

BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
The City University of New York

Department ENGLISH

Title of Course:	Course Number:	ENG 381
<b>ENGLISH 381: AMERICAN LITERATURE: FROM COLONIAL ERA TO THE CIVIL WAR</b>	Class Hours per Week:	3
	Lab Hours:	0
	Credits:	3

A. Description

English 381 surveys American literature from its colonial beginnings to the American Renaissance of the nineteenth century--from Anne Bradstreet and Cotton Mather to Walt Whitman and Herman Melville. Students learn about the cultural milieu that influenced writers, read major and representative works and sharpen their critical abilities.

B. Prerequisites and/or Corequisites

English 201 or English 121

C. Student Outcomes

Students will

- Discuss course content in a range of critical contexts.
- Demonstrate knowledge of themes and genres of course texts.
- Critique the complexities and differences among course texts.

D. Required Texts and/or Supplementary Materials

Instructors typically assign a well-known anthology of American literature, such as the following:

*The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, Vol. 1

*The Heath Anthology of American Literature*, Vol. 1

*The Harper Anthology of American Literature*, Vol. 1

In addition, a novel is usually assigned, such as *The Scarlet Letter*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, or *The Blithedale Romance*, as well as *The Classic Slave Narratives*, ed. Gates.

E. Evaluation and Requirements of Students

Students are required to read extensive assignments in the literature of the period and either to pass quizzes on important readings or maintain a journal recording their responses to some readings. A long term paper or a series of short essays will be assigned, along with a midterm examination and a final. Class participation in the form of group discussions or oral reports is expected. Grades will be based primarily on written work, but class participation will also count.

### **College Attendance Policy**

At BMCC, the maximum number of absences is limited to one more hour than the number of hours a class meets in one week. For example, you may be enrolled in a three-hour class. In that class, you would be allowed 4 hours of absence (not 4 days). In the case of excessive absences, the instructor has the option to lower the grade or assign an F or WU grade.

### **Academic Adjustments for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments for this course must contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities. BMCC is committed to providing equal access to all programs and curricula to all students.

### **BMCC Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Statement**

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, words or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one's own creation. Using the idea or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism.

Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The library has guides designed to help students to appropriately identify a cited work. The full policy can be found on BMCC's web site, [www.bmcc.cuny.edu](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu). For further information on integrity and behavior, please consult the college bulletin (also available online).

## F. Outline of Topics

Week 1: Introduction: Course Procedures and Background

Weeks 2-4: The British Heritage

- A. Puritan Writers: Poets, Theologians, and Historians
- B. Further Perspectives of Diarists and Essayists

Weeks 5-8: The Emerging Nation

- A. Political Writers: Franklin, Jefferson, Paine
- B. Poets: Wheatley, Freneau, Bryant, Barlow

C. Writers of Fiction: Irving, Cooper

Weeks 9-14: American Romanticism

- A. Transcendentalism: Emerson, Thoreau, Fuller
- B. Romantic Poetry in America: Whitman, Poe, Lowell
- C. Major Fiction Writers: Poe, Hawthorne, Melville
- D. The Civil War in Literature: Slave Narratives, Stowe, Whitman