



INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON OSTROM WORKSHOP

COLLOQUIUM SERIES

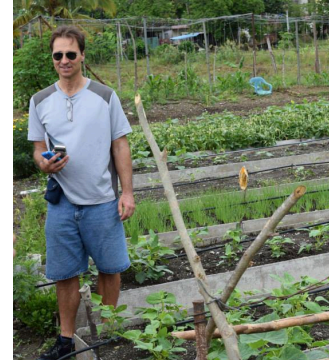
Frank Marshalek

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Monday, March 29: 12:00 – 1:00 pm ET

Virtual via Zoom: [Click here for link to Zoom meeting](#)

The New Cuban Cooperatives: Towards Democratic Self-Regulation in a Command Economy



In 2010 the Cuban Communist Party announced plans to devolve political powers to lower level governments and economically empower workers by moving towards a mixed economy. Cooperatives were given endorsement as a socialist form of production, despite their functions in the private sector. The cooperative sector is now expanding from agriculture to production of goods and services in the urban context. This research uses the Rochdale Principles of Cooperation to analyze the primary contradictions arising from the inducement of a cooperative movement by the Cuban state socialist government. Primary challenges include creating a culture of cooperation among workers accustomed to following a chain of command, creating a regulatory body for cooperatives without ideological biases, and crafting uniform standards and regulations that can apply to a wide variety of co-ops without undermining the principles of cooperation. This paper concludes that the contradictions can be resolved, and that the Cuban cooperative movement is a progressive means of devolving economic power from the state to Cuban workers.

Frank Marshalek is a geographer at Indiana University specializing in the political economy of globalization, the Americas, and Northern Europe. He has taught Regional Geography, Human Geography, Research Methods and an international exchange course called, “Issues in Latin America, the Caribbean and Contemporary Cuba,” His current research is on economic restructuring in Cuba, informal markets in Latin America, and cooperative economics in both Cuba and the region of Scandinavia. His book, *Cuban Entrepreneurs: Family, Networking, and Informal Cooperation* is under review at Notre Dame University Press and he is currently working on another book on the cooperative movement in Cuba.

Ostrom Workshop
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