



AUF

*The American  
University of Florence*

## SYLLABUS

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Academic  
Affairs

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Florence University of the Arts (FUA) is an academic institution for study abroad in Florence, Italy. FUA collaborates with The American University of Florence (AUF), an international university offering US-style undergraduate and graduate degrees, in a cooperation to offer study abroad programs with a diverse breadth and depth of academic curriculum.

FUA study abroad programs may include AUF offerings, which are US-aligned in terms of higher education standards as per the university's institutional structure. Common courses offered by FUA and AUF have been jointly selected by both institutions as eligible for mutual recognition and delivery. As such, equal academic standards, credibility, and outcomes are vetted by the Academic Offices of the institutions for all courses and syllabi offered in the study abroad program.

**SCHOOL OF FOOD AND WINE STUDIES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BAKING AND PASTRY**  
**COURSE TITLE: PROFESSIONAL CHOCOLATE SHOWPIECES**  
**COURSE CODE: FWBPCS630**  
**3 semester credits**

### 1. DESCRIPTION

Pastry art competitions are fundamental milestones in the career of a professional pastry chef. Chocolate sculpture competitions are by far the most challenging field where artistic abilities and technical skills play a major role. This course offers students the knowledge needed to join the world of international chocolate competitions by covering the entire process of competition sculpture from design to creation. The international evaluation standards will be analyzed and will be the starting point of the creative plan developed by students to present in competition: dimension and proportion, applied color percentage, balance of the various elements, sugar decorations application, cleanliness of the work, theme recognizability, and more. Students will learn how to produce their own resin, plaster and PVC molds, while all other operations will be rigorously hand-made. Special emphasis will be placed on a variety of different techniques such as carving, hand-modeling, hydro-free butter application, and piping-painting. Students will learn the guidelines for the choice of suitable colors to be applied in relation to a specific theme. The course will include also the application of basic geometry and physics principles in order to guarantee the balance and stability of the sculpture.

### 2. OBJECTIVES

The aim of this course is to develop the necessary skills for students to plan and create chocolate showpieces for competitions.

Upon successful completion of the course students will be able to:

- Identify the main organization steps to participate in a chocolate showpiece competition
- Understand the guidelines to follow according to the competition theme and the jury background
- Comprehend international competitions standards
- Understand the importance of competitions to broaden your own career opportunities and creative ideas
- Schedule the planning and production, including a “plan b” in case of emergencies
- Employ skills at 100% without exceeding personal resources
- Apply cutting-edge techniques to dedicated mold creations
- Upgrade classic techniques for mold production
- Apply hand drawing and paint brush skills
- Understand the importance of color application to the showpiece harmony and dynamism

- Demonstrate the color wheel method to choose the suitable color combinations
- Define the suitable geometric rules to apply for a balanced and harmonious showpiece

### **3. REQUIREMENTS**

Advanced Chocolate Artistry or equivalent.

### **4. METHOD**

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and interaction with the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, integrate relevant academic sources, may include multimedia references, propose creative problem-solving, and other appropriate forms of delivery as deemed appropriate to the course's purpose.

### **5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES**

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

Ewald Notter - The Art of the Chocolatier: From Classic Confections to Sensational Showpieces - John Wiley and Sons ,INC.

Bleu Chocolat - Stéphane Leroux - BAI, Kontich

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

### **FURTHER READINGS**

How Baking Works: Exploring the Fundamentals of Baking Science, Paula I. Figoni

### **LIBRARY**

Course participants may access the campus library. Please consult the library site for resources such as collections, borrowing, scanning and wifi connection, and research:

<https://www.auf-florence.org/Library/the-library/>

### **6. COURSE MATERIALS**

1. All students are strictly required to attend class wearing a clean uniform: the jacket provided by the institution, black pants, apron (color depending on the CA level), safety footwear, a white Chef's hat, and a set of knives. Students with long hair should tie hair back before wearing the hat. Students are not allowed to wear rings, earrings or any other visible piercings, bracelets, watches, and nail polish during lab hours. Students who are not dressed properly will not be allowed in class.
2. All students must attend class fully prepared and on time. Late students will not be accepted.
3. Carefully wash hands at the beginning of each class, before food is handled.
4. During professional cooking classes only small food tastings are allowed as the main purpose of these courses is to develop technical skills. Students are not allowed to take food out of the kitchen.
5. Students are also required to participate in a polite and responsible way. Students are not allowed to sit on the working stations. Students who disturb lessons or are disrespectful to the instructor or the other students will be asked to leave the class. Serious infractions will be evaluated by the Academic Office.
6. Cooking classes will include various tasks which all students must carry out. Classes will include all different types of recipes and students are expected to actively participate in all lessons regardless of personal likes or dislikes.
7. Each student is responsible for washing all utensils used during class and keeping the working station

clean and tidy, with all the utensils as listed in the station inventory. Two students at a time will tidy up the kitchen common areas during each class.

8. Students are responsible for kitchen utensils and maintenance of the equipment. The cost of a) any missing utensil b) damages due to student carelessness will be shared by all students.

9. No visits are allowed in class at any time.

10. The use of cellular phones is not allowed within the school building.

Should students wish to store materials or equipment, lockers are available with a deposit (given back after returning the key).

## **7. COURSE FEES**

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. If this course requires a fee, the exact amount is communicated prior to enrollment.

## **8. GRADING AND EVALUATION & ATTENDANCE**

10% Attendance

30% Class Participation and Assignments

20% Midterm Exam, Field Learning project (if applicable), Special/Research Project (if applicable), Practical Performance (if applicable)

20% Final Exam

20% Paper/Project

The above grade breakdown percentages reflect the grading scale standards in the "Grading and Evaluation System" section of the catalog.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Class participation is mandatory. Based on the hours defined in the Academic Catalog's attendance policy, students may miss up to 2 class encounters delivered as lecture hours. A third absence constitutes a course failure.

Please note that absence hours may vary according to the learning methodology, as per the academic catalog policy on credit hours:

[https://catalog.auf-florence.org/standard\\_regulation](https://catalog.auf-florence.org/standard_regulation)

## **9. EXAMS / PROJECTS / ASSIGNMENTS**

**Final Exam:** The final exam is divided into two sections:

- Part I: written test
- Part II: hands-on performance

The written test is divided into three sections:

- Part I: 10 Multiple choice questions. Each correct answer is worth 2 points, for a total of 20 points.
- Part II: 10 short-answer questions. Each correct and complete answer (concise explanations, main ideas, key words, names, etc.) is worth 5 points, for a total 50 points.
- Part III: two essay questions; each correct and complete answer is worth 15 points (based on content, vocabulary, detail, etc.) for a total of 30 points.

No pencil allowed. Blue and black pens only.

Further details (guidelines, grading rubric,...) are provided in the course portal.

The final exam is cumulative and will account for 20% of the final grade breakdown.

**The time and date of the exam cannot be changed for any reason.**

**Final Project:** The final project accounts for 20% of the final course grade. The project details will be assigned on the first day of class.

**Assignments:** This course requires at least 3 assignments as per the course outline in the syllabus.

Assignment #1: History of Chocolate Sculpture Competitions. Due by Lesson 4.

Assignment #2: Techniques Used in Chocolate Showpiece. Due by Lesson 7.

Assignment #3: Color Use in Chocolate Competition Showpieces. Due by Lesson 10.

Further details are provided in the course portal.

## 10. COURSE OUTLINE

Lesson 1	
Meet	In class
Lecture	Introduction to the course Participation in a contest as a way to build a professional career - New trends in chocolate sculptures styles - Gaining experience - Researching the event - Selecting the right competition - Obtaining information on the judges - International competition standards-Planning the competition performance, Preparing to compete - Choosing a theme - Theory of sculpture design - Choosing techniques to apply to the sculpture - The advantages that molds can give to the development of new ideas and shapes
Objectives	Understand how participation in pastry competitions can change the professional approach of a pastry chef - Understand how competitions can be a way to improve learning - Increase manual ability and confidence with the materials - Understand the new trends in chocolate competitions – Gain confidence with eventual divergent evaluations by judges - Understand the importance of learning competition rules in detail-Understand how to develop organization for the competition - Understand the factors that can influence the theme choice – Establish the importance of having a variety of sources of inspiration - Understand how trends can influence the quality of the chosen theme - Be able to match techniques with the chosen theme
Visit/Lab	Watch competition videos and sculpture images on the internet and in specialized books - Competition planning operations

<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	<p>Ewald Notter - The Art of the Chocolatier: From Classic Confection to Sensational Showpieces Chapter 15: creating a competition showpiece  Bleu Chocolat pp.100-104  <b>Assignment #1 History of Chocolate Sculpture Competitions assignments. Due by Lesson 4.</b></p>
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<b>Lesson 2</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	<p>Cardboard scale version of the sculpture-Building a scale version of the final sculpture to evaluate the techniques to be applied - Analysis of materials to be used for mold development: silicon, resin, polycarbonate - Creating molds for the elements of the sculpture-Basic elements for the sculpture - Mold production: focus on PVC applications 1-2 Choose the right type of chocolate to obtain perfect and realistic decorations - Application of a variety of chocolate tempering methods according to the type of technique chosen - Storage of the decoration and preparation for finishing - Application of cocoa butter as polish</p>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>Understand how the preparation of a scale model can help to develop support and stability in the actual sculpture. Analyze the suitable materials for the production of molds according to the type of decorations - Learn PVC applications for molds production-Understanding how to prepare and shape decorative patterns using PVC molds  Identify the suitable type of chocolate - Respect the tempering temperatures in order to obtain a stable and crystallized final product - Learn how to store chocolate decorations - Become familiar with spraying chocolate and/or cocoa butter, both as a finishing layer and as a preservative</p>
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Preparation of PVC molds for supporting elements
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	The Italian Baker pg. 72/73/74/81/82/84

<b>Lesson 3</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	<p>Mold production: focus on silicon. Working with plaster, wood, Styrofoam: creating the negative mold - Stabilization and crystallization of the supporting elements - Suitable tempering method for supporting elements: crystallization control - How to remove air bubbles efficiently</p>

<b>Objectives</b>	Gain confidence with various types of silicone - Learn how to apply silicone in the preparation of chocolate sculptures - Learn to prepare the negative mold with high density materials - Learn how to use the vibrating table to remove air bubbles from chocolate
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Silicon mold production - Supporting elements production
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Ewald Notter - The Art of the Chocolatier: From Classic Confection to Sensational Showpieces Chapter 15 creating a competition showpiece Bleu Chocolate pp. 30/46/53-55/158-179/192-194 <b>Assignment #2 Techniques Used in Chocolate Showpiece assigned Due by lesson 7</b>

<b>Lesson 4</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Additional techniques for decorative patterns Geometrical and Natural shapes: meaning and application Straight knife-dipped flowers - Polycarbonate molds for flowers - Triangle tube flowers - Fake wood bark - Balloon technique
<b>Objectives</b>	Learn how to make flower petals using the knife or spatula technique - Learn how to give three-dimensionality to the flower during assembly - Learn to use the right amount of chocolate for flower production - Learn how to make a flower using the box technique - Learn how to create fake wood bark - Learn how to use a balloon to create chocolate shapes
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Preparations of decorations and additional components with various techniques
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Ewald Notter - The Art of the Chocolatier: From Classic Confection to Sensational Showpieces Chapter 15 Creating a competition showpiece Bleu Chocolate pp. 122-125/143-157/208-217/231-239/272-273/296-297 <b>FINAL PROJECT OVERVIEW.</b> <b>Assignment#1 Due</b>

<b>Lesson 5</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class

<b>Lecture</b>	Sculpture elements finishing Finishing techniques application: planer, sandpaper, paper towel, sponge, microfiber towel - Building a home-made airbrush spray booth - Preparing the colors mixtures according to the different final textures and the appearance: sifting, tempering and crystallization - Review of the sculpture elements and guidelines
<b>Objectives</b>	Gain confidence with a variety of finishing techniques - Identify the final steps of the sculpture production - Understand the importance of precise finishing - Understand the importance of following the given guidelines
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Finishing techniques - Colors mixtures preparation
<b>Readings/Assignments</b>	Ewald Notter - The Art of the Chocolatier: From Classic Confection to Sensational Showpieces Chapter 15 creating a competition showpiece Bleu Chocolat pp. 26-28/90

<b>Lesson 6</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The color wheel Color harmonies: complementary, analogous, triad, split-complementary, rectangle/tetradic, square-Color application of supporting elements - Airbrush-Matching colors and sculpture meaning - Final spraying applications: low temperature cocoa butter spraying for shining effect
<b>Objectives</b>	Learn how to use color pairing in order to achieve specific chromatic effects-Learn how to balance color density and cocoa butter concentration - Learn how to apply low temp cocoa butter with airbrush technique
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Color pairing application - Coloring the supporting elements
<b>Readings</b>	<a href="http://www.tigercolor.com/color-lab/color-theory/color-harmonies.htm">http://www.tigercolor.com/color-lab/color-theory/color-harmonies.htm</a> Ewald Notter - The Art of the Chocolatier: From Classic Confection to Sensational Showpieces Chapter 15 creating a competition showpiece Bleu Chocolat pp. 83-88/157/179/182-184/197/201/205/222-223/347/385-386

<b>Lesson 7</b>
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<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Color application on decorative patterns - Mini airbrush Cocoa butter-based color - Alcohol and fat-soluble colors - Immersion technique Assembling decorative patterns with cocoa butter-based colors (ex. stems and leaves)-Creating patterns with polyethylene sheets
<b>Objectives</b>	Gain confidence with the application of a variety of coloring - Learn how to color with the immersion technique - Learn how to use colors to assemble small pieces - Gain confidence with modeling patterns using polyethylene sheets
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Mini airbrush application - Polyethylene sheets technique
<b>Readings</b>	Ewald Notter - The Art of the Chocolatier: From Classic Confection to Sensational Showpieces Chapter 15 Creating a competition showpiece Bleu Chocolat pp. 83-88/157/179/182-184/197/201/205/222- 223/347/385-386 <b>Assignment #2 Due</b> <b>Assignment #3 Color Use in Chocolate Competition</b> <b>Showpieces assigned. Due by lesson 10</b>

<b>Lesson 8</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Hand drawing and paintbrush application-Freehand drawing - Choosing the complexity of the drawing according to the sculpture theme and personal skills - Tracing on parchment paper and transferring on chocolate - Paint brush application - Direct application of color powder and titanium dioxide - Maximum allowed quantity of titanium dioxide application
<b>Objectives</b>	Gain confidence with hand drawing on chocolate - Learn how to transfer drawings on chocolate - Apply brush painting to chocolate decoration - Learn how to safely dissolve titanium dioxide with chocolate colors in order to obtain a perfect texture to apply
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Hand drawing - Paint brush decorations
<b>Readings</b>	Ewald Notter - The Art of the Chocolatier: From Classic Confection to Sensational Showpieces Chapter 15: creating a competition showpiece

<b>Lesson 9</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class

<b>Lecture</b>	Showpiece general test-The golden ratio - Finding the primary visualization point - Placing elements: the rule of thirds - Connecting the elements: materials and techniques - Unusual techniques: connecting the supporting elements using the dowel and drill technique-Separate elements for eventual transportation
<b>Objectives</b>	Understand the importance of proportions for an elegant and harmonious structure-Learn to associate geometric and mathematical techniques for ideal proportions. Understand how to find the primary visualization point - Understand the importance of using the same type of chocolate for the connections between two elements
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Final assembly 1
<b>Readings</b>	Ewald Notter - The Art of the Chocolatier: From Classic Confection to Sensational Showpieces Chapter 15: Creating a competition showpiece <b>FINAL PROJECT DUE</b>

<b>Lesson 10</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Final assembly Safe transportation: DIY special supports for chocolate elements - Building supports that perfectly match the sculpture elements - Delivery: Packing techniques Sculpture exposition-Final assembly of the showpiece: replicating the test - Use of special finishing tools
<b>Objectives</b>	Learn how to build tailored supports for safe sculpture transportation - Gain confidence with packing techniques - Learn how to build the sculpture during the competition - Analyze all factors: environment, time, temperature - Learn how to apply special techniques and tools for sculpture assembly
<b>Visit/Lab</b>	Final assembly 2
<b>Readings</b>	Ewald Notter - The Art of the Chocolatier: From Classic Confection to Sensational Showpieces Chapter 15: Creating a competition showpiece <b>Assignment #3 Due</b>

<b>Lesson 11 Final Exam</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class

Lecture	FINAL EXAM
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