

Community Education – Fall Quarter 2026

Course Title: Sculpt Your Selfie

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Course Details

Date: Tuesdays, 9/29 to 11/17

Time: 6:00pm -8:00pm

Location: Room 331, Columbia Tech Center Campus, 18700 SE Mill Plain Blvd, Vancouver.

Course Description

Make a face that is unmistakably yours — or invent one with plenty of personality. In this hands-on beginner course, you'll use polymer clay to sculpt a quirky portrait bust of yourself, a loved one, or an imagined character. Through demonstrations and guided studio time, you'll learn facial proportion, armature construction, expressive features, texture, painting, and display design. Your finished bust is mounted on a personalized base that helps tell your character's story. The emphasis is on character and playful exaggeration, not perfect realism — no prior sculpture experience required.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will:

- Plan a portrait using simple sketches, basic head proportions, and fun caricature choices.
 - Build a stable foil-and-tape armature and shape a head-and-shoulders bust in polymer clay.
 - Sculpt expressive eyes, noses, mouths, ears, hair, and skin textures.
 - Paint your cured sculpture with acrylic base coats, washes, dry brushing, and lifelike color.
 - Mount and display your finished bust on a decorated base that tells your character's story.
 - Work safely and confidently with sculpting tools, paints, and adhesives.
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Course Schedule

Week 1: Sept 29, Getting Started: Designing Your Character

Goal: Choose your subject and create a simple design plan for your bust.

Course welcome and studio orientation. View sample busts for inspiration, learn the basics of head proportions and playful caricature, and sketch front and profile views of your chosen subject — yourself, a loved one, or an invented character.

Before next class: gather two or three clear reference photos and a small box for carrying your work.

Week 2: Oct 6, Building the Foundation

Goal: Construct a sturdy armature and rough in the basic form of the head and shoulders.

Learn to build a foil-and-tape armature and how to condition and apply polymer clay. Establish the overall silhouette, head shape, jaw, neck, and shoulders of your bust.

Week 3: Oct 13, Eyes, Nose, and the Planes of the Face

Goal: Sculpt the features that most define likeness and expression.

See demonstrations of the major planes of the face, expressive eye construction, and nose structure, then apply them to your bust with individual guidance on placement and symmetry.

Week 4: Oct 20, Mouth, Ears, and Expression

Goal: Complete the main facial features and give your character personality.

Learn to sculpt the mouth and lips, a simplified ear, and how small choices — asymmetry, brow position, cheek volume — create emotion. Finish the primary facial structure of your bust.

Week 5: Oct 27, Hair, Texture, and Bake Prep

Goal: Finish the sculpting stage and prepare your piece for curing.

Explore several approaches to sculpted hair plus surface details like wrinkles, freckles, and clothing texture. Complete your clay work; sculptures are inspected and prepared for baking between sessions.

Before next class: have your acrylic paints and brushes ready — painting begins in Session 6.

Week 6: (Nov 3, Painting Foundations

Goal: Lay down the base colors that bring your cured sculpture to life.

Sculptures are returned baked and ready to paint. Learn approachable color mixing for skin tones and smooth acrylic application, then establish the base colors for skin, hair, eyes, and clothing.

Week 7: Nov 10, Advanced Painting and Lifelike Detail

Goal: Add depth, contrast, and subtle color that make the character feel alive.

Learn washes and antiquing to deepen recesses, dry brushing for highlights, and translucent "life color" like blushing cheeks. Extended studio time with one-on-one coaching.

Before next class: think about a theme for your display base and bring any small, lightweight trinkets you might want to include.

Week 8: Nov 17, Mounting, Storytelling Bases, and Gallery Walk

Goal: Mount your finished bust and celebrate with a class gallery walk.

Learn safe mounting techniques, then decorate your base so it tells your character's story. We close with an informal gallery walk to share and photograph the finished work.

Materials

Provided by the college: polymer clay (Sculpey), a sculpting tool set, and aluminum foil and masking tape for armatures.

Purchased by students: an acrylic paint set in the colors you'd like (about \$10–\$15), a paintbrush set (about \$10–\$20), and a wooden base plus any decorative materials — fake hair, miniature props, and so on - that suit your design. Nothing needs to be purchased before the first class; the instructor will offer recommendations and shopping guidance as the course progresses (paints and brushes aren't needed until Session 6).

Please also bring printed or digital reference photos of your subject and a small rigid box for transporting your work between classes.

Good to Know

- This is a non-credit course - no grades, no tests. Success means steady progress and a finished bust you're proud of.
- Each class combines a short demonstration with plenty of supervised studio time and individual feedback.
- Sculptures are baked (cured) on campus between Sessions 5 and 6 - no home baking required.
- Finish your bust early? You're welcome to start a second sculpture or work on more than one at a time.
- A safety orientation is provided in the first session and before any new tool or material is introduced.

Class Evaluation

- Class evaluations are sent by email.
- If you don't see it right away, check your **junk/spam folder**.
- Evaluations are **anonymous** and come directly from Clark College.
- If you don't receive one, contact:
 - Email: continuingeducation@clark.edu
 - Phone: 360-992-2939

Inclement Weather

- If the college closes due to weather, updates will appear at www.clark.edu
- Community Education may also cancel classes independently if travel is unsafe.
- If canceled, you will be notified by both phone and email.
- Please check that your contact information is correct on the class roster.

More Classes

Looking for more Community Education courses? Visit: www.clark.edu/cce/