

# THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN



*Where passion and excellence encounter knowledge*

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# News from the Director

Dear ISLAC family and friends,

Happy 2024! So many things have taken place since our last issue. Two of our students graduated from MALACS last December, congrats to **Barbara de Paula** and **Laurel Lee**.

I took ISLAC and USF to South America. I met with the Director of the Balseiro Institute, located in Bariloche, in the Argentinean Patagonia. The purpose of the visit was to discuss future collaborations between USF, the Balseiro Institute, and the National University of Cuyo. Balseiro conducts cutting-edge research and has a long history of applied research and startup companies. They only accept the very best engineers in the country to study physics, mechanical and nuclear engineering, telecommunications, mathematics, and medical physics. They have several labs and a reactor dedicated to applied research, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer and other diseases. There are two **gems** from Balseiro that I want to share with you. One is the beautiful library with a collection of statues of female scientists. The second one is that Balseiro has a so-called “gravity tree,” which is a descendant or clone of the original Newton’s famous apple tree. The tree is happily located in the perfect scenario, surrounded by physicists and scientists 24/7 (see pictures below).

In this newsletter, we include a **new section** with some news and current events taking place in Latin America and the Caribbean. I hope you enjoy it.

This Spring, ISLAC is hosting and co-hosting several events. Stay tuned for more information coming soon. Tampa will have its First **International Book Fair** from March 7-10, 2024, in Ybor City, HCC. ISLAC is involved. We are organizing a **pre-fair event** to celebrate the book fair and International Women’s Day on March 5th. More information is coming soon.

The first ISLAC Global Symposium is approaching, April 11 and 12. It will showcase USF and ISLAC Faculty and Students’ research on Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino issues and community contributions. The call for papers is open until February 16. We already have about 30 presenters and international and national guest speakers. Save the date in your calendars.

Let us know if you have news to share. Enjoy reading.

*Beatriz Padilla*





# ISLAC Past Events



## Circulating Culture Jennifer Cearns

**Dr. Jennifer Cearns** presented her book, “Circulating Culture: Transnational Cuban Networks of Exchange”. She delved into the intricacies of doing fieldwork, highlighting the unique challenges posed by traditional recruitment strategies in the context of Cubans in Miami and Cuba.

Additionally, Dr. Cearns shared a few ethnographic passages from her book allowing the audience to gain a better understanding of the connection between people in Cuba and Miami. Students, faculty and staff greatly enjoyed listening to her presentation!

During the Empowerment Hour, **Dr. Muñoz-Pogossian**, USF alumna, reflected on her journey as a Venezuelan migrant arriving in the United States, her academic path at the University of South Florida, and her involvement in international organizations, particularly the Organization of American States (OAS). Marynes Mateos, also a USF alumna, guided the discussion with some inspiring questions.

Dr. Muñoz-Pogossian offered tips and advice to students on how to succeed in their careers. She mentioned the importance of designing a career with a purpose, addressing imposter syndrome, mapping key actors, understanding the significance of symbolism, practicing punctuality, building intellectual leadership, mastering the use of social media, and networking strategically.

Students also asked Dr. Muñoz-Pogossian thought-provoking questions on networking, the role of women in politics, balancing personal and professional life, exploring academic opportunities, and embracing risks.

## Empowerment Hour Betilde Muñoz-Pogossian





# ISLAC Student Spotlight

## Barbara De Paula and Laurel Lee graduated from USF

ISLAC is excited to congratulate **Barbara De Paula** and **Laurel Lee** on graduating from the Master's in Latin American, Caribbean & Latino Studies program this past December 2023.

**Laurel Lee** will be starting a new position on the project management team at Metropolitan Ministries in Tampa. Laurel expressed her deep gratitude for Dr. Padilla's advice and guidance regarding her schedule and course selection at USF, which opened up new job opportunities during her search.

Upon graduation, **Barbara De Paula** will continue to work for Martha's Vineyard Adult Learning Program (MVALP), serving out-of-school youth, something she really loves.

We are proud of what Barbara and Laurel have accomplished during their time at USF and look forward to seeing where the future takes them!!!!



**Laurel Lee**



**Barbara de Paula**



# ISLAC Student Spotlight



## Carlos Marcelo Cuadra graduated from USF

Marcelo, from Peru, obtained a Master's in Finance, with a specialization in Compliance, Risk, and Anti-Money Laundering. He is passionate about Latin American studies and has professional and academic experience in Peru, Brazil, and the U.S. Although his field is finance, he developed such strong bonds with the Latin American and Caribbean community at USF that he decided to deepen his studies of the region and is taking a course on the History of the Americas."



## Anabela Villach Shares Her USF Experience with Students in Argentina



Anabela, an ISLAC affiliate student, visited her hometown in Argentina during the winter break. There, she shared her experience in Tampa with faculty and students from local universities. This meeting was led by María Gabriela Ábalos, the Chair of Constitutional Law courses at the National University of Cuyo and the University of Mendoza. Anabela was asked about the process of applying to a US university and her experience thus far at USF.

It was a great opportunity to encourage young students to engage in study abroad opportunities.

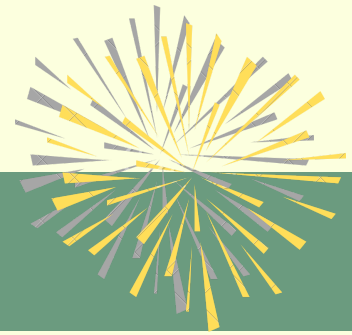
# Alumni Spotlight

## Andrea Centr  Joins the US Embassy in Bogot 



ISLAC is thrilled to announce that our former alumni Andrea Cetr , has recently joined the United States Embassy in Bogot , Colombia. Cetr  is now part of the Public Diplomacy Section, serving as a Public Engagement Specialist.

ISLAC congrats Andrea Cetr  in her new role!



# Faculty Spotlight



**Tamara Nemirovsky**, Instructor in the Judy Genshaft Honor College, directed the documentary "Second Chances", addressing the challenges of drug addiction. The documentary follows the journeys of four individuals from Tampa, as they navigate recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic with the support of The Portico, a local non-profit organization.

"Second Chances" has received national and international **recognition**, including the Best Documentary Award at The Tampa Bay Underground Film Festival 2023, the Best Documentary Made during Quarantine award, the Best Feature Female Director award, and a nomination for Best Documentary Screenplay at the South Film and Arts Academy Festival 2024 (Chile). It achieved semi-finalist status at the Chicago Art House Film Festival, and this year it has been selected for the Dunedin International Film Festival and BARCIFF - Barcelona Indie Filmmakers Festival (Spain).

Recently, Tamara added **Spanish subtitles** to the film to enhance accessibility and impact in Hispanic communities as well.



## Dr. Beatriz Padilla participates in an International University Education Panel



From left: Dean Diego Carbonell, Dr. María Gabriela Abalos, former Gov. José Octavio Bordón, Governor elect Alfredo Cornejo, Dr. Andrés Malamud and Dr. Beatriz Padilla



Alfredo Cornejo, Governor of Mendoza



The University of Mendoza, in Argentina, hosted an international panel featuring renowned intellectuals and university professors from Portugal and the United States, including **Andrés Malamud** (ICS-Portugal) and **Beatriz Padilla** (USF), along with Governor-elect **Alfredo Cornejo** and former Governor **Jose Octavio Bordón**.

During the event, Cornejo discussed perspectives on education, emphasizing its importance and addressing the challenges universities face today. One of his main concerns is the management of education systems, stating that the current public deliberation is not about ideologies or public versus private education but about improving the management of education systems to achieve positive outcomes and make education a foundation for socialization and equal opportunities.

The panel compared the local context with international experiences in Europe and the US, brought by Malamud and Padilla, providing a rich analysis.

# Faculty Spotlight

## USF and ISLAC in South America

Ubacyt Migraciones y espacio urbano. Escenarios interculturales en la Ciudad de Buenos Aires y el AMBA.



SEMINARIO MIGRACIONES

**Latinoamericanas/os en la academia estadounidense y española**

Jueves 23 de noviembre De 17:00 a 19:00 hs AULA 1

 **Beatriz Padilla**  
(Universidad de South Florida, EEUU)

Participan: Carolina Mera (CONICET-UBA-IIGG)  
Cecilia Melella (CONICET-CIS/UBA-IIGG)

Dr. Padilla represented ISLAC and USF abroad. She offered a lecture at the Gino Germani Institute, University of Buenos Aires, **Argentina**, on November 23, 2023, where she presented research findings on Latin Americans in Academia in Spain and the United States.

Additionally, she was a guest speaker on an International Roundtable on Decoloniality, Autonomies, and Transformation of Global Politics and Society, at the 1st International Seminar on Knowledge from the Global South (SISSUL 2023), held on November 24, 2023, in Santa Maria, **Brazil**, at the Federal University of Santa Maria



**MESA REDONDA INTERNACIONAL II**  
24 de novembro às 14 horas



**BEATRIZ PADILLA**

Possui doutorado e mestrado em Sociologia (Universidade de Illinois, Urbana-Champaign), mestrado em Assuntos Públicos (Universidade do Texas, Austin, Estados Unidos) e bacharelado em Ciências Políticas e Administração Pública (Universidade Nacional de Cuyo, Argentina). Atualmente, ela é professora associada na Universidade da Flórida do Sul e pesquisadora associada no Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (ISCTE-IUL). Ela foi Investigadora Principal no ISCTE-IUL (2016-2018), Professora Visitante de Saúde no Grinnell College (2018) e Professora Associada na Universidade do Minho (2013-2015). Ela atuou como consultora para a Organização Internacional para as Migrações (OIM) em diversas ocasiões e para a Presidência Portuguesa do Conselho da União Europeia em 2007.

**24.11.2023**

**09:00 - 12:00**  
**Workshops de**  
**Formação - Parte II**

**14:00 - 17:00** **AUDITÓRIO CCSH**  
**Mesa Redonda Internacional II**  
**Decolonialidade, Autonomia e**  
**Transformação da Política e**  
**Sociedade Global**  
**Profa. Dra. Beatriz Padilla**  
University of South Florida, EUA  
**Prof. Dr. Vineet Thakur**  
Leiden University, Países Baixos  
**Prof. Dr. Mirosław Sadowski**  
University of Strathclyde, Escócia

**17:00 - 18:00**  
**Coffee Break + Estandes de**  
**Extensão Interativos**

**18:00 - 21:00** **AUDITÓRIO CCSH**  
**Mesa Redonda Internacional III**  
**Desenvolvimento, Instituições**  
**e Mudança Global**  
**Profa. Dra. María Belén Espoz Dalmasso**  
Universidad de Córdoba, Argentina  
**Prof. Dr. Pablo Díaz**  
Universidad de la República, Uruguay  
**Prof. Dr. Hernán Olmedo González**  
Universidad de la República, Uruguay





# Faculty Spotlight

**Prof. Margarita Altuna**

## **Innovation in Online Design and Teaching Award**



**Margarita Altuna**, Spanish Instructor at USFSM, was recognized as one of the finalists for the 2023 **USF Innovation in Online Design and Teaching Award**. This recognition highlights our educational community's ongoing commitment to excellence and innovation in online teaching.

Margarita has cultivated an inclusive and equitable learning environment and is committed to continually seeking ways to improve and enhance her online courses.

Over the past ten years, Margarita has dedicated herself to developing her passion for online Spanish teaching, which has evolved through a continuous process of experimentation, blending her traditional classroom experience with personal and professional growth, and the integration of technology. In her online courses, she has designed a truly immersive learning experience using a variety of methodologies and evidence-based standards to build knowledge. Her students are fully immersed in the Spanish language and culture, and they are encouraged to develop a comprehensive understanding of education that values liberal arts, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, curiosity, and ethical considerations.

She wants to express her sincere gratitude to her students, her colleague Roberto Jiménez, the Department of World Languages, the Instructional Technology and Distance Learning team, ISLAC, and the USF administration for their ongoing support and collaboration. Only through teamwork can exceptional achievements be made, and this recognition is a shared accomplishment that celebrates our collective commitment to academic excellence.



# Organization Spotlight

## Latina/e/o/x Graduate Student Organization (LGSO)

The purpose of The Latina/e/o/x GSO is to foster a USF-wide interdisciplinary space for underrepresented graduate students to have access to faculty mentorship, peer support, and professional development, while participating in local and international community outreach efforts.

If anyone is interested in joining LGSO, contact Tailyn Osorio at [osorio10@usf.edu](mailto:osorio10@usf.edu).  
Follow them on Instagram at [lgso\\_usf](https://www.instagram.com/lgso_usf)



### E-Board members

Tailyn Osorio - President

Glenda Vaillant Cruz - Vice-President

Carlos Marcelo Cuadra - Secretary

Barbara Herrera - Tresurer

Julissa Ramírez - Fundraising Chair

Diego Dulanto Falcón - Event Coordinator

Camille Ruiz Mangual - Communications & Marketing Chair

Júlia Lopes de Paulo - Undergraduate Liaison

Montserrat Villaseñor-Garcia - Undergraduate Representative



Julissa Ramirez, Alessandra Ruiz, Barbara Herrera, Diego Dulanto and Julia Lopes de Paulo during a Bulls Market Event, January 2024.



Diego Dulanto, Júlia Lopes de Paulo, Camille Ruiz Mangual, Tailyn Osorio, Glenda Vaillant Cruz, Montserrat Villasñor-Garcia, Barbara Herrera and Carlos Marcelo Cuadra.



# Organization Spotlight

The **Latino Caucus for Public Health, Student Chapter at USF** has been officially recognized as the first chapter of the Latino Caucus for Public Health (LCPH). This organization is an affiliate of the American Public Health Association.

In their letter, LCPH highlighted that the Latino Caucus for Public Health, Student Chapter at USF, serves as a shining example of effective advocacy and community engagement, dedicated to inclusivity, diversity, and health equity.



**LCPH  
USF CHAPTER**

*Congrats!*

## Upcoming events



*Coming soon...*



# Upcoming events

## Tampa International Book Fair in the heart of Ybor City

The Cuban Club & Hillsborough  
Community College - Ybor Campus  
March 7th-March 10th, 2024

A free, four-day, literary & cultural book fair in the heart of Ybor City—the first international book fair in Tampa—at the Cuban Club and the Hillsborough Community College campus in Ybor City.

Thursday, March 7th, 6pm: Opening ceremony & a cultural event at the Roland Manteiga Theater at the Cuban Club.

Friday, March 8th, 5:30pm: Yborin Children's Pavilion opens in the HCC patio; at 8pm: Celebration of International Women's Day, at 1920 7th Avenue, Ybor City.

Saturday & Sunday, March 9th & 10th, 9:30am-5:30pm: Two whole days of authors from all over the world presenting their work, round table discussions, cigar maker readings, children's activities, book sales, and more.

For more information, visit

[tampainternationalbookfair.com](http://tampainternationalbookfair.com)

or write to

[tampalector@tampainternationalbookfair.com](mailto:tampalector@tampainternationalbookfair.com)

[info@tampainternationalbookfair.com](mailto:info@tampainternationalbookfair.com)



ISLAC, the World Language Department and the English Department are involved in the **Primera Feria Internacional del Libro** in Tampa. This event will contribute to disseminating and promoting Latin American, Caribbean, Latino, and Tampa's culture, literature, dance, and music. It will also cover topics related to publishing and translation and include a special program for children.



# Upcoming events

**First ISLAC Global Symposium USF**  
**April 11th & 12th, 2024**

The Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean at USF is now accepting submissions to its first symposium. We invite contributions that pertain to **Latin America, the Caribbean, and/or Latino populations in the US or worldwide.**

Proposals may be sent as a panel (up to 04 papers) or individual to [padillab@usf.edu](mailto:padillab@usf.edu) and [acvillachvaquer@usf.edu](mailto:acvillachvaquer@usf.edu) (make sure to include ISLAC Global Symposium as the title of your email)

**Deadline: February 16th, 2024**

**CALL FOR PAPERS**



SCAN FOR MORE DETAILS

 UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN AT USF

The field of Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) studies has witnessed significant growth since the 1960s, not only within the US but also on a global scale. This expansion has been spurred by the forces of globalization, encompassing transnational migrations, international trade, and global partnerships. Consequently, LAC studies have evolved to encompass new perspectives, including the experiences of Latino populations in the US and around the world.

As ISLAC prepares to commemorate its 30th anniversary, we are thrilled to announce the inaugural ISLAC Global Symposium. This event aims to celebrate, exchange, and showcase USF's research, teaching, and practices in this dynamic field among academic peers, as well as with our local and global community.

We encourage faculty, students, and practitioners to propose papers in the following fields/topics (though not limited to):

- Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latino roles in World Affairs
- Democracies and regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean
- Migrations and Minority Communities in Latin America and the Caribbean
- Gender and Sexuality in Latin America, the Caribbean, and among Latino populations
- Higher Education Issues relating to Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latino populations
- Cultural Contributions from Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latinos to the world (including arts, literature, architecture, music, etc.)
- Global Challenges faced by Latin America, the Caribbean, and Latino populations (including indigenous and Afrodescendant communities)

# Upcoming events

THE USF HISTORY DEPARTMENT PRESENTS:

## THE 2024 WARD STAVIG MEMORIAL LECTURE

### “HOW FLORIDA HELPED SHAPE THE NATION’S ‘CULTURE WARS’: A HISTORY OF THE 1950S AND 60S”

This lecture will explore the social, political, and cultural dynamics that emanated from Florida and contributed to the broader narrative of the nation’s “culture wars.” Dr. Capo will examine key events, movements, and figures from the era, shedding light on Florida’s impact on shaping the ideological battlegrounds that defined the cultural conflicts of the time.



#### ABOUT DR. JULIO CAPO

Dr. Capo’s research focuses on South Florida and its relationship to the Caribbean and Latin America through immigration, trade, and tourism, with a particular focus on issues of gender, sexuality, and LGBT history. He has written on Miami’s queer past, the Mariel boatlift, queer border crossings, and many other topics. He also serves as an Organization of American Historians “Distinguished Lecturer.”

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15**

6:00 p.m.

Marshall Student Center (MSC) - RM 2708  
4103 USF Cedar Cir., Tampa, FL 33620

FOR MORE INFO AND TO REGISTER  
[USF.TO/STAVIG-LECTURE](https://usf.to/stavig-lecture)

## Dr. Angela Valenzuela (U of Texas -Austin)

### Lectures

*“The Power of Authentic Cariño (Caring) and Pedagogy in the Third Space: Experiencing the Sacred at Academia Cuauhtli”*

**February 22, 2024**

**Location: ULH 101**

**Time: 5:00-7:00 PM**

*“Creative Resistance in the Struggle Against Anti-Diversity Policy in Texas”*

**February 23, 2024**

**TECO Hall, USF College of Education**

**Time: 1:00-3:00 PM**

Co-sponsors: College of Education, ISLAC, Anchin Center





# LAC News Takeaways

Here are some news and events happening in Latin American and the Caribbean

- **Argentina:** Since December of 2023, Argentina has a new president: Javier Milei. He is pressuring Congress to pass an “omnibus bill” that supports free-market reforms and drastic cuts in public spending.
- **Brazil:** Dengue fever outbreak. Rio declares health emergency ahead of Carnival.
- **Chile:** Deadly wildfires scorch Chile’s central coast, and former President Sebastián Piñera dies in helicopter crash.
- **El Salvador:** President Bukele wins re-election by a large margin.
- **Ecuador:** is experiencing a state of emergency, and President Noboa has declared war against gangs and drug cartels.
- **Guatemala:** Fernando Arévalo was elected new president against all odds, defeating the establishment. however, he is facing challenges to work with congress and do his job.
- **Haiti:** Hundreds of Haitians took to the streets on Monday to protest the government of Prime Minister Ariel Henry, whose administration has seen violent gangs expand control across most of the capital and nearby areas.
- **Mexico:** was Mexico biggest trade partner of the U.S. in 2023 and the biggest source of the country's imports. US-Mexico imports and exports reached close to \$800 billion.
- **Latin America** is likely to experience a migration surge as a consequence of the current situation in Ecuador, expelling Ecuadorians, as well as the Colombians and Venezuelans living there.





For more information on our upcoming events, please visit ISLAC webpage  
<http://islac.usf.edu/>

We would love to include other faculty publications and events in our next issue. Please reach out to Laurel Lee's email which is listed below.

If you want to **donate** to ISLAC to support our students, academic program or research, please do so in this page

<https://giving.usf.edu/online/gift/f/390750/>

## ISLAC INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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