

CFIS/AIA 2010 FALL SEASON

CHALLENGING COUNTRIES, DIFFICULT LEADERS

At the UNM CONTINUING EDUCATION CONFERENCE CENTER, 3-5 PM
1634 University Blvd. NE

ILS will address the problems of leadership from an unconventional angle. It will look at challenges presented to the United States by such countries as Iran, North Korea, Venezuela and Cuba. It will concentrate on the leaders of these countries and the problem of how to best deal with them. This question is relevant not only for US foreign policy, but also for businesses and local communities in this age of growing globalization.

08/29/2010 – IRAN: Understanding Ahmadinejad and His Politics by Dr. Bahman Baktiari, Director, The Middle East Center, University of Utah.

To the outside world, the President of Iran, Mahmoud Ahamdinejad, presents himself as a strong power ready for confrontation. Back home, however, the image is different. His presidency is under siege, scared by the outbreak of youthful defiance, and determined opposition by influential politicians. This internal weakness may itself be driving Ahmadinejad's increasing belligerence and radicalism. But more importantly, it is also debatable whether he will be able to complete his presidency, and if so, at what cost to the political system of the Islamic Republic.

09/17/2010 – VENEZUELA. Hugo Chavez: The Cold War's Revolutionary Son by Brian Nelson, Johns Hopkins University

An examination of the psychology and the political motivations of Latin America's most truculent of presidents. What are the goals of the man who has befriended Fidel Castro, given aid to the Colombian FARC, called George W. Bush "the devil," and has made Venezuela one of the world's top arms buyers? Nelson will unravel the riddle of Hugo Chávez and will examine the long-term implications for Venezuela—it's strategic importance as a major oil exporter, the consequences of it's budding relationship with Tehran, and what type of policy Washington should adopt to safeguard its interests in the region.

10/08/2010 – The US and NORTH KOREA: Dealing with Irrationality by Dr. Bruce Cumings, University of Chicago

An examination of the disconnect between the U.S. and North Korea, going back 65 years and the American transformation of North Korea first into a "rogue state" in the early 1990s, and then into part of the "axis of evil" in 2002. The American media assumes that all the irrationality resides in the North, and rarely examines the background to our conflict with Pyongyang, which includes not just the American Military Government in South Korea from 1945 to 1948 and the Korean War (1950-53), but the American role in introducing nuclear weapons to the Korean peninsula in 1958 and keeping hundreds of them there until 1991. Meanwhile the North rattles bombs and missiles, routinely acting in ways suggesting that the worst things said about it are true. In spite of all this, George Bush abruptly reversed course in early 2007, and concluded a denuclearization agreement with Pyongyang—an agreement still not fulfilled. Today the Obama administration inherits a long-running confrontation with no sign that it will end any time soon.

11/14/2010 – US-CUBA Relations: The Long View By Dr. Nelson Valdes, University of New Mexico

An overview of the relations between the United States and Cuba from the 19th century to the present. The roots of the conflict did not begin in 1959 but over 100 years before the Cuban revolution.. Since the 19th century Cuba has NOT been a foreign policy issue but a DOMESTIC issue in the politics of the United States and Spain. The presentation will discuss the importance of Cuban sovereignty and independence as permanent cultural and political values, as well as, what ought to be done to have mutually beneficial relations between the two countries. Special attention will be paid to the Cuban leadership.

Money saving packages: \$50/series – members, \$70/series– non-members (package MUST be purchased by August 25, 2010) \$15/lecture – members, \$20/lecture – non-members; Students – free

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