



# CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES

## LASPP

The Latin American Social and Public Policy Conference



### Keynote Speaker:

**DR. CARLOS E. PONCE**

*Director, Freedom House-Latin America*

### Corruption and impunity in Latin America: Democracies in crisis



Friday, March 23, 2018

11:00 a.m.

232 Cathedral of Learning

The recent wave of corruption scandals has put impunity at the top of the headlines and a major concern facing Latin America and the Caribbean in the context of democracy and governance. From a scheme to shelter assets from powerful politicians or business leaders leaked by the “Panama Papers” documents or the “Paradise Papers”, to the Petrobras and Odebrecht scandals or the FIFA scandal or the major money laundering, drug-cartels and corruption from Venezuela; the news of Presidents, former presidents and major business owners indicted or involved in such scandals have spread to Mexico, Panama, Guatemala, El Salvador, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Venezuela and beyond.

Fragile institutions, authoritarian governments and weak rule of law have been allowing corruption to act with total impunity. Investigative journalists and civil society organizations (CSOs) have been able to play their vital role in exposing corruption and impunity in Latin America and allowing these cases to become public and forced a response from global, regional and national forces. His presentation will cover the impact of authoritarian kleptocracies in current weakening and in some cases collapse of democracy in the region and how journalists and civil society keep fighting, even in the worst cases like Venezuela, Cuba or Nicaragua. He will expose some specific cases as well as some of the responses internally and externally. The conference will also provide an opportunity to review current trends in the region in a complicated electoral year.

He will also take advantage of the opportunity to introduce Freedom House (FH) to the participants. For 75 years FH has been one of the most influential organizations focused on the protection and promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide through a unique combination of research, programming, and advocacy. Their role documenting or supporting human rights organizations and journalists in LAC will be part of our conversation. <https://freedomhouse.org/regions/americas>

For conference program and other information, visit:  
<http://www.ucis.pitt.edu/clas/laspp>  
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