

PSU Fall 2010  
World Art HS 5560

Dr. Kathleen I. Kimball  
kik@metrocast.net  
[www.waterdragoninc.com](http://www.waterdragoninc.com)

### Teapots to Space Ships - A Tour of World Ceramics

From ancient European goddess figures to contemporary kitchen back splashes, ceramics are an enduring record of human experience. This course explores both technical and cultural aspects of ceramics around the world from prehistory to the present. Technical aspects include types of clay, forming techniques, surface treatments and firing methods. Cultural aspects include diverse uses of ceramic objects as indicators of economic status, signs of technological achievement and access to ritual and healing powers. Examples are drawn from Africa, Oceania, Eurasia and the Americas. One day museum field trip.

To cover the large subject of World Ceramics, meet six times on alternate Saturdays from 10am to 4:15 pm. Five meetings are @ 2 Pillsbury St., Concord, NH. One meeting is a museum trip. As we progress through the semester, our class readings follow a timeline from prehistory to the present. Our shifting temporal lens allows us to view and review ceramics in all parts of the world over time. You are invited to refine and personalize this geo-temporal approach in your final paper/presentation. For example, you might specialize in one geographic area & organize a curriculum unit on ceramics from a certain place. If you were interested in food, you might focus your studies on dinnerware or vessels that contain liquid or have been developed for particular food, plant, or social activity. Science oriented students might emphasize the development of a particular ceramic technology. Those interested in architecture might study the use of ceramic tiles, for example, in America during the arts and crafts movement. The subject is vast and your interests are welcome.

#### Objectives.

Students will:

1. understand discoveries, uses and migrations of ceramics over time and around the world;
2. appreciate cultural values transmitted by ceramics;
3. handle clay and tools to experience 'hands on' how different forming techniques and surface treatments work;
4. know basic resources for continuing their ceramic education;
5. be able to contextualize ceramics in today's world, including current ceramic trade, art and technology.

#### CLASS SCHEDULE

September 11 – When, where and why do humans use ceramics? How did it begin? What are the basic techniques for working with clay and creating ceramics?

Topics and Times=Course Overview; Ceramics from Pre-history to 200bce

Readings=Text Chapters One, Two and Three

1. “Prehistoric Ceramics from the Beginning to 2500BC”
2. “Ceramics of the First Historical Civilizations, 2500BC-1000BC”
3. “The Great Age of Greek Ceramics, 1000BC-200BC”

In Class Activities=Working with Types of Clay and Forming Methods; Discussion of Readings; Web resources

September 25 – What technological ceramic advances occur and how do they work? What are their social impacts? (e.g., higher temperatures in firing clay, improved clay bodies, new surface treatments, expanding ceramic trade, ceramic evidence for human migration, further evidence for ceramics as an indicator of economic success and status.)

Times=Ceramics from 200bce to 1400ce

Readings=Text Chapters Four, Five and Six

4. “Ceramics from the Roman and Chinese Empires, 200BC - 500AD”
5. “The Classical Age of Chinese and Mayan Ceramics, 500 -1000”
6. “The Golden Age of Islamic and Chinese Ceramics, 1000-1400”

In Class Activities=Surface Treatments and Glazes; Quiz #1 on chapters 1-6; Discussion of Readings; Web resources

October 9

MUSEUM TRIP

DUE - Response Paper #1 based on readings – Selection of Your Research Topic

October 23

Times=Ceramics from 1400ce to 1800ce

Readings=Text Chapters Seven and Eight

7. “The Ceramics of Europe and Asia, 1400-1700”
8. “The Century of Porcelain, 1700-1800”

In Class Activities=Quiz #2 on chapters 7-8; Response Paper #2 based on museum trip; Discussion of Readings; Web resources

November 6

Topics=Ceramics 1800ce to present

Readings= Text Chapters Nine, Ten and Eleven

9. “Ceramics of the Nineteenth Century”
10. “Ceramics of the Modern Period”
11. “Epilogue: Postwar American Ceramics”

In Class Activity=Quiz # 3 on chapters 9-11, Discussion of Readings; Web resources.

November 20

Presentations and Discussions of Your Research

Readings

Required - Course Text - World Ceramics by Munsterberg & Munsterberg, available used or new via amazon.com

Recommended - Specific readings suggestions will be made available based on student interest

Writings

Two short (maximum five pages each) response papers - one from museum trip and one from readings. One research paper of ten to fifteen pages with bibliography, of which at least three sources should be from peer reviewed journal articles. All papers to be typed, double spaced, standard margins, 12 pt. Times Roman. You are encouraged to select your research topic early in the semester to maximize the benefit you gain from this research.

Class Participation

Attendance and participation are required for all classes. Since our meetings are few but intense, it is

very difficult to pass the course if you miss a class. Discussing readings and presenting your thoughts are part of the learning experience. In addition to seeing the 'big story/picture,' student research and writings tailor content to your individual interests. The museum field trip is a group event and is tentatively scheduled for October 9.

#### Quizzes

There will be three quizzes based on the readings.

#### Final Presentation

The last class includes presenting your research. Students may elect to turn this research paper in at the last class or, to incorporate the comments and feedback they receive in class and submit the final paper up to one week later (November 27.) The paper may be the creation of a curriculum unit, investigation into a specific ceramic tradition, technique, class of objects, etc. Please see me before beginning your research. This is not to restrict you, but rather to ensure there are adequate resources available to support your inquiry.

#### Grading

Class participation	30%
Research Paper	30%
Response Papers	10%
Quizzes	15%
Final Presentation	15%