.
- l. Please deposit unused clay, glaze, or studio materials in the labeled receptacle within the studio.
- m. The studio staff will fire the scrap glazes in a discarded bowl to make them more environmentally stable.

10. Do not eat or drink in your workspace.

- b. Keep clay tools and eating utensils separate.
- c. Wash all clay from your hands and nails thoroughly after working with clay or glazes.

11. Safe and sustainable disposal: Discard of clay and glaze materials in a safe manner.

- a. Reformulate scrap glazes and/or give them to someone who can use them.
- b. The studio staff will fire the scrap glazes in a discarded bowl to make them more environmentally stable.
- c. Please deposit unused clay, glaze, or studio materials in the labeled receptacle within the studio.

- d. Ask your Instructor or studio staff for help if you are unsure of the correct disposal location.
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12. Use of any studio equipment can be hazardous if not operated properly.

- a. Receive proper instructions and permissions before operating. Never operate equipment if taking any medication, drugs, or alcohol that could impair your judgment.

13. Overuse and Strain Injuries.

Working with clay often involves heavy lifting and repetitive motions which can cause strain to the back, wrists, and joints. These injuries are often called “cumulative trauma disorders” because they develop over time from repetitive muscle strain. These injuries can occur from wedging, throwing, or hand building with clay. Artists can develop carpal tunnel syndrome, a debilitating condition affecting the median nerve at the wrist. Joint strain or sprains, and also Tendonitis are also common. Pay special attention to your hands, wrists, and back when throwing at the wheel. Injuries can also occur from lifting heavy sacks of clay, plaster molds, or other materials. To prevent these injuries pay close attention to your body for signs of fatigue, weakness, or changes to endurance. Practice good posture to support your back when throwing and wedging. Here are some steps to follow in the studio to help protect you from harm:

- a. maintain good posture
- b. take frequent rest breaks
- c. alternate tasks or vary the types of work
- d. warm up muscles before work by stretching
- e. move and stretch muscles during breaks
- f. ease back into heavy work schedules after a holiday or hiatus rather than expecting to work at full capacity immediately
- g. modify technique and/or equipment to avoid uncomfortable positions or movements.
- h. Bend with your knees and keep your back straight when lifting heavy materials or equipment.
- i. If you experience pain, weakness, or any of the symptoms, seek medical attention. Early intervention is the key to resolving the majority of overuse injuries. Delaying treatment will only make the condition worse and put you at risk of permanent damage. Prevention is the best medicine.

14. Airborne Risks: Inhaling or ingesting the dust from clay or glaze materials is unhealthy.

- a. The best way to protect your lungs is to thoroughly clean all wheels, tables, tools and equipment after use and wash up any spills, splatters, or trimmings that land on the floor.
- b. Pick up clay scraps before they turn to dust and help eliminate the dust before it goes airborne.

- c. Wear a mask with HEPA filtration if you are grinding kiln shelves, working with dry glaze materials, or heavy studio cleaning.

15. Prevention

- a. Inhalation hazards - keep it wet, it won't go into the air. Particle size smaller than what you can see.
- b. Use low silica clays. Minimize the hazard.
- c. Use vent system at the source. Pick up the dust before it gets into the studio.
- d. Ventilation is the key.
- e. Cleaning or making clay just before you leave at night allows dust to settle.
- f. Latex or rubber gloves for glazing when you have cuts on hands.
- g. Absorption hazards - rubber gloves. Personal protective equipment when absorption is possible.
- h. Ingestion - watch out when eating or drinking.
- i. Wash hands well before eating.
- j. Throwing - keep moving around. One position is what hurts.