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Office Hours: TR and by appointment
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WRTG 3020 – Contemporary Women Writers

Welcome to Contemporary Women Writers! This class is designed to hone your analytic writing abilities. Throughout the semester, you will be composing papers about the various fiction and nonfiction pieces we will be reading. For most assignments, you will first compose a draft and then revise the draft into a final paper. This process will help you identify common ways that you can improve your papers for other classes. We will also be doing many smaller assignments and exercises to help you master specific writing techniques.

The goal of the course is to improve your writing, regardless of your current ability level. When you have completed the course, you should feel confident writing academic papers and have a better understanding of how to make your papers more coherent and persuasive.

Course Materials:

A writer’s notebook (bring to every class)
Course Reader (available at the bookstore)
Rebecca by Daphne du Maurier
A good grammar book – I recommend The Elements of Style by Strunk and White.

Class format:

Because this course follows a workshop format, you will be commenting on work by your fellow students and they will be commenting on yours. In order for the workshop to function effectively, you’ll need to spend a substantial amount of preparation time reading and responding to your fellow students’ papers. This process will not only help your peers but help you look for common pitfalls in your own writing.

Assignments and Grading:

The main assignments for the course will be three 3-5 page papers. This may not sound like a lot, but each paper will require a considerable amount of work. There will also be several smaller assignments throughout the semester. The final course grade will be calculated as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper #1</th>
<th>25%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper #2</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper #3</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes and participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Papers will be assessed in terms of their content, clarity, creativity, style, organization, and grammatical correctness. A main emphasis will be on the paper’s overall persuasiveness. We will talk more about grading as the first paper assignment approaches. Please staple your assignments; I will not accept unstapled papers.

Quiz grades, smaller writing assignments, and written comments on your peers’ drafts make up most of your participation grade. Sometimes these assignments will be turned in for participation scores, and sometimes they won’t. Your lowest participation score will be dropped. Involvement in class discussions also influences your participation grade.

Attendance also affects your grade, as described below.

**Attendance**

Attendance is required. You have two grace absences, after which each absence results in your final grade dropping by 3 percentage points. Exceptions may be made in cases of documented medical illnesses or for observance of religious holidays. If you know you will be missing class, it is your responsibility to contact me or a classmate beforehand so you can make up work as necessary.

**Plagiarism**

Please follow the honor code. When you turn in each paper, include the following statement with your signature: “On my honor as a University of Colorado student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance.”

I will report any incidents of academic misconduct to the Honor Code Council, and if you are found in violation you will be subject to sanctions. See [www.colorado.edu/honorcode](http://www.colorado.edu/honorcode) to view the specific guidelines.

**Disabilities**

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard 322, [www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices](http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices)).
Reading and Paper Schedule

The following is a list of reading and paper assignments for the semester. Please note that the schedule is subject to change, and that you will have additional assignments on top of those listed below. However, the schedule should give you a good overview of the topics and readings we'll be covering throughout the semester. All readings except Rebecca (which we'll be reading after spring break) are in the course reader.

Jan. 17
Introduction to the class and review of the syllabus
In-class discussion: Alice Walker's "The Flowers"
Questionnaire

Gender Discrimination: Then and Now

Jan. 19
Reading due: Chapters Three and Four of Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own

Jan. 24
Readings due: William Henry's "Why Can't a Man be More like a Woman?" and excerpts from Malcolm Gladwell's Blink: The Power of Thinking without Thinking. p. 72-98, 245-254

Rebellious Women

Jan. 26:
Readings due: Vivian Gornick's "What Independence has Come to Mean to Me" and Barbara Ehrenreich's "Welcome to Cancerland"

Short Fiction

Jan. 31
Reading Due: Alice Munro's "A Wilderness Station"

Feb. 2
Reading Due: Samantha Chang's "Pipa's Story."

Feb. 7
Draft of Paper #1 Due – Bring in Copies for the Whole Class.
In-class Reading: Margaret Atwood's "Happy Endings"

Feb. 9, 14, 16 & 21
In-Class workshops

Feb. 23
Final Paper #1 Due
In-Class Reading: Pam Houston's "How to Talk to a Hunter"

Women and Religion

Feb. 28
Readings Due: Daphne Merkin's "Trouble in the Tribe" and Kathleen Norris's "Conversion: The Feminist Impasse"
Cultural Heritage: Honoring the Past or Embracing the Future?

Mar. 2  
Readings Due: Amy Kolen’s “Fire” and Barbara Ehrenreich’s “Cultural Baggage”

Learning from a Disaster: The Lessons of Sept. 11

Mar. 7  
Reading Due: Elaine Scarry’s “Citizenship in Emergency”

Gender and Body Issues

Mar. 9  

Mar. 14  
In-Class Reading: Sarah Courteau’s “Chicken 81”

Mar. 16 & 21  
In-Class Workshops

Mar. 23  
Final Paper #2 Due.  
In-Class Reading: Lorrie Moore’s “You’re Ugly, Too”

Mar. 28 & 30  
Spring Break – No Class

The Novel: Rebecca

Apr. 4  
Reading Due: Rebecca, chapters 1-6.

Apr. 6  
Reading Due: Rebecca, chapters 7-10.

Apr. 11  
Reading Due: Rebecca, chapters 11-16.

Apr. 13  
Reading Due: Rebecca, chapters 17-19.

Apr. 18  
Reading Due: Rebecca, chapters 20-23.

Apr. 20  
Reading Due: Rebecca, chapters 24-27.

Apr. 25  

Apr. 27 & May 2  
In-Class Workshops

May 4  
Final Paper #3 Due. There is no final exam in this course, and we will not be meeting during finals week.