

Schoolcraft Ceramic Studio Procedures

Welcome to the Schoolcraft College ceramics studio! This communal space hosts both Liberal Arts and Personal & Professional Learning courses, as well as open lab hours for self-directed student work time. At its busiest, this space is in use by 10 different ceramics courses, which can total 160 students. In order for the studio materials, equipment, and technicians to best serve your time in the studio, please adhere to the following procedures:

1. Please treat all members of the studio staff as well as fellow students with respect, empathy, and patience.

All Schoolcraft College faculty and staff work hard to give you the very best experience possible. But we are all human, and mistakes do happen. Please bring any issues to the attention of faculty and staff in a respectful manner.

2. Sanding of greenware or bisqueware should be done outside in a well-ventilated area.

Sanding green and bisqued ceramics creates a lot of dust that is harmful to breath in, and can also trigger those with asthma or who are especially sensitive.

3. Unworked clay should remain in the communal bin, and not stored on student shelving.

Students in other classes and lab time need to have access to the clay that has been mixed for all. A small amount of clay (less than 2lb) may be stored on student shelving for handle-making.

4. Plastic clay should remain in the classroom, and no finished greenware should be brought into the studio from home.

Schoolcraft clay should only be used for projects directly connected to a student's coursework. No plastic clay should be taken to home studios, and no work completed at home studios should be brought in to be fired. All clay to be fired in the Schoolcraft kilns must remain on the premises at all times. This ensures that all projects are compatible with Schoolcraft firings and that Schoolcraft clay is not being used for production work.

5. Schoolcraft clay should not be used to make mass production work or work made explicitly to be sold.

The Schoolcraft studio is an educational institution and not a production pottery facility. Students making large quantities of work reduce the amount of clay, glaze materials, and kiln space that are available to other students as well as diminish the amount of time the studio technicians have to perform all necessary duties in the allotted time. Students found to be over-producing will receive a notice from the studio technicians. If they continue to over-produce, they will be reported to administration. Students wishing to make large quantities of work, or work for sale should find other accommodations better suited for production.

- 6. Special clay needs must be discussed directly with a studio technician *before* you purchase non-Schoolcraft clay.**

In order to prevent any mishaps in the kiln, any non-Schoolcraft clay or glazes must be presented to a studio technician in a *sealed* container to be checked for compatibility.
- 7. Only authorized personnel may load or operate studio equipment such as the mixer or kilns.**

Only the Schoolcraft Studio Technicians or administration-approved personnel may load and operate Schoolcraft kilns or clay mixers. Any students or unauthorized personnel found to be handling this equipment will be reported to administration.
- 8. Students must put initials or an identifying mark on all work.**

Identifying marks help reunite students with their work, and help studio technicians identify who to contact if any problems arise.
- 9. Students should rotate their work fully through the glazing process as soon as they collect their bisque.**

This helps to reduce glaze firing build up at the end of the semester and to create more space on student shelving. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that their work is moved to the appropriate shelves to be processed.
- 10. Students should alert a technician if they find a glaze is too low to use.**

Students should never water down a glaze in order to increase its quantity. Adding water to a glaze can seriously alter the glaze's ability to perform in firing. Any glazes found to be too low to properly dip should be brought to a technician's attention in order to mix, or should be brushed on instead.
- 11. Cone 10 kilns fire less frequently than Cone 6 due to kiln size and energy use. They will fire when capacity is reached.**

In order for Cone 10 kilns to fire more frequently, it is recommended for PPL students to glaze Cone 10 when possible. More work for the Cone 10 = filling the kiln = more frequent firings.
- 12. Make sure any greenware is fully dry and less than 1" thick, and glazed work has been properly dry-footed before being placed on carts to be fired.**

Big blowups and glaze mishaps in the kiln can cause significant damage to student's work and can potentially ruin the work of others in addition to damaging the kiln shelves and furniture. Students producing large amounts of small flat work (like Christmas ornaments) need to create waster slabs to expedite loading and prevent kiln mishaps. Any special stiling needs should be discussed with a studio technician prior to being placed on a glaze cart. Overly thick greenware or improperly dry-footed glaze work may be rejected at loading by the studio technicians.
- 13. Bisque or finished glazed work should be moved to student shelving within 1 week of being unloaded.**

Both bisque and glaze kilns fire multiple times throughout the week and shelf space for this workflow is vital. In order to make space for each kiln to unload, students should check the bisque and glaze shelves *each* class, and move any work to their student shelving. Tall bisque works can be moved to the Tall Work-in-Progress shelving found in the back of the room. Any student who cannot be at class to check the bisque and glazed shelves should ask a classmate to assist in moving their work to their personal shelf.

14. All wet work will end two weeks before the end of each semester.

This is to make sure all pieces can be bisqued and glazed in time for students to take home at the end of the semester. Open lab times may be used for trimming, decorating, and glazing, but no new pieces should be made after the 9th class in the Fall and Winter semesters, or 6th class in Spring semester.

15. All student work and tools should leave the studio at the end of the semester. Student shelves should be cleared, and cleaned with a sponge.

The studio technicians perform a deep clean between each semester to maintain storage space and cleanliness for the following semester. Students should plan to have all work glazed and finished by the last class period for the semester, and should be taken with them at the end of class. Unfinished bisqueware must leave the studio, and any greenware should be reclaimed. Any tools or work left in the studio after the final class period is subject to being donated or purged.