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CRWR 514.01: Techniques of Modern Fiction

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CRWR 514, Sec.1 ---- Techniques of Modern Fiction: Women from the Sticks

Instructor Information:

- Instructor: Deirdre McNamer
- Office: LA 116
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- Office hours: Wednesdays from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and by appointment.

Course Description:

Women from the Sticks: Reading and Writing Eudora Welty, Louise Erdrich and Alice Munro. In this class, we will function as writers/investigators who ask these kinds of questions: Is there a relationship between rural sensibilities and fictional form? Do narratives focused on close-knit communities employ a distinctive sense of time? Do these writers, and others we'll discuss, place a unique emphasis on the spaces surrounding, or occurring within, the ostensible subject?

We will look very closely at the work of these writers and several others. You will write responses to the readings; do imitations; give a talk that accompanies a story you've written and describes a conversation between the two; and expand upon the talk, again accompanied by either a substantive rewrite of your story or an essay of 7-10 pages.

Learning Outcomes:

1. That you leave the class with a strong sense of how these writers, in their fiction, interacted with their physical and social environments and with their positions (as a Southerner, a Native American and a Canadian, respectively) beyond the borders of American urban literary culture.
2. That this close reading, the discussions that result, and the fiction or analysis you create will enhance your ability to shape your ongoing work in interesting, possibly new, ways.

Required Textbooks:

The Red Convertible, Louise Erdrich, Harper Perennial; *Family Furnishings: Selected Stories, 1995-2014*, Alice Munro, Vintage International; *Collected Stories of Eudora Welty*, Harcourt Brace.

Required Assignment and Tests:

- Close reading of three stories per week. A 2-page (or longer) response to one of them. An imitation can be substituted for two of the responses during the course of the semester.
- One story of your own accompanied by a verbal presentation in class that explores the ways in which your work converses with the work of one of the three writers.

- An expansion of your talk, accompanied by a substantive rewrite of your story or an essay that amplifies the content of your talk.
- Outside reading, from time to time, that is intended to further illuminate the work of these writers.

Course Guidelines and Policies:

I assume that you are invested, motivated, talented, learn-by-doing adults. You will get a high grade if you read carefully, respond intelligently, and participate energetically. If, at any time, you want my assessment of what your grade is precisely ---and why --please talk to me.

Student Conduct Code

Please familiarize yourself with the [Student Conduct Code](http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php) site:
http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php

Attendance

Do not come to class late. Missing more than two classes without consulting with me will lower your final grade by a letter.

Course Withdrawal

See the Office of the Registrar site at [umt.edu](http://www.umt.edu) for information about deadline and procedures for adding and dropping courses.

Disability Modifications

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration among students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability that could adversely affect your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact [Disability Services](#) in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406-243-2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.