

TOOL KIT FOR THE UMRA BOOK CLUB

(This tool kit applies to the book club as it is now organized. Of course, book clubs can be organized in different ways.)

Meeting Time and Location:

The UMRA Book Club currently meets on the third Friday of each month except for December. At the beginning of the third week, an e-mail reminder is sent out to the group giving the time and place, the name and author of the book for the month, and the name of the discussion leader. Members are asked to inform both the coordinator and the Zoom host if they will not be joining the meeting.

If we return to in-person meetings at the same meeting place, it will again be necessary to wait at the front door to let people into the building. Since our founding in 2010, we have met at 1666 Coffman near the St. Paul campus. Although the meeting place is flexible, depending on the wishes of the members, we like our present place as it is in a small library and two (and now three) of our members live at this residence.

Methods for Publicizing and for Recruiting New Members When Needed:

- An email can be sent out on the UMRA Listserv.
- The annual reception for new UMRA members gives an opportunity to highlight special interest groups such as ours.
- UMRA newsletter and website.

The website includes a brief, continuous-running article written by the book club coordinator describing the book club and giving the coordinator's name and email for contacting purposes.

One of our members acts as a liaison to the website and sees to it that monthly announcements are posted of the meetings and the books being read. Also, members take turns writing monthly book reviews for the website.

Size of Group:

Because we reserve each member a time to speak in our hour-long meetings, we keep member size to approximately 15. For in-person meetings, we also maintain this size to avoid overcrowding.

Choosing Books:

Our decision has been to read books of all genres, both fiction and nonfiction. In November of each year, the coordinator provides a calendar sign-up list. Each member signs up for the month they want and fills in the name of their book if they know it. We run our books by the rest of the group at the November meeting, and sometimes changes will be made to please the group. Those who haven't decided on a book inform the coordinator later, and updated calendars are emailed to the group.