

## 2007 PREFACE Book

The PREFACE selection for 2007 is Ruth Ozeki's national bestselling novel *All Over Creation*. This multi-layered novel takes an abstract scientific issue about genetically engineered crops and brings it down to earth. Told with humor and empathy, the tale presents a cast of quirky and memorable characters whose lives intersect at real life junctures, such as traditional family farming verses 21<sup>st</sup>-century corporate agribusiness, globalization verses individual ethics and political action, personal freedom verses family responsibility, old hurts verses renewed appreciation. The powerful family drama is set in rural Idaho, where a teenage runaway returns after 25 years to care for her aging parents. Over the years, moral, familial, and environmental issues have germinated and now lives collide in ways both tragic and tender. Ultimately, like seeds, the characters grow and enlarge their capacity for understanding and renewal.

“Buzzes and blooms with the cross-pollination of races and subcultures, death and birth, betrayal and reconciliation, comedy and tragedy.” The Los Angeles Times Book Review best captures this intriguing novel's full scope in its back cover book review.

Selected PREFACE books must satisfy a number of the PREFACE book selection criteria.

**Book Selection Criteria** - campus-wide committee (faculty, staff, & students)

Four Main Criteria - the book should:

1. Be engaging to students
2. Generate issues of social relevance and intellectual depth
3. Have a broad appeal across disciplines
4. Generate issues of personal relevance

(Possible themes: students' futures, transition, independence, exploration of values, cross-cultural awareness)

### **Book Guidelines**

1. Readable/Accessible
2. Generally between 200-400 pages
3. Living author

*All Over Creation* was chosen for the following reasons.

1. The book addresses contemporary issues in a way that is relevant to readers.
2. The book is timely, given societal consciousness regarding environmental sustainability.
3. The book addresses issues of family, friendship, trust, support, and grief in a way that champions understanding and renewal.
4. The book shows how tragic events can alter and connect people's lives unpredictably.
5. The book depicts generational and cultural experiences in rural America.

6. The book explores an image of corporate life in large scale agribusiness.
7. The book presents perspectives regarding organic farming and Genetically Modified Crops (also referred to as GMOs - Genetically Modified Organisms).
8. The book challenges the readers to critically analyze the complexity of the technical and political issues surrounding Genetically Modified Crops.
9. The book is provocative and filled with complicated life circumstances and ethical dilemmas worthy of intellectual debate.
10. The book addresses community awareness and civic engagement