

Welcome to *Literature of the Americas*

Congratulations on your acceptance to BHSEC! We are looking forward to meeting you.

We wanted to tell you a little bit about *Literature of the Americas* - your first English course here at BHSEC - as well as a little bit about the first book we will be discussing when we meet in September - *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*.

In your first year of English at BHSEC, you will be reading a wide variety of literature geographically anchored and bounded in the Americas, which includes the United States, Canada, the Caribbean and South America. *Literature of the Americas*, however, is not a survey course. In this course, we favor depth over breadth. We read fewer texts but read them more deeply and more deliberately by engaging in practices that will foster your ability to generate more authentic and creative analysis.

This course is designed to prepare you for the rigorous college program, which begins in your third year. The literature of this course will serve as a vehicle for advancing the rigor with which you closely read, for gaining greater agency during seminar-style discussion, and for developing intentional literary criticism and methodology for writing.

Our first reading will be *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Students are expected to have read the autobiography in its entirety, as your first formal writing assignment will be a response to it. That said, our recommendation is for you to simply read it with curiosity and an open mind. Get to know the Malcolm X in the text. What is the story of Malcolm X's life? How does Malcolm X tell it? Why are certain moments more important to Malcolm X than others? Who was his main audience? At the same time, make room for your own connections and reflections: If you were to write the beginning of your own autobiography, where would you start? How would you tell it? Do you have just one story - one *real* story - or do you have multiple *real* stories for different audiences? We prefer that you purchase your own copy of the book to read but we are also attaching a pdf version of it for your convenience.

We are very excited to hear your thoughts about these writers and to work with you closely in the fall.

All the best,
Kyung Cho
Ursula N. Embola
Jesse Garces Kiley