Cuba Program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

The Cuba Program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is committed to the development of multiple and multifaceted initiatives given to the production and dissemination of knowledge of Cuba, based on professional collaboration between the members of the faculty, staff, and students of the University with colleagues in Cuba.

The Program has involved a wide cross-section of the University. Between 2006 and 2010, with the subvention and staff support provided by the College of Arts and Sciences and the Department of History, Carolina served as the home for the editorial management of the journal, *Cuban Studies/Estudios Cubanos*. In 2001, the University of North Carolina Press inaugurated a series under the name of "Envisioning Cuba." The series has developed into an important venue in the United States for the publication of social science and humanities scholarship on Cuba. An estimated 30 scholarly books on Cuba have been published by the Press–including a number of translations into English of Cuban scholarship–many of which have been recipient of prestigious national and international prizes and awards.

During these past years, an estimated 100 undergraduate students have completed a one-semester full-time study at the University of Havana. At the graduate level, a score of students have completed their Ph. D. degrees in the social sciences and humanities, almost all of whom have subsequently developed career tracks dedicated to the study of Cuba.

The Cuba Program at the University of North Carolina was conceived within and remains committed to the proposition of collaboration as the cornerstone of the UNC relationship with Cuba. The Program sponsors a Cuba Speaker Series designed to host visits of varying lengths of scholars, poets, writers, and artists to address matters bearing on Cuba. The Speaker Series has given priority to the sponsorship of visitors from Cuba, an effort designed to include perspectives from the island and at the same time promote collegial engagements from which collaborative initiatives often develop. The Cuba Program has also hosted the visits of Cuban scholars for the purpose of conducting research at Carolina. The visits have varied in length from one week to one month, during which the visiting scholars have availed themselves of the rich Cuba archival and library materials housed at the multiple libraries of the University.

The Cuba Program has also successfully organized a series of international conferences. With the support of the Christopher Reynolds Foundation, the University organized in 2000 and again in 2008 conferences dedicated to debate and discussions bearing on Cuba-U.S. relations. The conferences provided an opportunity for scholars, advocates, representatives of NGO's, and government officials, from both Cuba and the United States, to meet and engage in a fruitful exchange of ideas and perspectives. In 2008, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Cuban revolution, in collaboration with Ackland Art Museum, the Program sponsored a semester-long exhibit of original Cuban art donated by the late David Craven, accompanied by a month-long film and speaker series, "The Cuban Revolution at 50: Art and Cinema." In 2009, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill co-sponsored with Queens University an international conference in Kingston, Ontario, Canada, as a 50-year retrospective of the Cuban revolution and provide a venue to foster dialogue among Cuba scholars from the island, the United States, and Europe.

The imperative of collaboration with Cuban colleagues and counter-part institutions serves as the guiding principle of the Program, and indeed the success obtained in the development of a framework of collaboration with colleagues in Cuba must be considered one of the Program's most noteworthy achievements. Members of the University administration, faculty, staff, and students have committed to the Cuba Program first and foremost as a means of promoting mutually beneficial collaborative outcomes. Institutional collaboration has included a University-to-University relationship between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Havana. The Cuba Program has developed a collaborative relationship between the Biblioteca Nacional 'José Martí' in Havana and Davis Library at UNC for the purpose of preparing inventories of holdings preliminary to enabling both libraries to assist each other in filling gaps in their respective collections. The University has entered into a formal collaborative protocol with the Unión de Artistas y Escritores de Cuba (UNEAC) designed to foster academic and artistic exchanges. Institutional relationships exist with the Centro Cultural 'Juan Marinello,' the Fundación Fernando Ortiz, the Casa de Altos Estudios, and the Academia de Historia.

With the assistance of a generous grant in 2013 from the Christopher Reynolds Foundation, the Cuba Program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has inaugurated a new initiative dedicated to the development of collaborative Cuba-Carolina partnerships in the fields of natural sciences, health sciences, and law.