

*Re-building Latin American in the Covid-19 Era: Emerging Crisis, Activism and National Policy  
Implications*

*Reconstruyendo Latinoamérica en la era del Covid-19: Crisis emergentes, activismo e  
implicaciones de políticas nacionales.*

**Midwest Association for Latin American Studies annual conference**

October 28-30, 2021 on Zoom

Latin America is facing a health, humanitarian, and economic crisis without precedent since Covid-19 landed in the region. Within days of the confirmation of the first case in Brazil in March of 2020, Latin American countries have implemented extreme restrictions policies in an attempt to control the pandemic. Despite severe mitigation measures, the region continues to suffer surging number of infections with profound social and economic consequences. Tragically, the total number of Covid-19 death has so far exceeded 800,000 by the end of April, 2021 (Pan American Health Organization). The number of cases in Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Colombia, and Peru have tripled and the health system in the region has collapsed under waves of new infections. The effect of the pandemic in education and businesses has been devastating in nations already struggling with poverty, social inequalities, and the rise of authoritarian models of government. In addition, the shortage of vaccines and lack of economic relief programs signal a long road to recovery. At the same time, this crisis has ignited massive demonstrations in Argentina, Colombia, and Ecuador flued by frustration over political instability, restricting policies, corruption, human right violations, and health systems stretched beyond their capacity. In this context, the social unrest in all Latin America shows the profound impact of the disease in the cultural and political structure of the continent. The public and private life of nations has been deeply affected by social, economic, and spatial control policies, threatening the cultural fabric of its nations. The new Latin America scenario in the covid-19 era makes it necessary to take serious measures to resolve the critical situation of the region which threatens to become a new center of the pandemic. As new stains emerge and governments struggle to respond to unprecedented circumstances, it is unclear what the future holds for the region.

This call invites scholars to participate in the discussion of the past, present, and future challenges of covid-19 in Latin America. MALAS 2021 conference theme may be addressed through social sciences, as well as literature, history, arts, and popular cultures, among many other disciplinary or interdisciplinary approaches.

MALAS invites scholars, students and researchers from different areas to submit a 150 to 200-word abstract in English or Spanish addressing one or more of the topics suggested above, although other themes are also welcomed. **Abstract deadline is September 17, 2021.** Please send the abstract with contact information to either [jbowen5@slu.edu](mailto:jbowen5@slu.edu) or [gschmidt@utep.edu](mailto:gschmidt@utep.edu)