COURSE SYLLABUS  COLLIN COLLEGE

Course Number:       ENGL 2327

Course Title:        American Literature I: Colonial Period to the Civil War

Course Description: A survey of American literature from the period of exploration and settlement through the Civil War. Students will study works of prose, poetry, drama, and fiction in relation to their historical and cultural contexts. Texts will be selected from among a diverse group of authors for what they reflect and reveal about the evolving American experience and character.

Course Credit Hours: 3
Lecture Hours:        3

Prerequisite: ENGL 1302 or ENGL 2311

Student Learning Outcomes:

- **State-mandated Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of this course, students will:
  1. Identify key ideas, representative authors and works, significant historical or cultural events, and characteristic perspectives or attitudes expressed in the literature of different periods or regions.
  2. Analyze literary works as expressions of individual or communal values within the social, political, cultural, or religious contexts of different literary periods.
  3. Demonstrate knowledge of the development of characteristic forms or styles of expression during different historical periods or in different regions.
  4. Articulate the aesthetic principles that guide the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
  5. Write research-based critical papers about the assigned readings in clear and grammatically correct prose, using various critical approaches to literature.

- **Additional Collin Outcome:** Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to do the following:
  1. Demonstrate personal responsibility through the ethical use of intellectual property.

[Note: The reading, thinking, testing, and writing assignments in this course are designed to help you meet the learning outcomes listed above.]

Withdrawal Policy: See the current Collin Registration Guide for the last day to withdraw.

College Repeat Policy: A student may repeat this course only once after receiving a grade, including W.

Collin College Academic Policies: See the current Collin Student Handbook. As your instructor, I am asked to report suspected cases of plagiarism, collusion, and/or any scholastic dishonesty to the Dean of Students at Collin College. I will withhold a grade until your case is reviewed.

Americans with Disabilities Act: Collin College will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the ACCESS office, SCC-G200 or 972.881.5898 (V/TTD: 972.881.5950) to arrange for appropriate accommodations. See the current Collin Student Handbook for additional information.
Instructor’s Name: Shirley McBride
Office Number: B-108 at Spring Creek Campus (inside B-104 suite)
Office Hours: Mondays 1:45 – 2:30 p.m.; 5:15 – 7:00 p.m. (on-site)
Wednesdays 1:45 – 2:30 p.m.; 5:15 – 5:45 p.m. (on-site)
Online Hours Tuesdays 8:00 – 10:00 p.m. Email me and I will respond immediately by email or phone.
Other days/times by appointment
Phone Number: 972-881-5675 [Calls taken during on-site office hours]
Email: smcbride@collin.edu [Preferred method of contact]
You may email me anytime, but on Tuesdays 8:00 - 10:00 p.m., I will respond immediately.
Class Information: Semester: August 24 – December 11, 2015 Fall 2015
Section Number: ENGL 2327.S70 CRN: 11191
Meeting Times: Monday 7:00 p.m. – 9:45 p.m.
Meeting Location: Spring Creek Campus Room: B-112
Minimum Student Skills: Microsoft Word and Powerpoint
Classroom Etiquette: To keep distractions to a minimum, please be on time for class and turn off all cell phones, PDAs, pagers, and other electronic devices.
In the event of an unavoidable tardy, please enter quietly and take a seat in the row near the door to avoid disturbing other students and me.
Your classmates (and you) have paid for the course and are here to learn. Students should respect the learning environment. Please finish all food and drinks (except water) before class begins.
Students are required to bring books to class beginning the second class to participate in class activities.
RESOURCES: On-site Writing Center at SCC: 972-881-5843. Make appointment. Online Writing Center: Go to http://www.collin.edu/writingcenter/online_tutor.htm and click on “Online
Attendance Policy: Students should attend every class, take notes, participate in class, keep up with the reading and study, and stay in touch with the instructor when unavoidable situations arise. Attendance includes being on time and staying the entire class session.

Note: Attendance is taken twice during each class session.

In the event of an unavoidable absence, consult the course calendar for the reading and study assignment. Check with a classmate for notes. Like most instructors, I do not provide summaries in response to “what did I miss” e-mails.

Work may not be accepted from students who have missed more than three weeks of the semester.

Because the class is designed to be a learning environment, students who can achieve perfect attendance will earn 20 bonus points toward their final point total for the course.

Work may be accepted one week late if the student provides appropriate documentation. Late work usually receives a ten percent penalty.

Last Day to Withdraw: Friday, October 16, 2015 (end of the eighth week). To receive a W in the course, the student must formally withdraw in the Registrar’s Office. Students who do not withdraw will receive a performance grade. Please conference with me before requesting a withdrawal.

Method of Evaluation: Each student’s grades carry the following weight out of 1000 points:

- Exam 1 120 points
- Critical Thinking / Response Essays 280 points
- Exam 2 120 points
- Oral Presentation 60 points
- Exam 3 120 points
- Quizzes/Responses to Study Questions 200 points
- (Exam questions from class notes & study questions) Poetry Analysis Essay 100 points
- [Perfect Attendance = + 20 bonus points]

Grading Scale:

- A = 900 – 1000 points
- B = 800 – 899 points
- C = 700 – 799 points
- D = 600 - 699 points
- F = Below 600

Note: Exams, quizzes, and response writings are graded and returned the next class.

Essays are graded according to standard grading criteria for college essays. Essays with thoughtful content, strong organization, elimination of sentence errors, and proper handling of sources will receive higher scores.

Course Requirements:

1. Read assigned works and answer reading questions
2. Participate in class discussions.
3. Take quizzes over reading questions.
4. Write thoughtful text-based essays using MLA style.
5. Complete a poetry project that includes an oral presentation.
6. Take major exams over assigned material.
7. Attend class.

COURSE CONTENT AND CALENDAR Fall 2015 McBride

8/24 Syllabus. Introduction in text, Volume A, pp. 3-13. “O brave new world” and our American literary heritage. What are the historical contexts? What ideas today were shaped by those who came before us?
[Note: The course will concentrate on writers whose works were widely read and whose ideas were influential not only in their life times, but in the decades (and centuries) that followed. Thus, the course will concentrate on ideas formed early in our history that still affect what we as Americans believe and value today.]

**The Explorers.** Early impressions of the New World that were published and widely read in Europe:

We will look at a few selected passages from the explorers and pilgrims to provide an idea of the portrait of the New World that was presented to the Old World in Europe by these widely-read accounts.

- What is the portrait of the native Indian peoples?
- What were the challenges and hardships in the New World?
- What were the advantages and rewards of the New World?

**Captain John Smith**’s “The General History of Virginia, New England,...” (A: 81-99) and the establishment of the Jamestown Colony in 1607.

8/31. **The New England Pilgrims – Quiz #1 Smith and Bradford Study Questions** (Open Notes)

**William Bradford** of Plymouth Colony, established 1620

What do we learn from Bradford’s thirty-year history “Of Plimouth Colony”? Scan Bradford’s “Historie,” A:121-156, noting especially A:124-144..

- What do you learn about the Pilgrims and their religious beliefs? The reason they left Holland? The Mayflower voyage? The colony? The hardships? Indian relations? The first “thanksgiving”? Growth and prosperity of the colony?

**John Winthrop** of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, established 1630. His sermon “A Model of Christian Charity” (A: 165-177) summarizes religious beliefs of the first settlers and contains the famous portrait of America as a “city set on a hill” – an experiment in democracy for all the world to watch.


**Anne Bradstreet** (A: 207-237) – America’s first published poet is a woman in the mid 1600s! What does this devout Puritan lady write about? What are her topics, themes, images, memorable lines? We’ll look at a few selected passages in her poems, some of them quite intimate (A: 208, 225-238).

- What do we learn about Puritan beliefs and her life in the New World? Her poems were the first published poems by a resident of the new world. First published in London in 1650, they were widely read. Do you think she believed in the Pilgrim/Puritan experiment? Do you think that perhaps in the New World she felt more “free” to write, considering the accepted view in Europe about the role of women? What are her topics, themes, images, and poetic style?

9/7 **Labor Day Holiday.** Use this week to read texts and work ahead.

9/14 **Response Essay #1 Due**

**Mary Rowlandson**’s capture by Indians (A: 256-288). What portrait of American Indians is presented in this widely published (1682) and popular narrative by this devout New England lady?

- How does Ms. Rowlandson describe her captivity?
  - Note: A “remove” is a change of place and thus each section of her narrative is called “the first remove,” “the second remove,” etc., as she is forced to travel with the Indians. Find several examples of positive things that she reports about the Indians and several examples of negative things she reports.
What qualities in Ms. Rowlandson’s nature seemed to help her survive when other captives did not?

After having “met” Bradford, Winthrop, Bradstreet, Rowlandson, how would you describe these early American colonists also known as Pilgrims and Puritans? What hardships are reflected in their writing?

9/28  Response Essay #2 Due.

Major Exam I  John Smith, William Bradford, Winthrop and Early Books, Anne Bradstreet, and Mary Rowlandson  (Writers of the 1600s)

10/5  Quiz #3  Study Questions over Franklin's Essays

“The New Race of Man” Emerging in America in the 1700s:

Benjamin Franklin’s essay “Information for Those Who Would Remove to America” ( pp. A-471-475) What type of man does Franklin say will prosper in the New World?

What advice does Franklin give European nobility who are thinking of coming to America? What are the benefits in America for “the poor of Europe” who are willing to work? What opportunities are there in America for “the youth” of Europe?

J. Hector St. John De Crevecoeur’s essay, “What Is An American” (A-605-613), widely published in 1782 after his travels in America. What are his observations and predictions about “this new race of man”?

Franklin’s essay “The Savages of North America.” Sampling of Indian Oratory.

10/12  Response Essay #3 Due

The Emerging Desire for Freedom from Tyranny and Independence from Britain:

Thomas Jefferson (A-659-661) and his draft of the “Declaration of Independence” (A-.661-667). [Note: I will provide a handout of the final draft of this important document.]

How is this document an example of the phrase “the pen is mightier than the sword”? How is it an example of classical argument? How does it use logos, ethos, and pathos to be convincing to the world?

How did the Declaration of Independence unite the colonists so that they could rebel against Britain’s tyranny? What do you think it must have been like for a rag-tag group of colonists to rebel and fight against a nation as powerful as Great Britain?

Letters of John and Abigail Adams

Washington Irving’s story: “Rip Van Winkle” (B: 29-41).

Note: Friday, October 16, 2015  Last Day to Withdraw in the Registrar’s Office.

10/19  Quiz #4  Study Questions over Hawthorne’s story “The Birth-Mark”

Nathaniel Hawthorne “The Birth-Mark” (B: 418-429) Excerpts from The Scarlet Letter.

10/26  Major Exam II : Benjamin Franklin, De Crevecoeur, Jefferson, Adams, Irving, Hawthorne.
I will introduce the Poetry Project and Edgar Allan Poe’s poetry.

**11/2 Bonus Quiz: Study Questions over Poe’s story “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”**

Edgar Poe (pp. B-629 ff.) creates the detective story: Read “The Murders in the Rue Morgue.”

Who is Poe’s sleuth? What are his methods of solving a crime? Who is the murderer?

[Note: Poe pre-dates Arthur Conan Doyle and his famous Sleuth Sherlock Holmes by forty years!]

Almost immediately following his mysterious death, Poe has been the center of controversy. The question asked is: Was Poe a gifted but demented writer affected by his personal life of sadness, loss, and disappointment?

Or, was Poe a controlled artist who worked logically and carefully to produce a desired effect and impeccable structure, artistry, and imagination in his poems and stories? Think about these questions as we study Poe.

**Edgar Allan Poe** “The Raven” (pp. B-637), [Poe’s essay “Philosophy of Composition” (selected passages from B-719 explain how Poe says he constructed his famous poem “The Raven.”)]

**11/9 Response Essay #4 Due**

Brief look at Poe’s popular horror stories such as “The Black Cat” (B-695), “Ligeia” (B-644,) and “The Tell-Tale Heart” (B-691). How would you describe the characters Poe creates in his stories and poems?

**Quiz #5 Study Questions over Moby Dick**

Discussion: Excerpts from Herman Melville’s novel *Moby Dick.*

**11/16 Reports on the Poets**

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (B-596)) and his poems “A Psalm of Life” and “The Slave’s Dream” and “A Slave Singing at Midnight.” What issues does Longfellow address?

What poems did Longfellow write about America’s past? What “democratic” poems did Longfellow write about ordinary Americans, their trades, their home life, etc.?

Of all American writers, what special honor did the British bestow on Longfellow? (B-597)

**11/23 Walt Whitman** (B-1310) and his poetry about the Civil War. (B-1395 ff.).

What was Whitman’s involvement in the Civil War? What are the images Whitman records? Note the poems written from 1861 such as “Beat! Beat! Drums!” to “The Wound Dresser” and others in 1865 (dates that parallel the Civil War). What do you know about the American Civil War and its effects on the developing young nation and its people?

How is Whitman’s poetry different from other poetry we have studied?

**11/30 Emily Dickinson and her poetry, a brief look (B-1659 ff.) at a few poems such as # 260, # 269, # 479, # 519, # 591, # 598, # 648, and # 764.** What are her themes, images, and poetic style?

Herman Melville and his Civil War poetry. Historic poetry of Emerson and Holmes.

**Review for Exam 3.**

[A note about Louisa May Alcott: Her somewhat autobiographical work *Little Women* was as famous in her day as J. K. Rowling’s stories have been in recent years and as lucrative! There had been books]
written for boys, but this was the first book written for girls. Ever since then, children’s literature has been a huge genre.

Monday, December 7, 2015  Major Exam III: Poe, Melville, and Poets of Early to Mid 1800s
Section S70: 7:00 p.m.

Congratulations! You have finished the course. I hope you have enjoyed your study of early American literature!

DETAILS ABOUT THE ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE COURSE:

A. Writing Assignments for the Course. All writing must use MLA style for academic essays. Check with the Writing Center if you have questions about MLA style.

1. Four RESPONSE WRITINGS @ 70 points each. Length minimum: 3 pages. No late papers please.

These papers should respond to the ideas in the essay or story; therefore a biography of the writer is NOT to be included. Pick out ideas in the work to show your familiarity and then relate your personal responses to those ideas. A sample response writing will be distributed in class.

Response #1 Choose one topic and respond: Due September 14

a. Name several characteristics of the native peoples of Virginia that John Smith reveals in his narrative. Which ideas are new or surprising to you? [Remember that while you are showing familiarity with the work, you are also writing a response.]

b. Name several hardships revealed in Bradford’s history of the Plymouth pilgrims summarizing detail you read about each one. Which hardships do you think would be the hardest for you and your family to endure? Explain.

Response #2 Choose one topic and respond: Due September 28

a. Choose one of Bradstreet’s poems that expresses ideas that you can identify with. Tell why and relate similar situations you have experienced or heard about.

b. What parts of Mary Rowlandson’s narrative reveal kindnesses shown to her by the Indians and which parts reveal unkindnesses? Give several examples of each. Can you imagine surviving in her situation? Explain.

Response #3 Choose one topic and respond: Due October 12

a. What ideas from De Crevecoeur in the 1700s seem the most significant to you as an American? What new perspectives did you gain after reading his words about the founding principles of our country? Explain which of his ideas you especially value and why.

Response #4 Choose one topic and respond: Due November 9

a. After having studied a few examples of Poe’s works – detective stories, poetry, and horror stories, what conclusions can you draw about Poe as a writer and an artist? Refer to elements of specific works in your discussion.
2. POETRY PROJECT:  A hand-out will provide all the details for the analysis essay and the oral presentation. Final paper is due near the end of the semester.

B. EXAMS: The course has three exams that cover the course content as presented in class and in the reading and thinking questions. Each exam counts 120 points and will have a mix of objective questions, fill in blanks, and short answer. Students who keep up with the reading questions and take notes in class usually do well on the exams.

Exam dates are:
- Exam I  Monday, September 28
- Exam II  Monday, October 26
- Exam III Monday, December 7  (dates also noted on the course calendar.)

C. QUIZZES: Five quizzes @ 40 points each. Each quiz has 10 questions selected from Study Questions.

Quiz #1  Monday, August 31  Questions over Smith and Bradford
Quiz #2  Monday, September 21  Questions over Rowlandson
Quiz #3  Monday, October 5  Questions over Franklin’s essays
Quiz #4  Monday, October 19  Questions over Hawthorne’s “The Birth-Mark” and the Adams letters.
Quiz #5  Monday, November 9  Questions over excerpts from Moby Dick

Bonus Quiz: Monday, November 2  Questions over Poe’s story “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”  (Replacement Quiz Score)

Notes about the Reading and Thinking Questions over each writer and his/her works:

The class day before the assigned study of a writer, I will hand you reading and thinking questions over the material you are to read for the next class. Then at the beginning of class, I will choose ten random questions for a quiz. You may use your notes for the quiz. Note: You may use your notes, but not another student’s notes. Scores on these quizzes count 200 points of your final point total. In class, in addition to discussion, I will provide elaboration, visuals, activities, etc., to extend your knowledge of the ideas of each writer.

The process of reading and thinking about the material helps put information into your long-term memory so that you can respond to test questions in the short-term and enrich your appreciation of American ideas and values evident in literature in the long-term. Research shows that simply memorizing answers without doing the reading and thinking yourself is not only hard and frustrating, but it is often unproductive for tests and thoughtful writing assignments because your lack of understanding will be evident. If you do the reading and thinking questions before each class session and then add to your understanding in class, I think you will be amazed at how much you are learning, how well you do on the writings, and how little you have to “cram” before exams.

I hope that you are committed to the class and committed to learning. If you are, I think you can expect to earn a good grade in the course! At any point in the class, let me know if you have concerns. Please let me know if issues arise that cause you to think of withdrawing.

-- Thanks, Prof McBride