Department of Art
Unit Level Assessment
Spring 2019 Liaison Report

Prof. Paul Wandless, Assessment Liaison
Prof. Jess Bader, Head of Ceramics

Art 196

Beginning Ceramics
Throwing a Cylinder
Fall 2018 Results

Resource poster of the steps to throw a cylinder.

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SKUTT
CERAMIC PRODUCTS

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PHONE (503)774-6000 • FAX (503)774-7833 • WWW.SKUTT.COM

WHEEL THROWING

CENTERING AND CYLINDER BASICS

THREE OF OUR MODELS:

PROFESSIONAL Handles up to 400 lbs. of clay

PRODIGY Handles up to 100 lbs. of clay

REVOLUTION Handles up to 150 lbs. of clay

All of our electric wheels feature removable heads for easy cleanup

TOOLS:

Elephant Ear Sponge · Rib · Needle Tools · Wood Tools · Cut Off Wire · Chamois · Scale · Bucket and Towel

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

CENTERING YOURSELF

You are steady and deliberately centered in your position to the wheel and in your own posture. Brace your arms on hips, thighs or torso to stay centered.

CENTERING THE CLAY

The clay is centered when the wheel is turning and your hands, placed on the revolving clay, look still.

STAYING CENTERED

Touch the clay and remove your hands from the clay in a slow deliberate motion, allowing the wheel head to make several revolutions as you approach and as you withdraw from the clay. Move too quickly and the clay can easily become uncentered.

WEDGING – Prepare a two pound piece of clay for wheel throwing by cutting, weighing and wedging on clean plaster, wood, canvas or concrete. Wedging is used to make the piece of clay all the same consistency and free of air pockets. Shown here is the Ram's Head technique for wedging.

CENTERING – Using dry hands, place well-wedged clay in center of wheel head and pat into place. As the wheel head turns slowly counter clockwise, use both hands to pat and secure the clay to the center of the wheel head.

Using dry hands, seal ball of clay to wheel head using finger. This creates a vacuum and helps secure clay to wheel head.

TIPS ON WATER USE

Hands need moisture to work the clay on the wheel. Think about the amount of water you use. The right amount of water differs from clay body to clay body, from potter to potter and from pot to pot. However, too much water can quickly break the clay down and make it unworkable. Also, the more water you use the less time you have to work on your pot.

Wet hands and center clay on wheel head – with wheel turning medium to fast speeds, place wet hands on clay with pressure applied between the fingers of right hand and heel of left hand directly across the clay from each other. Continue applying pressure, coning up and pushing down until clay looks like it is standing still and centered as wheel is turning.

OPENING – Mark center of centered ball of clay using both thumbs and apply pressure to create a small crater in the clay.

NOTE: Think of the wheel head of the potter's wheel as a clock face. Most of the work done on the wheel with the wet clay is done at the 3 o'clock position of the wheel head.

Press down to open the clay. Put ring and second finger of left hand in center crater and press down, leaving 3/8" of clay on bottom of the pot. Left hand is inside and right hand is outside at 3 or 4 o'clock. The right hand has a damp sponge in it on the outside to guide and feel the thickness/distance from the other hand.

CHECK THICKNESS – Use a needle tool to be sure you leave 3/8" to 1/2" thickness at bottom of the pot. **COMPRESS** the clay on the bottom by holding and gently pressing the second and ring finger of the left hand in center bottom of the pot, and slowly moving out to the wall. Be sure to get a full revolution of the slowly turning wheel head before moving the fingers outward from center.

Left hand inside, right hand outside, **OPEN OUT** the bottom straight across to leave ½" of clay in the wall between the inside and outside hands. When water puddles in bottom of the pot remove with the sponge with the wheel turning slowly and the sponge held still.

With the wheel turning slowly **RAISE THE WALLS.** Start at the bottom with the first pull, using one hand on the inside and one outside directly opposite each other. *(See photo at right for position of hands.)*

TIPS – Get **full revolutions** of the wheel head as the hands move together up the wall of the pot with the wheel turning slowly. If the wheel turns too quickly, centrifugal force will widen the top opening of the clay. Be careful not to squeeze too hard and tear the clay wall. Take three to four **pulls** to get the walls raised.

Raise walls from bottom to top and hold at the rim for a couple of revolutions to finish a **pull.**

NOTE: The goal is to have finished pottery that has walls, from top to bottom, all the same thickness. This takes practice.

TIPS ON COMPRESSION

Compress the rim using a sponge or a chamois throughout the throwing process. Also keep the bottom or floor of the pot compressed using fingers of left hand, sponge or tool throughout the throwing process as well.

COMPRESS rim using left hand finger and thumb as support and gently press down on top with sponge in right hand.

This is an example of horizontal finger marks inside pot accomplished with **full revolutions** during each **pull.**

Your can smooth and straighten walls with a rib.

Cut off unevenness of the rim at the top of the pot using the needle tool. Use 5 to 6 **revolutions** of the wheel head to cut through rim to remove unevenness.

Cut off excess clay at bottom of the pot using a wooden clay tool. This also provides an indentation at the base to help you lift the pot off the wheel head when the time comes.

Cut the cylinder off the wheel head using a cut off wire. Hold the wire tight between both hands. With wheel turning slowly, press wire to wheel head with your thumbs and gently pull straight toward you under the pot.

Place fingertips at base of pot, tip and lift pot off of wheel and place on bat or ware board.

On occasion cut a cylinder in half to check for even thickness and your throwing progress.

Degree and Course Learning Outcomes for throwing assessment

The measurable skills for this assessment are found within the technical competency SLOs for the A.F.A Studio Degree and Art 196 course syllabus.

AFA Degree level Student Learning Outcome (technical)

- Demonstrate competence in the application of a broad range of technical skills for the fine arts disciplines with appropriate tools, materials and mediums.
- Construct projects that demonstrate learned skills in the manipulation of materials used in their respective discipline.

Course level Student Learning Outcome (technical)

- Create various utilitarian and sculptural forms.
- Demonstrate the ability to construct clay using various handbuilding techniques including but not limited to pinch, coil, potter's wheel, stiff and soft slab construction.
- Perform safety procedures in handling, glaze and clay materials, studio equipment and tools including but not limited to slab roller, extruder, potter's wheel, and glaze mixing drill.

Assessment Tool and Processes for Fall 2018

The assessment tool used was a hands-on activity that measured the skill levels with materials *(clay),* tools *(throwing tools)*, and equipment *(pottery wheel)* associated with creating *(throwing)* a cylinder. Students were instructed to throw a cylinder to meet specific size parameters.

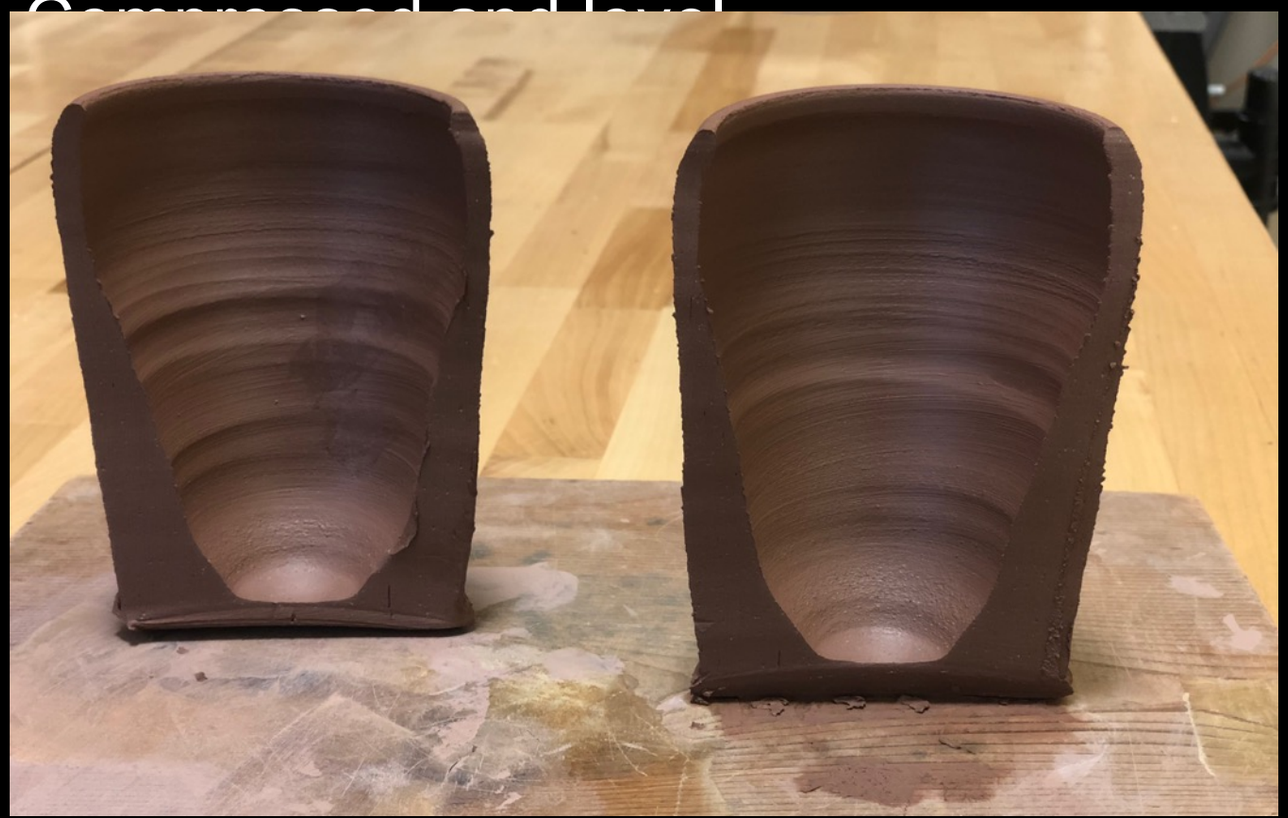
There were given an instruction sheet with benchmarks for height, width, wall thickness, and bottom thickness for the vessel. The trimmed base and compressed lip of the vessel are also assessed along with overall craftsmanship of their throwing technique. Each student is instructed to throw two cylinders using 2lb balls of clay, then submit the cylinder they feel meets the parameters best.

Technical Skills Assessed

The descriptive rubric was used to score how well the benchmarks were met for each skill used to create the submitted cylinder. The cylinders are cut in half to do the scoring. These are the basic measurable competencies of throwing a proportionally balanced, basic cylinder.

Measurable paramenters for a thrown cylinder

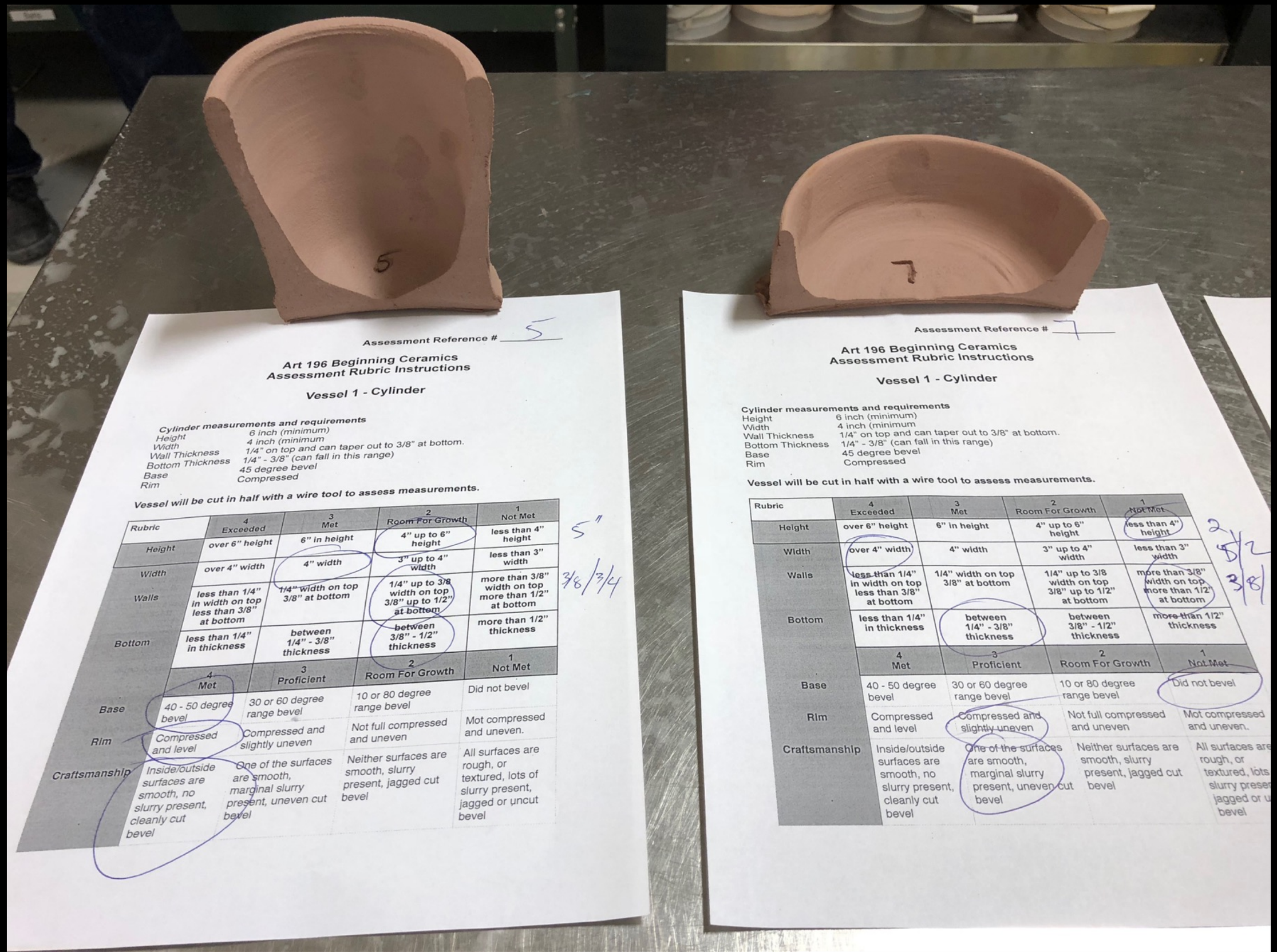
Height	6 inch (minimum)
Width	4 inch (minimum
Wall Thickness	1/4” on top and can taper out to 3/8” at bottom.
Bottom Thickness	1/4” - 3/8” (can fall in this range)
Base	45 degree bevel
Rim	Compressed and level



Fall 2018
Art 196 Beginning Ceramics
Assessment Scoring Rubric
Vessel - Cylinder

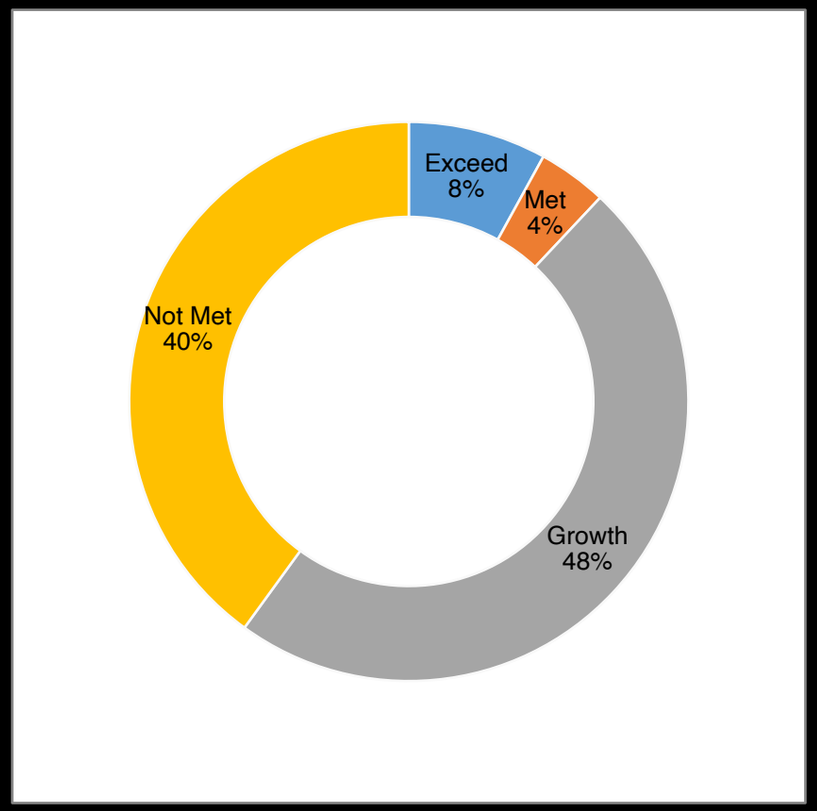
Rubric	4 Exceeded	3 Met	2 Room For Growth	1 Not Met
Height	over 6” height	6” in height	4” up to 6” height	less than 4” height
Width	over 4” width	4” width	3” up to 4” width	less than 3” width
Walls	less than 1/4” in width on top less than 3/8” at bottom	1/4” width on top 3/8” at bottom	1/4” up to 3/8 width on top 3/8” up to 1/2” at bottom	more than 3/8” width on top more than 1/2” at bottom
Bottom	less than 1/4” in thickness	between 1/4” - 3/8” thickness	between 3/8” - 1/2” thickness	more than 1/2” thickness
	4 Met	3 Proficient	2 Room For Growth	1 Not Met
Base	40 - 50 degree bevel	30 or 60 degree range bevel	10 or 80 degree range bevel	Did not bevel
Lip	Compressed and level	Compressed and slightly uneven	Not full compressed and uneven	Mot compressed and uneven.
Craftsmanship	Inside/outside surfaces are smooth, no slurry present, cleanly cut bevel	One of the surfaces are smooth, marginal slurry present, uneven cut bevel	Neither surfaces are smooth, slurry present, jagged cut bevel	All surfaces are rough, or textured, lots of slurry present, jagged or uncut bevel

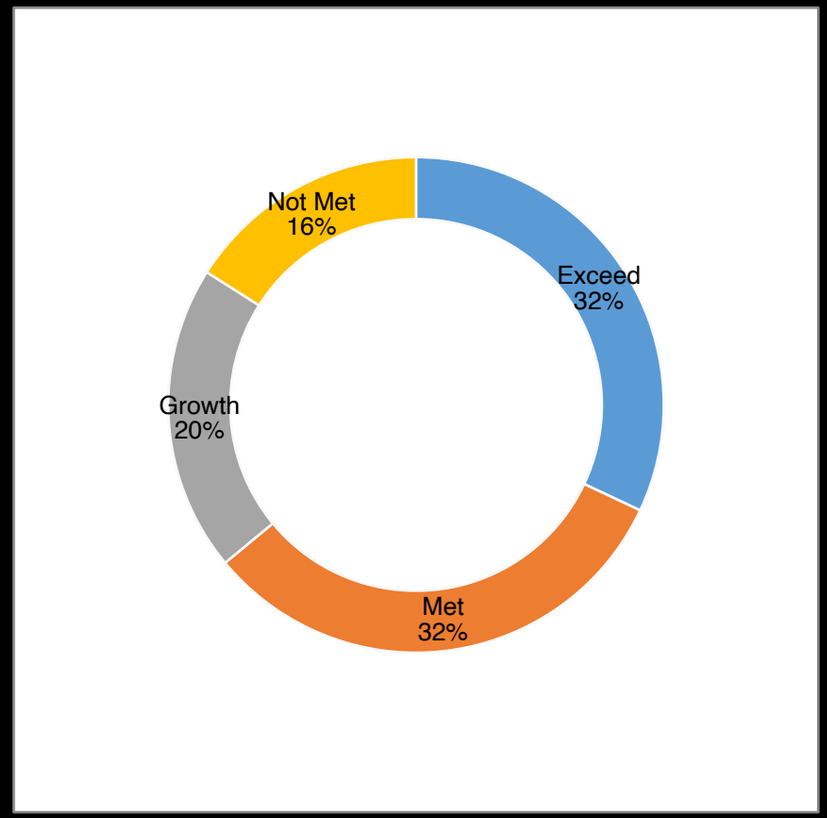
Scoring Rubric applied to cylinders.



Scoring Results for Fall 2018

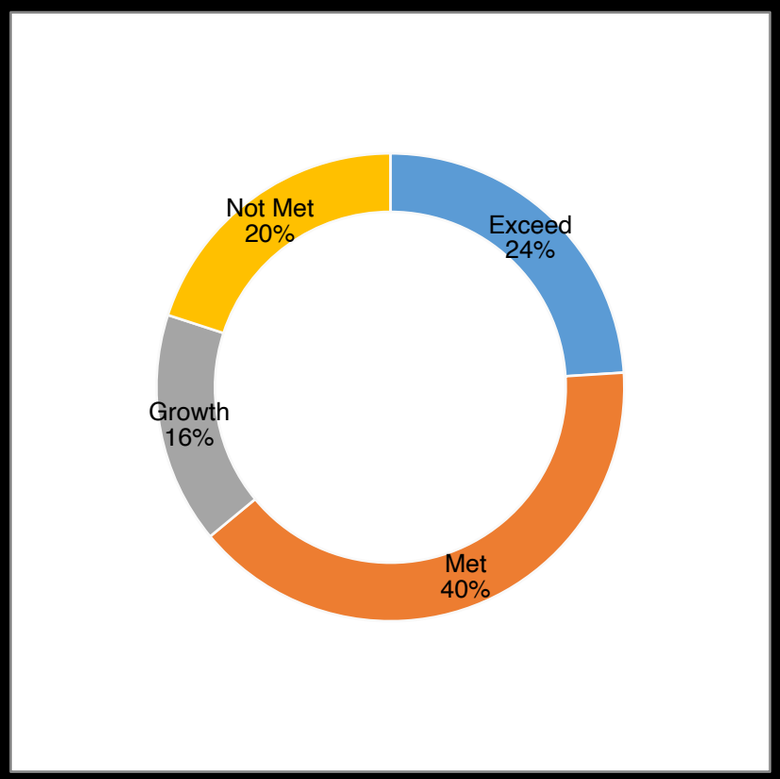
Height of 6”

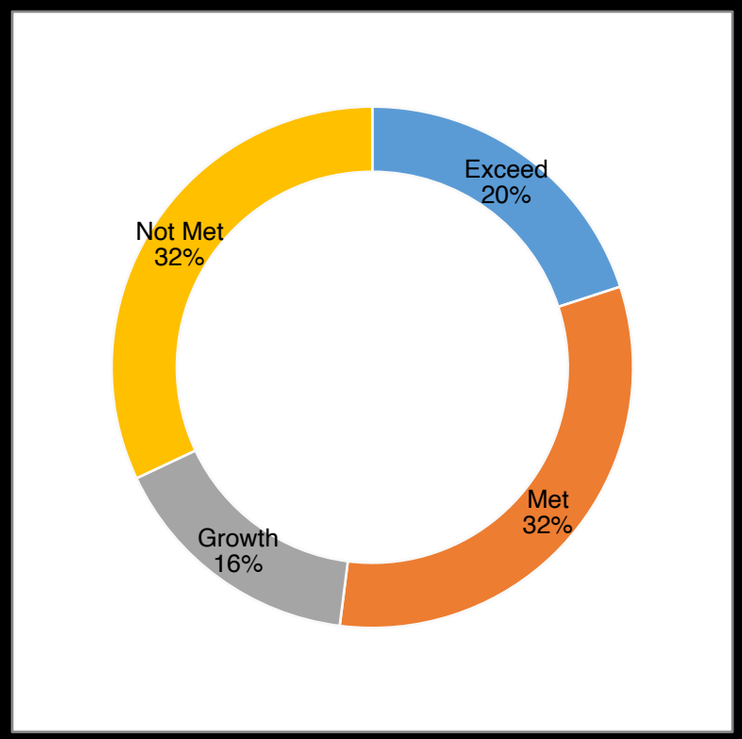




Width of 4”

Walls between
1/4” - 3/8”

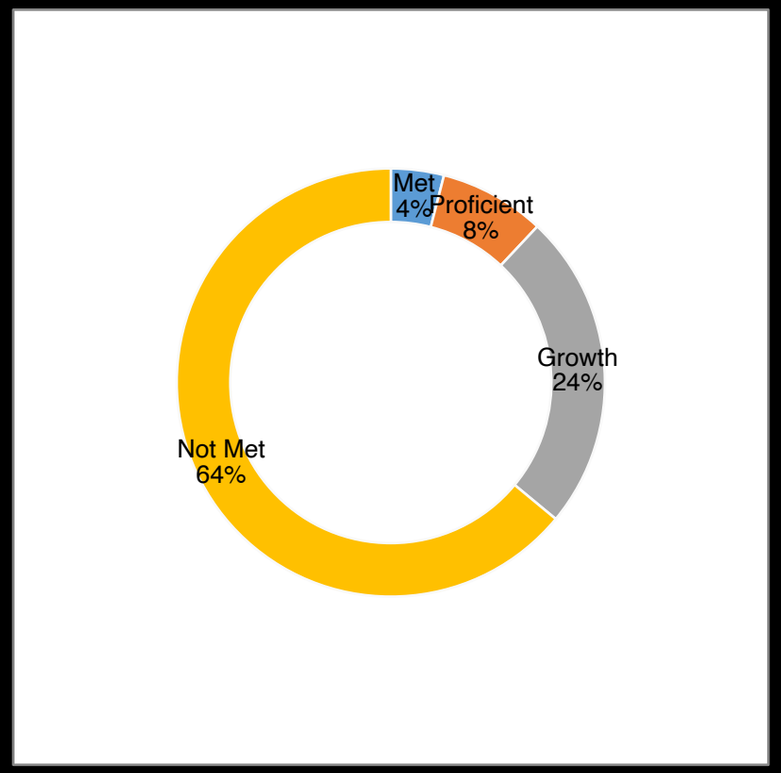




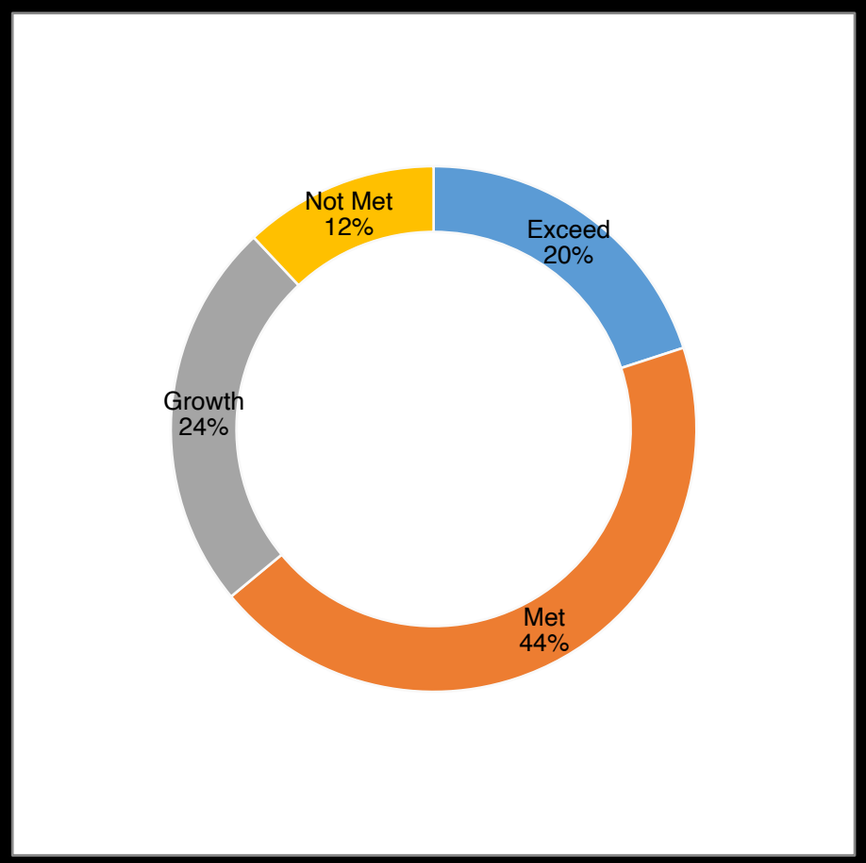
Bottom between
1/4” - 3/8”

Scoring Results for Fall 2018

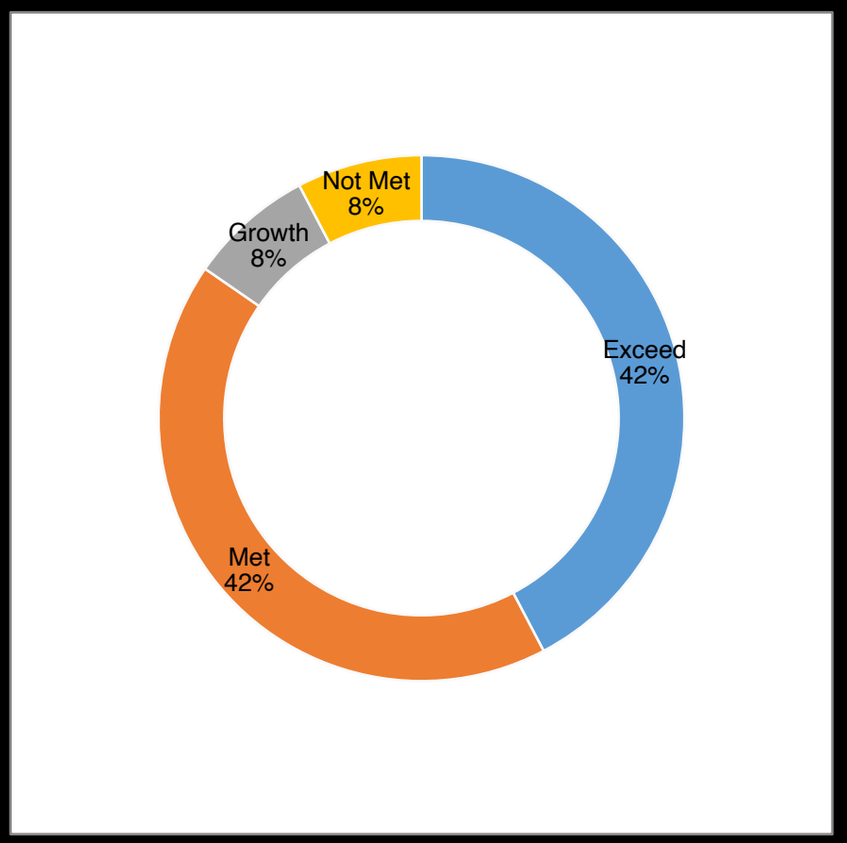
Base (bevel at 40 - 50 degree angle)



Lip (evenly compressed)



Craftsmanship



Success Factors

Overall, the assessment was successful to discover how the students were performing the task of throwing a cylinder on a pottery wheel.

Factors that led to the success of the assessment were controlling as many variable as possible so all cylinders were able to be scored fairly.

1 - Students had the same length of time to complete the assessment.
2 - They used their own familiar throwing tools.
3 - Each had thier 2lb balls of clay, pre-wedged for them to use.
4 - The length of time the students had to learn and practice the skill of throwing on the wheel during the semester was consistent.

The length of time learning to throw is an important factor, because the amount of time a student has to learn and practice throwing impacts their skill level. Throwing is a practiced based skill where repetition is key. The longer the time period they have to practice throwing, the better they will be. So a class with 6 weeks to learn throwing would score higher than a class with only 4 weeks to throw.

Recommendations for future assessment of Art 196

While the assessment was successful, there's a few ways to positively impact the tool, instruction

1 - Based off the height finding, Prof Bader feels the height of 6" for the cylinder is not a realistic expectation. This goes back to length of time students have to learn this skill. Currently students have 5 class to learn this skill, which is a brief period of time and makes the 6" not a realistic height to achieve successfully. So the height parameter will be changed to 4" for the next assessment. This should be an attainable goal.

2 - Based on the bottom finding, have more emphasis during class instruction on the proper thickness for the bottom of a cylinder.

3 - Based on the base finding, have more emphasis during class instruction on the proper bevel for the base.

4 - Students will wedge their own 2 lb balls of clay for the assessment going forward.

5 - Update instruction sheet parameters, where changes were made to reflect new goals.

6 - We want to be sure we are using language that is consistent in all classes so the parameters are all read with the same understanding. To this end, a shared vocabulary list will be created to address the specific terms associated with the assessment. A graphic will also be included that illustrates the use of word in relation to different parts of a vessel.

Prof. Paul Wandless (L) and Prof. Jess Bader (R) scoring the cylinders using the descriptive rubric.

The cylinders are cut in half to do the assessment.

This allows for accurate measurements of the parameters.