

Four Corners Gem and Mineral Club Q&A for Gem Club Teachers

Am I allowed to teach at the Four Corners Gem and Mineral Club?

A dues-paying member with a special skill to share with beginning, intermediate, or advanced students in earth science, lapidary, metalsmith, or allied arts, may teach at the Club and charge tuition. The lessons may be public or private. Dues payment may be waived if the teacher lives at a great distance, teaches a skill we can't obtain locally, and is approved at a monthly business meeting.

How do I reserve the building for my class?

Contact the Class Coordinator (Charlotte Lenssen, charlotte_lenssen@yahoo.com) or attend a monthly business meeting and request your dates. Be prepared to explain cost, date, hours, and how to register. Prepare a write up about you class and attach a thumbnail image of a finished product (the image should not exceed 1" inch or 100 pixels in any direction). Send the description and image to Charlotte.

Is there a cost to reserve the building?

Yes. Facility use fees are \$4 per student hour. You pay for the number of students who attend. If you have 6 spots available but only 5 people sign up, pay tuition, and attend, then you pay for 5 students.

Here are three examples of the calculation method based on \$4 per student hour:

Number of students x	Number of class hours x	Facility Use Fee	Amount owed Club	Cost per student (include this in tuition)
4 students x	6 hours x	\$4 =	\$96.00	\$24
5 students x	10 hours x	\$4 =	\$200.00	\$40
6 students x	4 hours x	\$4 =	\$96.00	\$16

Are there restrictions on club-owned supplies I can use?

Yes. If the supply is consumed during class, or likely to be consumed, then you are required to supply it. Most teachers include supply costs in their tuition fee. For example, if you teach a beginner's class that involves sawing, bring extra saw blades to account for breakage. If your students will have a lot of sink time, bring a roll or two of paper towels. Metal costs are explained on the next page.

How do I pay for something consumable like acetylene? Am I supposed to bring my own tank?

Consumables such as acetylene, propane, oxygen, solder and flux are an exception to the rule. If your use is ordinary (similar to a regular shop day), then you may use these supplies without reimbursement to the Club

But if your students will tackle large, lengthy or high-intensity torch projects, then bring a supply of solder and flux, and pay the club for excessive gas use. To determine excessive use, write down the level of the acetylene, propane or oxygen tank before the class begins. At the end of class, write down the finished level. If you have consumed ¼ or more of the tank, then pay the club for gas at this rate:

¼ tank - \$10.00
 ½ tank - \$20.00
 ¾ tank - \$30.00
 Full tank - \$40.00

Are there restrictions on equipment or tool usage?

You must be thoroughly familiar with user safety, proper usage, and what students must do to avoid harming themselves or the equipment or causing excessive wear or tear. These safety and proper usage guidelines must be part of your curriculum before turning students loose. If you are not entirely sure how to use a tool or

equipment item, then don't allow your students to use it, even if your student claims to know its proper usage. You are responsible for breakage or excessive wear and tear if equipment or tools are misused. Equipment may also break from normal and proper usage. Please discuss with club organizers any breakage that occurs during your class time to determine what can be done to make things right.

How do I charge for my class?

The tuition cost is entirely up to you, but most teachers will consider four factors: 1) hours of instruction 2) facility use fee, 3) cost of materials you provide, and 4) how much you hope to receive after all of your expenses are paid. Classes at the Club typically cost from \$80 to \$200, however a few classes have sold for considerably more. Here is a typical calculation to determine tuition costs **PER STUDENT**.

No. class hours	Student's share of facility use fee at \$4 per hour	Students share of supplies provided by the teacher	Student's share of instructor fee	Tuition per student
5	\$20 +	\$12 +	\$80 =	\$112.00
10	\$40 +	\$30 +	\$200 =	\$270.00

How do I receive payment?

Students are expected to pay the teacher directly. This makes you responsible for any declined checks or credit cards, for making change, and for remitting taxes to tax authorities. In turn *you will pay the facility use fee and, if applicable, the consumption of supplies, to the Club immediately after class.* You may ask students to pay in advance or at the door. You may require them to purchase certain tools or supplies not included in the tuition. Make sure your students know all the terms before they show up, but otherwise payment terms are up to you.

Can I bring a Teaching Assistant?

It is great to have additional help to set up, assist students, put away and clean. An assistant can provide extra support for you and your students, and an extra pair of eyes on safe and proper tool use. For these reasons, the Club encourages teaching assistants. Assistants often want to complete the same projects as your students and so the distinction between an assistant and a student can get blurred. The facility use fee is based on the number of students using the Club facility. If your assistant is working on a project during your class time, including but not limited to the project your students are working on, then your assistant has consumed Club resources, and therefore owes the Club a facility use fee. As a courtesy to the assistant the instructor is responsible for the daily shop fee (\$5 in 2022) for each day the assistant is working with the instructor.

What about taxes?

You are responsible for reporting your own income tax and, if applicable, sales tax. Teachers are not employees or contract employees of the club; they are renters of the facility.

If you resell goods students may take home – such as a package of tools or supplies for future projects – this triggers a sales tax event. You are required to post your current, valid City of Durango and State of Colorado sales tax licenses during the class, collect sales tax from your students, and pay sales taxes owed to these authorities after the event. This is true even if you sell goods at cost.

Educational services, including tuition and the cost of *small tools and supplies essential to and/or consumed during class time*, are generally not subject to sales tax.

How do I recruit students?

You are responsible for most student recruitment. The club does not perform these services for independent business people. Most recruitment should begin 2 months before the class. Here is a list of strategies.

- Maintain a list of student prospects and email them. Many students who took your class before will want to take another class from you, so keep a list of your past and potential customers.
- Prepare a brief, punchy description for the Club's monthly newsletter and calendar, including
 - Class title, date and hours
 - Tuition cost and whether or not price includes supplies
 - A two or three sentence description of what the class will cover
 - How to contact you to enroll and make payment
 - A class project photo with a plain background suitable for a thumbnail image on the website
- After the class is approved, email this brief description and image to info@durangorocks.org (newsletter) and members@durangorocks.org (website calendar) at least one month but preferably two full months ahead of your class. Your class will be mentioned in the newsletter and added to the website calendar. If you do not send a brief description to the correct email address in a timely manner, you will miss out on this very effective publicity.
- Take advantage of local online calendars. With many online calendars posting "things to do in Durango," feel free to contact the calendar's host and request a posting. Your posting should direct students to the Club's calendar for more information at www.durangorocks.org/events.
- Ask for a list of student prospects. The Club's membership application process gathers the names of students interested in classes you might offer. Members whose class interests match your class offering *and* who pay for their dues online are automatically added to a digital file of prospects for your class type. Request this list from either info@durangorocks.org or members@durangorocks.org. Members who pay using the paper application form, however, are not usually digitized or therefore available.
- Offer a free demo. Offering a free demo a week or two before your class shows students what they will learn if they sign up. This is very effective for recruitment. A free demo requires the same marketing as a fee-based class, so plan ahead of time. There is no facility rental fee for a free demo, and demos are often held on week nights. Don't think of this as "giving away" your skills. Instead, you are building confidence in potential students to learn a new skill. They are more likely to sign up if they believe they can be successful in your class, and if they like the results you demonstrate.
- Use other publicity means such as flyers, Facebook, email blast to your contacts, etc. Put as much effort into marketing as needed to fill your class and build a waiting list. Some teachers don't market at all – they fill their classes by word of mouth. But most teachers must spend some time marketing.
- Submit to the Club's webmaster your teacher profile. This includes your personal photo and several photos of your work, as well as a bio relevant to your teaching skills. Email these to the webmaster at members@durangorocks.org. Request the webmaster to post this on the Club's classes webpage.
- Ask to be featured at the Club for "Artist of the Month" during the month before your class begins. This locked display is a great place to show examples of the type of work students will learn during your class. Ask about this at the business meeting when your dates are approved.

How do I obtain a key?

Make arrangements to obtain a door key when you obtain approval for your class. The deadbolt and handle both unlock in a clockwise turn. To lock up again, push the small knob on the inside handle to the lock position, then lock the deadbolt with a counter-clockwise turn from outside.

How do I heat the room if needed?

Before class, visit the Club during open hours. Ask a shop steward to show you the thermostat and demonstrate its operation if your class is held during cold weather.

What about injuries or accidents during class?

Practice safety first! Know where the fire extinguisher is, and the location of first aid supplies. In the unlikely event something happens, be sure to carry a phone with battery life and cell service. For an emergency, call 911 and then call a club officer. For non-life threatening emergencies, such as if a tool breaks or the room fills with smoke but the source of the smoke can be turned off, contact a club officer. A list of club officers is posted in the office area. You will need to write up the details of an injury or accident for insurance purposes. You may be held liable if your safety instruction or practice was remiss.

Is there a liability release people should sign?

Yes. Ask your students to sign the bottom half of a membership form before class begins, or to save paper, make copies of the liability waiver, two per sheet, using the copier.

Who is liable if a student is injured?

Our insurance providers tell us the teacher is liable. For this reason, art and science teachers generally carry their own liability insurance when renting a facility. However, the Club was able to obtain a group policy that covers you and your students, so long as no more than 15 participants are involved. This insurance coverage is included in the facility use fee paid to the Club.

Are my students required to be a Club member?

No, but once they discover the Club's amenities, please encourage them to join. Provide students with a membership application form or steer them to online payments at www.durangorocks.org. If you accept a membership fee, attach it to the membership application and put it in the membership box next to the printer. Do not deposit membership fees in the shop fee box as the person will not be credited with a membership payment if the payment is misrouted.

Is there anything else I should do during class?

Yes, ask your students to sign in on the shop's sign-in sheet, just as they would sign in for an open shop day. Create a heading with your class name, date, and your name as instructor, and each student signs in below. Include a column for email address as you may want this information when you offer future classes. You must leave the original for the Club as a record of class participation, as it is the backup documentation for your facility payment. But feel free to take a copy home as well. The printer "on" button is at lower left.

What if I cancel or postpone my class?

Teachers sometimes cancel or postpone if they don't have enough students enrolled, or if sickness or an emergency arises.

For a cancellation, you are responsible for contacting all of your students, returning any deposits paid, and notifying the website manager at members@durangorocks.org so the class is also cancelled online.

For a postponement, you are responsible for contacting all of your students, returning deposits to anyone who cannot attend the new date, obtaining a new available date by speaking with a Club officer or attending a business meeting, and notifying the Class Coordinator charlotte_lenssen@yahoo.com or the website managers members@durangorocks.org and info@durangorocks.org to update newsletter announcements.

What are my responsibilities after the class?

Prepare a payment report for the treasurer, including number of students x class hours x the current class fee and leave in the treasurer's mailbox. It is to the right of the printer in the office. You should exit the building in a condition better than you found it. This means:

- scrub out the sink and do not allow any particulate matter to go down the drain,

- empty water buckets (except those buckets that are settling sediment),
- wipe down surface areas,
- wipe down bathroom and restock toilet paper if needed,
- empty trash,
- take home and return any rags that need washing,
- make sure all tools and equipment are properly shut off (if needed) and stored,
- set up tabletop for next open shop, including calendar, sign in book, shop fee box, and pen,
- check the floor and jeweler's bench for debris and sweep or brush as needed,
- make sure water to the back room is turned off and drained,
- make sure all fans are turned off (except for kiln fan if the casting kiln is running), and
- turn off lights; the porch light is light-sensitive and automatic, so leave that switch on.

The furnace is programmed to automatically revert to 55 degrees so you do not need to adjust the thermostat on your way out.

Thank you for your interest in teaching at the Club!