U.S. and Latin American Relations
Third Edition

The third edition of *U.S. and Latin American Relations* offers detailed theoretical and historical analyses essential for understanding contemporary U.S.–Latin American relations. Utilizing four different theories (realism, liberal institutionalism, dependency, and autonomy) as a framework, the text provides a succinct history of relations from Latin American independence through the Covid-19 era before then examining critical contemporary issues such as immigration, human rights, and challenges to U.S. hegemony. Engaging pedagogical features such as timelines, research questions, and annotated resources appear throughout the text, along with relevant excerpts from primary source documents. The third edition features a new chapter on the role of extrahemispheric actors such as China and Russia, as well as a significantly revised chapter on citizen insecurity that examines crime, drug trafficking, and climate change. Instructor resources include a test bank, lecture slides, and discussion questions.

**Gregory B. Weeks** is Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He has a long track record of writing clear, accessible, and empirically grounded work on U.S.–Latin American relations and Latin American politics. He is the author of another textbook, *Understanding Latin American Politics*, and has authored a blog on the topic for 15 years. He served as Editor-in-Chief of *The Latin Americanist* for 15 years as well.

**Michael E. Allison** is Professor and Chair of Political Science at the University of Scranton. He was the recipient of a Fulbright Teaching/Research Award to Guatemala in 2013 and a Fulbright Student Scholar Award to El Salvador in 1997. He has been recognized as the 2019 Alpha Sigma Nu Teacher of the Year at the University of Scranton in 2021 and won the Excellence in Integrating Mission and Justice into the Curriculum Award in 2015 and 2019. He has provided expert witness testimony in over 50 asylum cases for Salvadorans and Guatemalans seeking asylum in the United States.
“This book is a superb resource for building knowledge and perspective on U.S.–Latin American relations. The masterfully crafted text – organized, engaging, and accessible – provides significant theoretical and historical lenses through which to understand contemporary dynamics in relations across the Western Hemisphere and beyond. This new edition expands the theoretical framework that is cogently woven into the text and provides students many opportunities to discover and think critically about recent events and current issues in the region.”

Elizabeth J. Zechmeister, Vanderbilt University

“An unbeatable resource for educators and interested citizens alike. This third edition revises and updates an outstanding introductory text on U.S.–Latin American relations. It presents and employs competing theoretic frames to structure a complete and concise analysis of the history which establishes a terrific foundation for understanding current issues in regional relations and current hemispheric relations.”

Pamela K. Starr, University of Southern California

“There is no better text for understanding the history of U.S.–Latin American relations, from the late colonial era right up to the post-pandemic present. It covers 200 years of history along with deep discussions of the full panoply of contemporary issues in a clear, engaging, yet theoretically grounded narrative.”

William LeoGrande, American University

“This updated and expanded edition from Weeks and Allison is sure to become a ‘go-to’ text for anyone teaching U.S.–Latin American Relations. The expanded theoretical framework and historical content provide excellent context for examining a range of contemporary issues in U.S.–Latin American Relations. It’s a well-written, comprehensive but accessible text for undergraduates or anyone who wants to better understand hemispheric relations.”

Christine Wade, Washington College
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The global pandemic that started in 2020 had important consequences for U.S.–Latin American relations, and highlighted many of the challenges embedded in them. As hospitals filled and deaths mounted, Latin American presidents sought out vaccines, but President Donald Trump was unwilling to help. When Joe Biden took office in early 2021, he made promises about vaccine delivery but could not immediately fulfill them. Latin America therefore looked elsewhere, especially to China, Russia, and Europe. Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele even managed to have 500,000 doses of Chinese vaccines delivered in the New England Patriots team plane.¹

U.S. members of Congress complained about China’s presence, viewing it as a threat to U.S. security and to Latin American stability. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken argued that Chinese vaccines had “strings attached” whereas other countries, such as the United States, were “doing it because it’s in the overall interest of humanity.”² The notion of the United States acting as a selfless champion of humanity rang hollow in the region, which from long experience knew otherwise. Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador thanked India, Russia, and China for sending vaccines and added, “I hope that soon I will be able to say thanks to the U.S. government, because I am sure they are going to help too, it is just that they haven’t done so so far.”³

There are often gaps between the expectations of U.S. policy makers, the responses and actions of their Latin American counterparts, and the reaction from the Latin American (and in some cases the United States) public to policy initiatives. Why do such gaps exist? What kinds of similar historical continuities still exist? Where and when do we see different kinds of policies emerging from Latin America? This book will help students to understand why policies are put in place and why they might persist for many years.

¹ Goodman 2021.
² Sugiura 2021.
³ Associated Press 2021.
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**U.S. and Latin American Relations** argues that greater understanding requires a focus on power and, more precisely, the imbalance of power. We examine four different approaches to understanding international relations: realism, dependency theory, liberal institutionalism, and the autonomy approach. Particular attention is paid to the strengths and weaknesses of each theoretical approach. Students can therefore link political history and current events to theories that serve as guides to explain the motivations of policy makers in different states, how political and economic power are used in the international system, and probable outcomes when interstate disputes arise.

Many books have been written on this topic, to the degree that reading all of them would be impossible, especially since plenty of previously forgotten tomes are now being revived digitally so more and more are available constantly. What sets this particular book apart is its integration of theory, scholarship, history, and pedagogy. It serves not only as a theoretically and historically oriented analysis but also as a springboard for further learning and research.

**Features**

This book opens with an introductory chapter that establishes a theoretical context for studying relations between the United States and Latin America; the remainder of the book is split into two parts, one on historical background and one on current issues. Chapters 2 through 7 in Part I cover the period from Latin American independence in the early nineteenth century to the Cold War, highlighting the development of U.S. hegemony and shifts in relations that took place, in terms of both U.S. policy and the actions and perceptions of Latin American political leaders. They include a case study of the Cuban Revolution, which had a dramatic impact on policies in Latin American countries and in the United States. Chapters 8 through 13 in Part II detail critical contemporary issues: the role of actors from outside the hemisphere, the challenges to U.S. hegemony, political economy, human rights, and citizen insecurity. They go beyond the headlines to analyze how these issues have been addressed, the conflict and cooperation, and how U.S. power has been wielded and resisted. This book goes beyond mere discussion and analysis. Each chapter includes a number of additional features that will help students dig deeper into the points being covered:

- A timeline of key events
- Excerpts from primary source documents
• An annotated selection of additional readings
• An annotated selection of websites
• Suggested topics for student research papers

The book also includes:

• A glossary for key concepts
• An extensive list of references

For instructors who adopt the text, lecture slides, discussion questions, and a test bank are available as well.
We want to thank Sean Fabery at Cambridge University Press for his support in getting the third edition published, and Jackie Grant for her help with the production.

Special thanks go to the 18 anonymous reviewers, all of whom provided thorough and constructive suggestions. The book is better as a result. We wish we could include all suggested additions to the text, but the book would be much longer.

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