

My name is Frank Vickery and I came to graduate school to continue my education while fulfilling my passion for the visual arts and art education. Through my experience here at Western Carolina University, I have been privileged to continue developing my craft, to work with artists such as Gay Smith and Don Reitz, and to expose myself to higher thinking and research. This lifelong passion began with my first encounter with ceramic in elementary school at a camp I attended called "Getting Dirty with Clay". Since then, and because of that experience, I have continued to seek every opportunity to learn more about the medium. I graduated from Winthrop University with a BA in Art Education and a BFA. Before attending graduate school last August, I was a middle school art teacher at Saluda the men's varsity soccer team school, I was fortunate to wheel for the students to begin their clay experience. Through the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts conferences and studying at Penland School of Crafts, I have been able to learn clay techniques in the context of larger relationships to the community.



As an art educator, my ultimate goal is to provide meaningful learning experiences using new and inventive techniques and methods, in order to promote cognitive learning development. I have learned that clay can be more than just a craft material used for making pottery and functional art. Working with the ceramic process can be the vehicle for which children and adults can explore every day issues. There is a connection between clay and every teacher's ultimate goal of sustained learning in their students, and this is my main focus.

My work in graduate school thus far has been focused on thrown and hand-built functional ceramic pieces. In addition, I have been researching different clay bodies, firing methods, and glazing combinations. I have also developed a method for introducing the conceptual framework of fine art into my sculptural work.



Experimenting, researching, and conceptualizing my artistic processes is a direct manifestation of my commitment to continuous professional growth and conviction as a studio artist and educator. I believe that continuing education is very important and necessary for teachers to keep the level of inspiration and implementation high in their classroom. I look forward to sharing my knowledge with future generations of art students.