



# AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, D C

CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN & LATINO STUDIES

*Message from the Director*  
*Fall 2018*

Dear CLALS Community,

Amidst refugee flows that are unprecedented in the modern history of the Americas, migration is central to the Center's work during the 2018-19 academic year. Several publications from our projects are being released over the course of the semester, including a recent Working Paper on "Newcomer Central American Immigrants' Access to Legal Services," and we are exploring opportunities to redouble our efforts in this area. We are also looking at the urgent challenges to democratic governance in places ranging from Brazil to Central America (particularly Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua) and Venezuela. These are difficult times throughout much of the Americas, and the Center is deploying its expertise to shed light on the shifting environment.

Corruption remains a pervasive problem in the region, and while we have addressed this issue through ongoing work in Central America, we now have support for an ambitious agenda of research on illicit trafficking in wildlife and timber (with case studies in Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Honduras) and linkages between organized crime and states (focused on Brazil, Paraguay, and Argentina). These efforts are being undertaken in partnership with our colleagues at InSight Crime, a research organization that has been hosted by the Center for a number of years.

During what remains of 2018, CLALS researchers will be back at an annual conference in Havana, continue our work in Central America's capitals, and continue to advance a North American agenda based on collaboration and cooperative governance encompassing Mexico, the United States, and Canada. Stay tuned as well for announcements regarding a major Brazil initiative, encompassing Schools and Colleges from across AU.

Through a variety of public events, we will also draw attention to vital intellectual currents in the fields of Latin American Studies and Latino Studies. In that vein, over the summer we served as sponsors of the Latina/o Studies Association Biennial Conference, and a CLALS delegation just now returned from Mexico City, where the Center was a sponsor of the Annual Metropolis North American Migration Policy Forum, held at the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs. Numerous events are planned for the fall, including a visit from Mexican novelist Carmen Boulosa, made possible by our Cátedra Program partnership with the Mexican Secretariat of Culture and the Mexican Cultural Institute of Washington, DC.

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Finally, we continue to explore novel ways to connect our expertise to users of knowledge across a variety of institutional settings. To that end, we have launched a partnership with UNICEF, through which the Center provides country expertise to senior staff assigned to Latin American offices, and we are exploring opportunities to collaborate with other DC institutions to orient Latin American diplomats to the institutional dynamics in Washington that impact their ability to represent their countries effectively.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eric Hershberg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Eric Hershberg  
Director, Center for Latin American & Latino Studies