

Be a PMC Promoter - Teach PMC!

Part 1 of 2:

- Getting a job teaching PMC
- Preparing your teaching materials

Like polymer clay in its infancy, PMC has yet to reach a critical mass. Each of us can be a PMC promoter and help the cause. Why is that important? For one thing, the more people who know about PMC, the less often we will have to explain it at craft shows. As with all crafts, it's important to educate future collectors and practitioners. I missed the bandwagon with polymer clay. When PMC came along, I decided to be one of the first teachers of PMC in my area, which helped me to get into new art centers as an instructor. There are still many untapped locations for teaching PMC. You can benefit by teaching a workshop, and you'll be helping the PMC cause.



If you want to teach PMC to others, what do you need? I will share information about the tools required to teach a class and how to convince an art center to hire you. In Part 1 I'll concentrate on getting the job, and in Part 2 I'll talk about tools and skills to demonstrate in a PMC class.

Getting the job

To get a teaching position at a non-credit division of a community college, art center, or bead store, you need a press packet which includes

- business card
- jewelry resumé
- biographical paragraph
- artist's statement
- course description(s)
- photos of your work (optional)
- head shot of yourself (optional)

Mail this folder, along with a cover letter, to the correct contact person (call first to get a name). Follow up with a phone call about a week later. I mail all my promotional materials in a snazzy maroon folder with a cut-out window for the business card. This is helpful when I call; I remind art center directors that my materials were in a maroon folder to help their memory.

Getting ready for class

Getting hired is only part of the job. You need to write a course outline, prepare any handouts, and acquire the necessary tools. Ask yourself what you will demonstrate in each class. For a six-week class it is important to divide the topics up evenly to allow for a good flow. In a traditional metalsmithing class I start with sawing, sanding, and filing. Avoid overwhelming the students with too much at once. With PMC, the learning curve is short so being overwhelmed is less likely.

I give students class handouts which include a syllabus, a list of places where they can purchase additional tools and supplies, and a few pages on safety. At the end of the course I give them a brochure I've written called, "Now what do I do? How to continue your jewelry education on your own."

I also make small posters I keep on an easel which depict various topics such as polishing, filing, and sawing. It is convenient to have pictures to refer to rather than to rummage through the tool cabinets just to

show what a particular tool looks like. For PMC classes I made a poster with images cut out of various magazines such as Studio PMC, catalogs, or print-outs from web sites featuring items made with PMC. I include all the information about who made what and where it appeared.

I also take two binders with me to classes. One is filled with pages from Lapidary Journal's Jewelry Journal, which I have ripped out of back issues (note: these aren't photocopies made in violation of copyright law, but the originals). The other features print-outs from Charles Lewton-Brain's web site on a variety of topics (these may be used as long as no money is made from them).

Other important resources for PMC class materials are specific Jewelry Journal articles with PMC projects, sample issues of Studio PMC, and the booklet on PMC from Rio Grande, Albuquerque (free with purchase of PMC).

In Part 2 (see the next issue of Studio PMC), I'll talk about the techniques I demonstrate in a PMC class and discuss the tools I take with me.

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