

LASA denounces the exclusion of social science professionals from association voting in Guatemala

February 2026

The Latin American Studies Association (LASA) expresses its rejection of a decision by a Guatemalan court that excludes social science professionals from voting in the election for [principal and alternate magistrates of the Constitutional Court](#). This decision violates their rights as members of the Assembly of the Guatemalan Bar and Notaries Association (Colegio de Abogados y Notarios de Guatemala, CANG).

This decision, issued by the Sixth Chamber of the Court of Appeals for Administrative Disputes, violates the right to academic freedom, freedom of expression, and the constitutional right of social sciences professionals –such as those in sociology, political science, international relations, and criminology– to participate in professional association elections. Those affected, represented by the Association’s Board of Directors, filed legal challenges before the Constitutional Court (Corte de Constitucionalidad, CC), which has ruled in favor of the Sixth Chamber’s decision.

This ruling sets a disastrous precedent by further weakening the rule of law, institutional integrity, and democracy in Guatemala. It also puts electoral bodies, such as the Guatemalan Bar and Notaries Association, at risk by forcing their Boards of Directors, under threat of penalties, to carry out an action that contravenes existing regulations and effectively relegate social science professionals to second-class membership status.

This measure violates the rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic, which upholds the principles of equality and non-discrimination. As an association committed to academic freedom and respect for the rights of academic professionals, we denounce this resolution as yet another attempt to undermine democratic institutions in Guatemala. We also demand that the Guatemalan justice system, and particularly the Constitutional Court, to restore this right to the affected members and to allow their free participation in the CANG electoral process.

LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES ASSOCIATION

4338 Bigelow Blvd
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
lasa@lasaweb.org
Tel: 412-648-7929
Fax: 412-624-7145

