

ENGLISH 401: AMERICAN LITERATURE 1

**Cr. 3**

*Uehling:*

This course will focus on close readings of major and representative American writers from the Colonial period to the Civil War. The historical and cultural context in which these artists worked will be provided by lecture and oral reports; however, the themes and styles of their literature will be the primary focus of our discussions. Among the writers to be considered are Edwards, Bradstreet, Franklin, Freneau, Cooper, Irving, Emerson, Thoreau, Poe, Hawthorne, and Melville.

Beyond an oral report, students will be required to take two unit exams and a comprehensive final exam. Students may choose to write two critical essays of five to seven pages or one longer paper of ten to twelve pages.

*Ruff:*

A survey of American authors from the Colonial Period to the beginning of the Civil War, with the following objectives: first, to examine the cultural and intellectual roots of American literature back to their European, African, and native American origins; second, to follow from first blossom to first fruits the emergence of distinctly American writers and styles of writing; third, to study how American authors represented what it meant to be an American, once a sense of the national as well as regional identities began to emerge; and finally, to examine how seminal works of Early American literature shaped, reflected, critiqued, or sought to demolish many of the ideas we have and hold dear about ourselves as Americans. From the very beginning, America has been a meeting place of many cultures, sometimes in concert, more often in conflict, and our reading list will reflect that historical reality, hopefully giving us new ways to come to terms with it.

To reach these objectives, students will be expected to participate actively in classroom discussions and projects, write several short papers, and take a midterm and a final examination.

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