

CRWR 491—02, Special Topics: Writing into the Wilds 374531

Tuesday 3:30-6:20 LA 233

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Office: LA 126 Office Hours: Tuesday, 2:30-3:30 email for appointment.

Required Texts:

1. Alexandra Fuller, DON'T LET'S GO TO THE DOGS TONIGHT,
2. Mark Spragg, WHERE RIVERS CHANGE DIRECTION,
3. John McPhee, COMING INTO THE COUNTRY,
4. Ernest Hemingway, THE NICK ADAMS STORIES

In this course, we will investigate issues of craft and technique in each required text, and explore topics specific to writing in and of wild places, be they physical wilderness or wilderness of a more internal nature. The reading requirements are designed to help students become better readers, and to advance their abilities to discuss, write about, and assess good writing. In addition to required texts, we will also read and discuss several stories, essays and novels over the course of the semester, some of which will be provided, from a reading list that will expand as student work is discussed. Students will explore the significance of these individual stories through class discussion.

The writing component of this class requires each student to submit two pieces (fiction or non-fiction, fifteen page maximum) for peer review, and one rewrite of one of those pieces, working toward a final portfolio of his or her best writing, with a goal of at least 30 pages of revised, polished writing by the end of semester.

Workshop requirements: Students furnish copies of their work one class period before the workshop. Please present all work double spaced, with standard margins, in a 12-pt. font, with pages numbered, and title your work, even if it's a chapter or segment of a longer work. I require a single-side copy of your essay, but you can make double-side copies for the class. No more than 15 pages per submission. As a reader, you mark each essay with notes, edits and questions, and then compose a typewritten page or two of overall comments to attach to the manuscript. Include your name on these pages. All copies of the manuscript will be returned to the author following workshop, and at that time, you will pass forward a copy of your comments to me.

Workshop format: We'll work to give the most useful feedback, with the idea that learning to read critically is a crucial component of learning to write well. The focus of the workshop will be to provide critical feedback and support for each writer, with a goal of creating publishable works. You are the editors in this class, in charge of offering thoughtful, well-reasoned advice to a writer. Make editorial comments that reflect your understanding of the writer's intent—we must assume every element offered in a manuscript is deliberately included. You are also the storytellers in this class, proud to offer up solid first drafts, work that's as good as you can make it without advice.

Attendance: Attendance is a significant factor in your grade. Do not come to class late. Missing more than two classes without consulting with me will lower your final grade by two letters. It only gets worse from there. If you know you will be gone, please contact me in advance, and contact me via email if accident or illness forces you to miss class. This is a collaborative studio course, not a lecture course; there's no way to effectively make up a missed workshop or a missed discussion. If you are absent on the day of your own workshop, it will not be rescheduled. It's up to the absent student to contact peers for workshop manuscripts and return to class with reading, writing and editing assignments prepared. Failure to do so will count as another absence.

Grading: Because you are upper level students electing to take this course, I assume that you are invested, motivated, talented, learn-by-doing adults. You will get a high grade if you do the assignments, come to class, and demonstrate, through your critiques and revisions, a grasp of how to employ certain techniques of rewriting and re-seeing. 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 site:
http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php

Course Withdrawal: See the Office of the Register site at [umt.edu](http://www.umt.edu) to see deadlines 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.