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The history of Cuba is a highly complex and controversial topic, having been the locus of repeated encounters between diverse cultures and subcultures since the sixteenth century. As the Spanish presence expanded in subsequent centuries, so did Cuba's role as an economic and political linchpin of the Spanish empire, and the increased importation of Africans as slave labor in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries diversified the island demographically and culturally even further. Proximity to the United States resulted in increased US influence, circumscribing Cuban independence and helping feed movements to eliminate that influence, culminating in the 1959 emergence of a revolutionary government and ongoing tensions between the island and the US ever since. This seminar focuses on the political, economic, social, and cultural issues and complexities of the island, as well as its relationship with the United States.

CHAIR/S: **Margaret E. Crahan**; **Gabriel Vignoli** • RAPPORTEUR/S: **Elijah Ferrante**; **Jazmín Novoa Lara**; **Victoria Korzin**

2025–2026 MEETINGS

September 29 — *US Cuba Policy: Past, Present, and Future*
Jeffrey DeLaurentis, Ambassador, ex-Chief of US Embassy Havana (Cuba), Dartmouth College
William LeoGrande, School of Public Affairs, American University
Geoff Thale, Ex-President of the Washington Office on Latin America

December 2 — *Maria Antonia – Classic Cuban Film Recently Restored*
Sergio Giral, Film Director
Jerry Carlson, The Graduate Center, City University of New York

February 19 — *Reimagining the United States Through Cuban History*
Ada Ferrer, Princeton University
Discussant: **Gabriel Vignoli**, The New School

April 7 — *Cuban Influence on Dominican Progressive Movements, 1960s–1990s*
Diogenes Abreu, Award Winning Artist, Writer, and Photographer
Dario Tejeda, Journalist
Antonio A. Mendez, Historian

April 21 — *Rethinking the Cuban Revolution from Within*
Michael Bustamante, University of Miami
Katrin Hansink, Baruch College, City University of New York

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