

KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York

CURRICULUM TRANSMITTAL COVER PAGE

Department: _____ Date: _____

Title Of Course/Degree/Concentration/Certificate: _____

Change(s) Initiated: (Please check)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Closing of Degree | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Degree or Certificate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Closing of Certificate | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Degree: Adding Concentration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Certificate Proposal | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Degree: Deleting Concentration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Degree Proposal | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Prerequisite, Corequisite, and/or Pre/Co-requisite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Course | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Course Designation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New 82 Course (Pilot Course) | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Course Description |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Deletion of Course(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Course Title, Number, Credits and/or Hours |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Change in Academic Policy |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Pathways Submission: |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Life and Physical Science |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Math and Quantitative Reasoning |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> A. World Cultures and Global Issues |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> B. U.S. Experience in its Diversity |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> C. Creative Expression |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> D. Individual and Society |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> E. Scientific World |
- Change in Program Learning Outcomes
- Other (please describe): _____

PLEASE ATTACH MATERIAL TO ILLUSTRATE AND EXPLAIN ALL CHANGES

DEPARTMENTAL ACTION

Action by Department and/or Departmental Committee, if required:

Date Approved: 3/11/21 Signature, Committee Chairperson: 

If submitted Curriculum Action affects another Department, signature of the affected Department(s) is required:

Date Approved: _____ Signature, Department Chairperson: _____

Date Approved: _____ Signature, Department Chairperson: _____

I have reviewed the attached material/proposal

Signature, Department Chairperson: 



TO: Spring 2026 Curriculum Committee
FROM: Prof. Ann Del Principe, Chair, Department of English
DATE: March 5, 2026
RE: Change in Course Title and Course Description for ENG 7300

The Department of English is proposing a change in course title and course description for ENG 7300:

Course Title Change:

From: Themes in American Literature I: Beginnings to 1865
To: American Literature: Beginnings to Emancipation
Rationale: By dropping the Roman numeral and adding a historical descriptor, the new course title allows the course to appear as a stand-alone, rather than part of a two-course sequence and provides clarity for the date 1865 (also allowing for parallel construction with “Beginnings”).

Course Description Change:

From: A survey of American literature and literary history from early America through the Civil War, focusing on the historical, philosophical, religious and literary forces that shaped American life.
To: The course will cover American literature prior to the Civil War, including colonial narratives, early American poetry, and the emergence of major movements like Puritanism, Enlightenment, Romanticism, and Transcendentalism. This course examines how American identity, culture, and society having been reflected in the changing literature of the nation.
Rationale: The new description provides students with a more specific outline of the key historical movements the course will cover, along with the themes that emerged from them.

CUNY Common Core Course Submission Form

Instructions: All courses submitted for the Common Core must be liberal arts courses. Courses submitted to the Course Review Committee may be submitted for only one area of the Common Core and must be 3 credits. Colleges may submit courses to the Course Review Committee before or after they receive college approval. STEM waiver courses do not need to be approved by the Course Review Committee. This form should not be used for STEM waiver courses.

College	Kingsborough Community College
Course Prefix and Number (e.g., ANTH 101, if number not assigned, enter XXX)	English 7300
Course Title	American Literature: Beginnings to Emancipation
Department(s)	English
Discipline	English
Credits	3
Contact Hours	3
Pre-requisites (if none, enter N/A)	English 1200
Co-requisites (if none, enter N/A)	
Catalogue Description	This course surveys American literature from early colonial settlement through the Civil War. Students will explore how writers responded to religious belief, political revolution, westward expansion, slavery, reform movements, and the search for a distinctly American identity. Major movements include Puritanism, the Enlightenment, Romanticism, and Transcendentalism.
Special Features (e.g., linked courses)	
Sample Syllabus	Syllabus must be included with submission, 5 pages max recommended

Indicate the status of this course being nominated:

current course revision of current course a new course being proposed

CUNY COMMON CORE Location

Please check below the area of the Common Core for which the course is being submitted. (Select only one.)

<p>Required Core</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> English Composition</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Life and Physical Sciences</p>	<p>Flexible Core</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> World Cultures and Global Issues (A)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> US Experience in its Diversity (B)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Creative Expression (C)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Individual and Society (D)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Scientific World (E)</p>
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Learning Outcomes

In the left column explain the course assignments and activities that will address the learning outcomes in the right column.

I. Required Core (12 credits)

A. English Composition: Six credits

A course in this area must meet all the learning outcomes in the right column. A student will:

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|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read and listen critically and analytically, including identifying an argument's major assumptions and assertions and evaluating its supporting evidence. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write clearly and coherently in varied, academic formats (such as formal essays, research papers, and reports) using standard English and appropriate technology to critique and improve one's own and others' texts. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate research skills using appropriate technology, including gathering, evaluating, and synthesizing primary and secondary sources. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support a thesis with well-reasoned arguments, and communicate persuasively across a variety of contexts, purposes, audiences, and media. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formulate original ideas and relate them to the ideas of others by employing the conventions of ethical attribution and citation. |

B. Mathematical and Quantitative Reasoning: Three credits

A course in this area must meet all the learning outcomes in the right column. A student will:

- | | |
|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interpret and draw appropriate inferences from quantitative representations, such as formulas, graphs, or tables. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use algebraic, numerical, graphical, or statistical methods to draw accurate conclusions and solve mathematical problems. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Represent quantitative problems expressed in natural language in a suitable mathematical format. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Effectively communicate quantitative analysis or solutions to mathematical problems in written or oral form. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate solutions to problems for reasonableness using a variety of means, including informed estimation. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply mathematical methods to problems in other fields of study. |

C. Life and Physical Sciences: Three credits

A course in this area must meet all the learning outcomes in the right column. A student will:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a life or physical science.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Apply the scientific method to explore natural phenomena, including hypothesis development, observation, experimentation, measurement, data analysis, and data presentation.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Use the tools of a scientific discipline to carry out collaborative laboratory investigations.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Gather, analyze, and interpret data and present it in an effective written laboratory or fieldwork report.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify and apply research ethics and unbiased assessment in gathering and reporting scientific data.

II. Flexible Core (18 credits)

Six three-credit liberal arts and sciences courses, with at least one course from each of the following five areas and no more than two courses in any discipline or interdisciplinary field.

A. World Cultures and Global Issues

A Flexible Core course must meet the three learning outcomes in the right column.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

A course in this area (II.A) must meet at least three of the additional learning outcomes in the right column. A student will:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring world cultures or global issues, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, economics, ethnic studies, foreign languages (building upon previous language acquisition), geography, history, political science, sociology, and world literature.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Analyze culture, globalization, or global cultural diversity, and describe an event or process from more than one point of view.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Analyze the historical development of one or more non-U.S. societies.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Analyze the significance of one or more major movements that have shaped the world's societies.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Analyze and discuss the role that race, ethnicity, class, gender, language, sexual orientation, belief, or other forms of social differentiation play in world cultures or societies.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Speak, read, and write a language other than English, and use that language to respond to cultures other than one's own.

B. U.S. Experience in its Diversity

A Flexible Core course must meet the three learning outcomes in the right column.

Students gather, read, interpret, and assess information from a wide range of literary and historical sources spanning early American history through the Civil War, including sermons, poetry, captivity narratives, slave narratives, political documents, essays, short fiction, and autobiography. Through this process, students consider multiple perspectives on religious belief, revolution, slavery, reform, westward expansion, and the evolving idea of an American identity, evaluating how different writers convey social, moral, and cultural viewpoints.

Students produce weekly informal writing assignments in the form of online discussions and journals (together worth 40% of the course grade) in which they gather evidence from the readings, interpret the authors' perspectives, and evaluate competing viewpoints while engaging key themes such as faith, freedom, self-reliance, justice, and national identity. Journal assignments also ask students to connect historical and literary evidence to their own experiences, values, and communities, fostering critical reflection on how patterns of belief, social norms, and cultural contexts both shaped the past and resonate today.

Students complete two formal writing assignments (each worth 25% of the course grade), in which they synthesize ideas from multiple readings, gather supporting textual evidence, and develop original analytical arguments. In "Early American Voices," students gather and interpret evidence from Colonial or Enlightenment primary texts, historical context, and at least one scholarly secondary source, assessing how religious or philosophical perspectives shape early American thought. In "The American Self Emerges," students synthesize multiple Romantic or Reform-era texts with a scholarly critical viewpoint, evaluating how different historical and interpretive perspectives inform ideas about freedom and individualism. Together, these assignments require students to assess and integrate a range of sources and points of view into a coherent literary argument.

- Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.

Students develop critical and analytical skills through close examination of both primary and secondary texts drawn from early American history through the Civil War. These materials include, for example, Puritan sermons and poetry, Revolutionary-era political arguments, Transcendentalist essays, and slave narratives studied alongside historical and critical scholarship. By comparing differing perspectives, such as religious versus Enlightenment views of human nature, or pro-slavery and abolitionist arguments about freedom and rights, students strengthen their ability to analyze contrasting claims, evaluate supporting evidence, and articulate informed, well-reasoned interpretations.

Students complete weekly discussions and journals that ask them to closely analyze specific passages, considering how language, imagery, and rhetorical choices support or complicate broader themes related to faith, liberty, identity, reform, and national purpose. For instance, in the unit on slavery and reform literature, students evaluate how autobiographical detail in slave narratives challenges dominant cultural narratives about race and freedom. These informal assignments emphasize critical engagement with

- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.

<p>textual evidence while also encouraging students to connect historical ideas to present-day questions about identity, justice, and civic responsibility.</p> <p>Students also complete two formal writing assignments that require sustained critical analysis of literary and historical arguments. In these essays, students compare how different authors use personal experience, philosophical reasoning, or imaginative literature to advance claims about morality, freedom, individualism, and social responsibility. Through this work, students practice synthesizing multiple texts and perspectives to develop original, evidence-based interpretations of how American literature reflects and shapes evolving cultural values.</p>	
<p>Students' informal and formal writing, as well as their participation in class discussions, are assessed based on their ability to develop clear, well-reasoned arguments about a range of texts from early colonial America through the Civil War. Students use literary analysis and historical context to make thoughtful, evidence-based claims about how these works reflect and shape evolving ideas about religion, freedom, identity, reform, and national purpose.</p> <p>Students complete two formal essays that require them to: develop a focused, arguable thesis; support their claims with carefully selected textual evidence, including quotation and close analysis; situate authors and texts within their historical and cultural contexts; compare and contrast how different writers engage shared themes, questions, or literary approaches; and explain the broader significance of these works in shaping early American literary traditions and ideas about what it means to be "American."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.
<p>A course in this area (II.B) <u>must meet at least three of the additional learning outcomes</u> in the right column. A student will:</p>	
<p>Students engage in sustained literary analysis across their reading, discussions, and writing as they examine a wide range of texts from early settlement through the Civil War. While the course introduces historical and cultural contexts, students primarily use methods of literary study--especially close reading, genre analysis, attention to rhetoric, and thematic interpretation--to analyze how literary form, language, and narrative voice shape meaning. Through careful textual analysis, students explore how literature reflects and constructs diverse and often conflicting ideas about religious belief, freedom, self-reliance, reform, slavery, and national identity, situating these themes within key historical moments such as colonization, the American Revolution, westward expansion, abolitionism, and the Civil War.</p> <p>For example, in Week 6, students conduct close readings of the <i>Declaration of Independence</i> and Abigail Adams's "Remember the Ladies," focusing on diction, tone, audience, and rhetorical strategies to analyze how each text defines liberty and constructs its intended readership. In discussion and journal responses, students support their interpretations with specific textual evidence, examining whose voices are centered or excluded and how literary and rhetorical choices shape ideas about rights and representation. In Week 4, students analyze Mary Rowlandson's and Olaudah Equiano's captivity narratives by comparing narrative structure, point of view, and figurative language in response to the prompt "How do race and power</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the U.S. experience in its diversity, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, economics, history, political science, psychology, public affairs, sociology, and U.S. literature.

<p>shape their experiences?" Journal reflections further ask students to interpret how identity is constructed through narrative voice and descriptive detail, reinforcing literary analysis of characterization, perspective, and theme.</p> <p>Students complete a first formal writing assignment in which they develop a thesis-driven literary analysis of one or more Colonial or Enlightenment texts, using close reading to examine how literary techniques, such as symbolism, tone, genre conventions, and rhetorical appeals, explore questions of morality and human nature. Students integrate historical context as supporting evidence, but the primary emphasis remains on interpreting how meaning is produced through the text's language and form.</p> <p>Students complete a second formal writing assignment focused on comparative literary analysis of works from approximately 1820–1865. In this essay, students closely analyze texts from movements such as Romanticism, Transcendentalism, reform writing, and slave narratives, comparing how authors use literary devices, genre, and narrative perspective to redefine freedom, individualism, and social responsibility. By synthesizing evidence from multiple texts and supporting claims with detailed textual analysis, students demonstrate their ability to interpret literature as a central lens for understanding evolving ideas about identity, power, and moral responsibility in early U.S. writing.</p>	
<p>Students analyze major themes in early American literature—such as freedom, self-reliance, individualism, and national identity—through weekly discussions, journals, and two formal essays. In Week 5, for instance, students compare Benjamin Franklin's <i>Autobiography</i>, Crèvecoeur's "What Is an American?", and Phillis Wheatley's poetry to examine competing visions of self-making and opportunity, considering how Enlightenment ideals are shaped by race, religion, and social limitations. Later, in Week 9 and in the second formal essay, "The American Self Emerges," students closely analyze Transcendentalist texts by Emerson and Thoreau to evaluate how concepts of self-reliance and freedom are redefined within Romantic and reform-era contexts.</p> <p>Discussion activities consistently ask students to interpret themes from multiple perspectives by placing texts in conversation with one another. For example, students contrast Jefferson's and Paine's Revolutionary definitions of liberty with Abigail Adams's critique of exclusion in Week 6, and they examine how Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs reveal the limits of freedom under slavery in Week 7. Journal assignments deepen this analysis by prompting students to reflect on who could realistically claim self-reliance and individualism in early America and how these ideals were shaped by social and historical conditions.</p> <p>The formal essays synthesize this thematic work through sustained literary analysis. In the first essay, students compare early American texts to analyze how authors use rhetoric, narrative, and philosophical argument to explore freedom, moral responsibility, and self-definition. Together, these assignments require students to interpret how different authors and historical moments construct, complicate, and challenge core themes of early American identity from multiple literary and historical perspectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze and explain one or more major themes of U.S. history from more than one informed perspective.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate how indigenous populations, slavery, or immigration have shaped the development of the United States.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain and evaluate the role of the United States in international relations.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify and differentiate among the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government and analyze their influence on the development of U.S. democracy.
<p>Students explore how major institutions and social structures in early American society, such as slavery, religion, education, and civic life, shaped patterns of identity, opportunity, and social hierarchy, particularly in relation to race, gender, class, and belief. Readings, including slave narratives (<i>Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs</i>), Enlightenment texts (<i>Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson</i>), and reformist writing, provide historical perspectives on how these institutions influenced individuals and communities.</p> <p>Discussions of Puritan community and religious belief in Weeks 2–3 examine how faith functioned as a governing social institution that defined moral behavior, gender roles, and belonging, encouraging students to connect these patterns to contemporary debates about belief and social responsibility. Later units on slavery, reform, and women’s rights (Weeks 7 and 10) use personal narratives and speeches by Douglass, Jacobs, Sojourner Truth, and Fuller to show how race, gender, and class shape access to freedom, family life, and political voice, institutions that continue to structure modern American society.</p> <p>The second formal essay asks students to analyze how early American writers, including authors of slave narratives, reform literature, and poetry, engaged with social institutions such as education, religion, and family to explore identity, empowerment, and social responsibility. By comparing texts across different historical contexts, students examine how race and its intersections with class, gender, and belief shaped access to power and self-definition, while also considering how literature itself influenced cultural and societal norms. This assignment connects literary analysis directly to broader social patterns, showing how institutions and social differentiation both constrain and are transformed by human action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Analyze and discuss common institutions or patterns of life in contemporary U.S. society and how they influence, or are influenced by, race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, belief, or other forms of social differentiation.
C. Creative Expression	
A Flexible Core course <u>must meet the three learning outcomes</u> in the right column.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.
A course in this area (II.C) <u>must meet at least three of the additional learning outcomes</u> in the right column. A student will:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring creative expression, including, but not limited to, arts, communications, creative writing, media arts, music, and theater.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Analyze how arts from diverse cultures of the past serve as a foundation for those of the present, and describe the significance of works of art in the societies that created them.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Articulate how meaning is created in the arts or communications and how experience is interpreted and conveyed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Demonstrate knowledge of the skills involved in the creative process.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Use appropriate technologies to conduct research and to communicate.

D. Individual and Society

A Flexible Core course must meet the three learning outcomes in the right column.

- Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
- Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

A course in this area (II.D) must meet at least three of the additional learning outcomes in the right column. A student will:

- Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, history, journalism, philosophy, political science, psychology, public affairs, religion, and sociology.
- Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices.
- Articulate and assess ethical views and their underlying premises.
- Articulate ethical uses of data and other information resources to respond to problems and questions.
- Identify and engage with local, national, or global trends or ideologies, and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making.

E. Scientific World

A Flexible Core course must meet the three learning outcomes in the right column.

- Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
- Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

A course in this area (II.E) must meet at least three of the additional learning outcomes in the right column. A student will:

- Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the scientific world, including, but not limited to: computer science, history of science, life and physical sciences, linguistics, logic, mathematics, psychology, statistics, and technology-related studies.
- Demonstrate how tools of science, mathematics, technology, or formal analysis can be used to analyze problems and develop solutions.
- Articulate and evaluate the empirical evidence supporting a scientific or formal theory.
- Articulate and evaluate the impact of technologies and scientific discoveries on the contemporary world, such as issues of personal privacy, security, or ethical responsibilities.
- Understand the scientific principles underlying matters of policy or public concern in which science plays a role.

English 73:

American Literature: Beginnings to Emancipation

Section XX/ CF# XXXXX; 3 credits/3 hours

Class meeting days; Class times; Room: TBD

Professor Name; lastname.firstname@kbcc.cuny.edu; 718-368-XXXX

Office hours: time and location

Course Description

This course surveys American literature from early colonial settlement through the Civil War. Students will explore how writers responded to religious belief, political revolution, westward expansion, slavery, reform movements, and the search for a distinctly American identity. Major movements include Puritanism, the Enlightenment, Romanticism, and Transcendentalism.

Learning Outcomes

This semester you will learn to:

- Apply key concepts from literary studies, which include performing close readings of literary texts, defending and supporting a thesis of a literary work, and incorporating terminology and strategies of literary studies to your analysis.
- Identify major themes and literary movements in early American literature—such as religious faith, survival, individualism, democracy, Puritanism, the Enlightenment, Romanticism, and Transcendentalism—and consider the historical contexts in which literary texts were composed.
- Analyze, discuss, and assess a range of critical views about early American literature generally and the assigned literary texts specifically, and incorporate these ideas into written assignments that offer an argument and supporting evidence.

Required Texts

The readings will be available on Brightspace or distributed in class. This is a Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) course.

Overview of Course Assignments

Informal Writing Assignments: Each week you will produce informal writing assignments in the form of online discussions and journals that ask you to consider how the assigned texts explore themes, questions, or connections to early American literary thought and identity. In your discussion responses, between 200-300 words, you will address aspects of the readings and offer textual evidence to support your ideas. In your journals, you will consider your own relationship to the

history and realities that the texts explore. Some of this informal writing may be developed into the formal assignments discussed below. I will offer written and/or oral feedback, and we will discuss these assignments in class.

Formal Writing Assignments: You will submit two formal writing assignments this term (each between four and five pages; 1,000-1,300 words) in which you develop a thesis and support it through close analysis of textual evidence. You will write both assignments in drafts and revise them based on both on my feedback.

Assignment 1: “Early American Voices” (Due Week 6)

In this essay, you will analyze one or two Colonial or Enlightenment texts from the course readings to examine how an early American writer defines morality, society, or human nature, with attention to the influence of Puritanism, religious faith, or Enlightenment reason. Your paper must present a clear, arguable thesis supported by sustained close reading of specific passages and appropriate literary terminology. You should situate the text(s) within their historical and intellectual context and incorporate at least one scholarly secondary source from the library databases to deepen your analysis of the author, movement, or period. The outside source should support and complicate your interpretation rather than replace it. This assignment fulfills the learning outcomes by requiring close reading and thesis-driven analysis, identification of major early American themes and movements within historical context, and engagement with at least one critical perspective to strengthen your argument.

Assignment 2: “The American Self Emerges” (Due Final Week)

In this essay, you will analyze at least two texts from 1820–1865 to explore how Romantic, Transcendentalist, or Reform writers redefine freedom, individualism, democracy, nature, or social responsibility. You must develop a clear comparative or thematic thesis and support it with detailed close readings, while identifying key features of the relevant literary movement and explaining the historical context shaping the texts. The essay must incorporate at least one scholarly secondary source that provides historical background or critical interpretation, and you should assess how this perspective informs or challenges your own claims. This assignment fulfills the learning outcomes by asking you to apply literary analysis and terminology, identify major themes and movements such as Romanticism and Transcendentalism, and incorporate critical viewpoints into a well-supported argument about the development of the American self.

Participation/Attendance: Active attendance and participation are essential to this course. You will engage in both in-class and online conversations, sharing your analysis of the readings and exchanging ideas with your peers. Participation may include speaking in class, responding to peers, small-group work, and online discussion activities. If at any point during the semester you stop attending class, you will be assigned a WU for this course.

Grade Distribution

Informal Writing Assignments (Discussions and Journals)	40%
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First Formal Writing Assignment	25%
Second Formal Writing Assignment	25%
Class Participation	10%

Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Encounter & Settlement

Themes: First contacts, exploration, and survival

Readings:

- Christopher Columbus, *Letter to Luis de Santángel*
- Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, excerpts from *The Narrative*
- Thomas Morton, excerpts from *New English Canaan*

Discussion: How do these writers describe the land and its peoples? What assumptions do they make about culture, power, and ownership?

Journal: What first impressions of “America” are created here? Which feel familiar, and which feel troubling?

Week 2: Puritan Belief & Community

Themes: Faith, covenant, and divine purpose

Readings:

- John Winthrop, *A Model of Christian Charity*
- William Bradford, excerpts from *Of Plymouth Plantation*
- Anne Bradstreet, selected poems

Discussion: How in these texts do you see Puritan writers connecting religion to personal and social responsibility?

Journal: Describe a community you’ve belonged to. What values do you think holds it together? How do they compare to Puritan ideals?

Week 3: Sin, Fear, and the Inner Life

Themes: Spiritual struggle and self-examination

Readings:

- Jonathan Edwards, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*
- Anne Bradstreet, “Upon the Burning of Our House”
- Edward Taylor, selected poems

Discussion: How do these writers use emotion and vivid imagery to try and shape belief or behavior?
Journal: How do fear, guilt, or hope influence people's decisions today? Connect to one reading.

Week 4: Captivity, Race, and Cultural Contact

Themes: Cultural collision and identity

Readings:

- Mary Rowlandson, *A Narrative of the Captivity...* (excerpts)
- Samson Occom, "A Short Narrative of My Life"
- Olaudah Equiano, excerpts from *The Interesting Narrative*

Discussion: How do Rowlandson and Equiano portray captivity differently? How do race and power shape their experiences?

Journal: What does it mean to have your identity defined by others? Reflect using one narrative.

Week 5: Reason, Self-Making, and Contradictions

Themes: Enlightenment ideals and American identity

Readings:

- Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography* (Part I)
- J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, "What Is an American?"
- Phillis Wheatley, selected poems

Discussion: How do Franklin and Crèvecoeur define opportunity and American identity? How does Wheatley's poetry complicate those visions?

Journal: What does "self-made" really mean? Who had access to that possibility in early America?

Week 6: Revolution, Liberty, and Limits

Themes: Freedom, rights, and exclusion

Readings:

- Thomas Paine, *The Crisis No. 1*
- Thomas Jefferson, *Declaration of Independence*
- Abigail Adams, "Remember the Ladies" letter

Discussion: How do these writers define liberty? Who is left out of these visions of freedom?

Journal: How do you think religion and reason shaped early American ideas about human nature?

Formal Paper 1 Due: End of Week 6

Week 7: Slavery and the Early National Contradiction

Themes: Freedom vs. enslavement in the new nation

Readings:

- Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life...* (first excerpt)
- Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (excerpt)

Discussion: How do Douglass and Jacobs show the gap between American ideals and lived reality?

Journal: Why are personal narratives powerful tools for revealing injustice?

Week 8: American Romanticism & Moral Darkness

Themes: Emotion, imagination, and hidden sin

Readings:

- Edgar Allan Poe, "The Fall of the House of Usher"
- Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Young Goodman Brown"

Discussion: How do these stories explore guilt, secrecy, or inherited sin? And how do these themes relate to the historical context in which they are explored?

Journal: Why might a young nation be drawn to stories about moral uncertainty?

Week 9: Nature and the Individual

Themes: Transcendentalism

Readings:

- Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance"
- Henry David Thoreau, *Walden* ("Where I Lived, and What I Lived For")

Discussion: What does it mean to trust yourself, according to Emerson and Thoreau? Who might find this harder to achieve?

Journal: Where do you feel most independent or clear-minded? Why?

Week 10: Reform, Abolition, and Women's Rights

Themes: Literature as activism

Readings:

- Frederick Douglass, *Narrative* (later excerpt)
- Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I a Woman?"
- Margaret Fuller, excerpt from *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*

Discussion: How do these writers combine personal experience with arguments for reform?

Journal: When does storytelling persuade more effectively than facts alone?

Week 11: Slavery, Sentiment, and Sectional Crisis

Themes: The nation on the brink

Readings:

- Harriet Beecher Stowe, excerpts from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
- Abraham Lincoln, "A House Divided" speech

Discussion: How does Stowe use emotion to influence readers? How does Lincoln use logic and warning?

Journal: Do you think literature change public opinion or political outcomes? Why or why not?

Week 12: Civil War, Loss, and National Meaning

Themes: War, death, and redefining America

Readings:

- Walt Whitman, "The Wound-Dresser"
- Emily Dickinson, selected Civil War-era poems
- Herman Melville, "The Portent"

Discussion: How do these writers respond differently to the violence and uncertainty of the Civil War?

Journal: Final reflection: How has literature from this course reshaped or complicated your idea of what it means to be "American"?

Formal Paper 2 Due: Finals Week

Additional Information

Absence Policy: Attendance in college is critical for students' learning. Regular attendance ensures that you will have the opportunity to learn from your professor, learn from your peers, participate in class discussions, keep up to date with in-class work (both individual and collaborative), and take in-class quizzes and assessments that will occur throughout the semester. If at any point during the semester you simply stop attending class, you will be assigned a WU for this course.

Classroom etiquette: Please do not come to class late and/or unprepared. I expect you to treat your instructor and your classmates the way you would want to be treated, by being respectful and thoughtful in your interactions with others in class. Failure to come to class prepared and failure to participate will result in a lower course work grade.

Academic integrity policy: Plagiarism is "the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work" (www.dictionary.com). Please note that this includes language, text, or material taken (without acknowledgement) from AI text-generators. If you plagiarize in any of the work you submit, you may receive a grade of 0 for the assignment. Please see Kingsborough's website page on Academic Integrity for more information on plagiarism.

https://www.kbcc.cuny.edu/studentaffairs/student_conduct/academic_integrity.html

Statement on accessibility: It is college policy to provide reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities. Any student with a documented disability who may need accommodations for this course is requested to contact AAS as early in the semester as possible. AAS can be reached by phone at 718-368-5175 or by email at AAS@kbcc.cuny.edu. The office is in room D205. All discussions will remain confidential. For more information, please click on the link to the Accessibility Services webpage in the Quick Links menu of the KCC homepage or at the bottom of every page on the KCC website. The AAS webpage also provides access to the AAS Student Handbook, which is a valuable introduction to the services and programs that are available.

Statement on preferred pronouns: I affirm all forms of gender expressions and identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to inform me on your preferred gender pronoun or if you do not have a pronoun. The gender-neutral bathrooms are located in the following places on campus: A117, A119, L303, L504, M436, T4 154, T8 108B, V211, and V212. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.