

**J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College
Course Content Summary**

Course Prefix and Number: ENG 241

Credits: 3

Course Title: Survey of American Literature I

Course Description (including lecture hours, lab hours, total contacts)

Examines American literary works from pre-colonial times to about 1865, emphasizing the ideas and characteristics of our national literature. Involves critical reading and writing. Involves critical reading and writing. ENG 241 has been designated as a "writing intensive" course according to standards developed by the English Department. Prerequisite: ENG 112 or approval by the English program head. ENG 241 and 242 may be taken out of order. Lecture 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose

ENG 241 develops skills in critical literacy, provides opportunities for self-expression, and promotes understanding of American literature of from the pre-Colonial period through the mid-19th century. As a writing intensive course, ENG 241 will provide specific instruction in writing, especially literary analysis, substantial written and oral feedback on formal writing, with the opportunity to revise at least one formal paper. Upon successful completion of the course, students will have produced at least 12–15 pages of formal writing, including academic essays and essay exam responses, and 12–15 pages of informal writing, including reading responses or journal entries.

Course Prerequisites/Corequisites (*Entry-level competencies required for enrollment*)

ENG 111 and ENG 112 or approval by the English program head. ENG 241 and 242 may be taken out of order.

Course Objectives

Upon completing the course, the student will be able to:

- a. Examine a text closely, demonstrating this skill in their reading, writing, and speaking critically about literary texts;
- b. Understand the growth of distinctive American literary themes in poetry, fiction, drama, and non-fiction;
- c. Understand American contributions to the development of literary techniques and innovations;
- d. Understand the shaping of American cultural identities as reflected in the literature;
- e. Understand the relationship between literature and the culture that produces it.

Major Topics to be Included

- a. Pre-colonial period, the 14th century through about 1700, emphasizing literature of the American Revolution. Students may expect to study prose narratives, including myths and legends recovered from oral cultures; verse forms within the Western poetic tradition; and nonfiction prose;
- b. Colonial period, primarily the 18th century, emphasizing the literature of the American Revolution. Students may expect to study texts reflecting the way America's literature addresses the questions of personal and political freedom;
- c. Post-colonial period, the 19th century through about 1865, including the period of the American Renaissance. Students may expect to study authors' various responses to the questions of cultural and national identity and to examine the influence of New England literature in the development of America's literary tradition.

Effective Date of Course Content Summary (Month, Date Year): February 13, 2009