

Juan Federico Vélez Vélez, PhD

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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. in Diplomacy · Tufts University, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Boston, USA** 2004
Specialization: Diplomatic History; Modern History of the Middle East and Latin America
- Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy (MALD) · Tufts University, Fletcher School, Boston, USA** 1997
Specialization: International Affairs; United States Foreign Relations
- Law Degree (J.D.) · Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, School of Law and Political Science, Medellín, Colombia** 1992

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Associate Professor · American University of Kuwait — Dept. of International Relations and History, Kuwait City** 2020–Present
Areas of teaching: Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution, International Relations, Global History.
- Associate Professor · American University of Kuwait — Dept. of Communications and Media, Kuwait City** 2017–2020
Areas of teaching: Political Communications.
- Associate Professor · Zayed University — Dept. of International Relations, Abu Dhabi, UAE** 2012–2016
- Assistant Professor · Zayed University — Dept. of International Relations, Abu Dhabi, UAE** 2004–2012
Areas of teaching: Diplomacy, International History.
- Adjunct Instructor · Tufts University — Dept. of Political Science, Boston, USA** 2000–2004
Areas of teaching: Cold War Seminar; Latin American Politics.
- Adjunct Instructor · University of Massachusetts — Latin American Studies Program, Boston, USA** 2002
Areas of teaching: Latin American History and Politics.
- Adjunct Instructor · Northeastern University — Dept. of Political Science, Boston, USA** 2000–2002
Areas of teaching: Terrorism and International Relations; Latin American Politics.
- Adjunct Professor · Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana — Faculty of Law and Political Sciences, Medellín, Colombia** 1992–1994
Areas of teaching: Legal Sociology; Constitutional Law.

COURSES TAUGHT

American University of Kuwait

- International Relations: IR 345 Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution; IR 202 Trends in International Relations; IR 306 Dynamics of Globalization in International Relations; IR 373 Communications Strategies in International Relations
- Middle Eastern Studies: SBSA 210 Society and Culture in the Arab World; IR 307 International Relations of Arab States
- History: HIST 105 World History Since 1900
- Communications: COM 370 Political Communications; COM 309 Communications and Law

Zayed University

- History: Modern Latin American History; Twentieth-Century Diplomacy
- Political Science: State, Society and Economy in the Middle East; Politics of Rentier Economies
- Law: International Law and World Politics
- Graduate: Diplomatic History; Middle East Foreign Relations; Latin American Politics

Tufts University

- Political Science: Cold War Seminar; Latin American Politics

University of Massachusetts

- History: Latin American History

Northeastern University

- Political Science: Terrorism and International Relations

ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION

American University of Kuwait (2017–Present)

Chair, International Relations Department 2026–

Director, General Education Program (2019–2022)

2019–2021

- Designed the framework for an interdisciplinary General Education Program, laying the groundwork for a broader institutional dialogue on general education at AUK.
- Led the development of program learning outcomes and assessment protocols.
- Coordinated across academic departments to build consensus and ensure first steps of program coherence.

Director, First Year Studies Department (2019–2022)

2019–2023

- Managed the first-year student academic experience.
- Developed academic support systems for first-year students.

Zayed University (2004–2016)

Associate Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

2015–2016

- Coordinated with internal and external assessment bodies.
- Oversaw the assessment team's self-study and monitored course-file compliance.
- Developed College Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with the CAS Dean.
- Evaluated Department Chairs and faculty for contract renewals.

Program Director, Master's in Diplomacy and International Affairs

2009–2016

- Created the first Master's program in diplomacy for mid-level professionals in the UAE.
- Collaborated with the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs on program development.
- Developed academic structure, policies, and admission and retention protocols; hired faculty and staff.

Founding Director, Zayed Diplomatic Academy at Zayed University

2008–2013

- Created a diplomatic academy delivering professional training for the UAE diplomatic corps.
- Collaborated with the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs on curriculum for entry-level diplomats.
- Trained appointed ambassadors before overseas deployment and delivered workshops for government entities.

Assistant Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

2008–2011

- Coordinated academic programs and faculty development initiatives.
- Participated in strategic planning and curriculum development.

Member, Graduate Studies Council (2009–2016); Member, Graduate Studies Academic Committee (2009–2016); Chair, Academic Affairs Committee (2005–2008).

Accreditation Experience

- Member, Accreditation Steering Committee, Zayed University reaccreditation, Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2013) — successfully reaccredited 2013–2018.
- Member, Accreditation Steering Committee, Zayed University initial accreditation, Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2008).

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Consultant · Member of the Programmatic Agenda on International/Middle Eastern Affairs of the Colombian Presidential Candidate Paloma Valencia	2026
Consultant · Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UAE — academic structuring of the Emirates Diplomatic Academy	2014–2015
Consultant · TV-3 Catalan Television, Spain — documentary on the UAE and the Gulf	2007
Expert Witness · Massachusetts Immigration Courts, Boston, USA — political affairs in Latin America	1998–2002
Doctoral Research Fellow · Fares Center, Tufts University, USA	2002–2004
Corporate Lawyer · Ignacio Sanín Bernal Abogados, Medellín, Colombia	1991–1995

ACADEMIC HONORS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

Honors and Grants

2009 Research Sabbatical Award, Zayed University
2008 Research Incentive Fund, Zayed University
2002 Latin America's Best Research Essay Award, Tufts University
2001 Fares Center Eastern Mediterranean Research Travel Grant, Tufts University
1999–2004 PhD Scholarship, Tufts University
1992–1996 Colombian Government Scholarship for Master's Degree (Colfuturo)

Teaching Awards

2016 Exemplary Faculty Recognition, Zayed University
2015 Exemplary Faculty Recognition, Zayed University
2014 Exemplary Faculty Recognition, Zayed University
2013 Outstanding Faculty Recognition, Zayed University
2012 Exemplary Faculty Recognition, Zayed University
2007 Outstanding Faculty Recognition, Zayed University

PUBLICATIONS

Books

2017 Vélez, Federico. *Latin American Revolutionaries and the Arab World: From the Suez Canal to the Arab Spring*. London/New York: Routledge.

Book Chapters — Refereed

2013 Vélez, Federico. “El Momento Wilsoniano en el Medio Oriente.” In *Relaciones Internacionales: La posición de Colombia en el Mundo*, 82–105. Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

Book Chapters — Non-Refereed

2018 Vélez, Federico. “Portuguese Missionaries in the Gulf.” In *La Soledad del Golfo*. Cantabria Press.

Refereed Journal Articles

2020 Vélez, Federico. “Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Salvator Arabia, o el espejismo del poder?” *Revista Hesperia: Culturas del Mediterráneo*, March 2020: 95–118.

2015 Vélez, Federico. “From the Suez to the Panama Canal and Beyond: Gamal Abdel Nasser's Influence in Latin America.” *Varia Historia* 31, no. 55: 1–27. (Also translated into Portuguese.)

2011 Vélez, Federico. “Abu Dhabi–Great Britain and the Crisis over Jurisdiction, 1959–1960.” *Historia Actual* 25: 31–40.

Journal Articles — Invitation by Editor

2026 Vélez, Federico. “America's Mission: From Colombia to the Middle East.” *ReVista: Harvard Review of Latin America*, March 4, 2026. [Link](#)

2005 Vélez, Federico. “U.S. Policy toward Latin America: A View from the Arab World.” *Revista, Harvard Review of Latin America*, Spring/Summer 2005: 10–12. [Link](#)

Journal Articles — Non-Refereed

2025 Vélez, Federico. “Sumas y restas de dos años de guerra en el Medio Oriente.” *Cambio*, October 8, 2025. [Link](#)

2024 Vélez, Federico. “Siria: Identidad y Guerra.” *El Tiempo*, December 27, 2024. [Link](#)

2024 Vélez, Federico. “De la Histórica Crisis a la Tragedia: Israel y Palestina antes del 7 de octubre.” *El Tiempo*, October 10, 2024. [Link](#)

2024 Vélez, Federico. “Caer en la trampa de Netanyahu y Sinwar.” *La Silla Vacía*, May 9, 2024. [Link](#)

Book Reviews

2024 Vélez, Federico. Review of *Vision or Mirage: Saudi Arabia at the Crossroads*, by David Rundell. *Historia Actual* 65 (Autumn 2024). [Link](#)

2008 Vélez, Federico. Review of *Liberalism without Democracy: Nationhood and Citizenship in Egypt, 1922–1936*, by Abdeslam M. Maghraoui. *Canadian Journal of World History* 42: 3.

SELECTED MEDIA INTERVIEWS AND COMMENTARY

2025 Interview by Juan Carlos Restrepo, “Total Peace,” *EnClave Podcast* #174. [Podcast audio](#)

2024 “Siria: Identidad y Guerra.” *El Tiempo*, December 27, 2024. [Link](#)

2024 “De la Histórica Crisis a la Tragedia: Israel y Palestina antes del 7 de octubre.” *El Tiempo*, October 10, 2024. [Link](#)

2024 Interview: “Un año turbulento y mortal con la escalada del conflicto en el Medio Oriente.” *El Herald*, December 15, 2024. [Link](#)

2024 Interview: “Conflicto entre Israel e Irán: ¿una escalada regional o el riesgo controlado de la guerra?” *El Herald*, October 5, 2024. [Link](#)

2023 Radio interview: “Could the Conflict between Gaza and Israel Become a Global War?” *La W Radio*, October 10, 2023.

2023 “War between Israel and Gaza: Experts Talk about a Possible End to the Conflict.” *El Heraldo*, October 15, 2023.

2023 Interview, *Enclave Podcast*: “Gaza Guerra Total,” October 14, 2023.

SELECTED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED LECTURES

Recent Presentations (2020–2026)

2026 “Justice, Reconciliation, and Accountability: Comparing Post-Conflict Paths in Colombia and Syria.” Paper presented at the 17th Asian Conference on Arts & Humanities (ACAH2026), Tokyo, Japan, May 9–13, 2026.

2025 “The Great War and the Middle East: The Lasting Legacies.” Harvard University, LSTU S-121: Global Law, Global History, July 2, 2025.

2025 “La Encrucijada Geopolítica en el Medio Oriente.” Lecture, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, April 11, 2025 (online).

2024 “Peace: An Unreachable Negotiation Outcome in the Middle East — The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict, 1967–2024.” Lecture, Sourcing Experts, November 29, 2024 (online).

2024 “The International Context of the Invasion of Kuwait.” Latin American Association of Kuwait, February 20, 2024.

2023 “The Palestinian/Israeli Conflict Today: Regional Actors, Global Powers.” Universidad Nacional de Colombia, October 26, 2023 (videoconference).

2020 “The Invasion of Kuwait: The Legacy to Arab Politics.” National Public Library, Kuwait City.

2020 “International Relations and the Invasion of Kuwait.” Embassy of Spain in Kuwait, Kuwait City.

International Conferences and Lectures (2013–2019)

2018 “The Gulf Crisis, Media and Diplomacy in the Gulf.” Fundación de las Tres Culturas, Seville, Spain (July 2018).

2016 “Latin American Revolutionaries and the Arab World.” Colegio de México, Mexico City (October 2016).

2016 “Geopolitics of the Recent Conflict in the Middle East.” University of Monterrey, Mexico (October).

2016 “Iran and the Arab Gulf Monarchies: Thirty Years of Geostrategic Confrontation.” XIV ALADAA, Monterrey, Mexico (October 2016).

2016 “Venezuela's Foreign Policy Towards the Middle East from Chávez to Maduro.” Latin American Studies Association, New York (May).

2015 “Diplomatic Performances: Arab Gulf Leaders at the UN General Assembly.” VI Semana Árabe, Mexico City (April).

2015 “The Recognition of States and Governments: A Task Halfway between International Law and World Politics.” Sixth Asian Arts and Humanities Conference, Osaka, Japan (April).

2013 “Terranova II: Ibero-Americans Discover the Arabian Gulf.” British Society for Middle Eastern Studies, Dublin, Ireland (June).

2013 “The Arab Spring: A View from Caracas.” Latin American Studies Association (LASA), Washington, D.C. (June).

Earlier Academic Presentations (2003–2012)

2010 “Higher Education Strategic Plans in Abu Dhabi and Dubai: The Tale of Two Cities.” Fares Center, Tufts University, Boston (October).

2010 “The Years of Living Dangerously: Arab Monarchies of the Gulf and the Iran–Iraq War.” World Congress on Middle East Studies, Barcelona, Spain (June).

2010 “The United States and the Middle East.” Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá (July).

2009 “As Pragmatic as Ideological: Venezuela's Policy towards the Arab/Persian Gulf.” LASA, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (June).

- 2008** “Protecting the Gulf from Nasser: Great Britain and the Challenge of Arab Nationalism.” Middle East Studies Association (MESA), Washington, D.C. (November).
- 2008** “The Shah Says He Agrees with Your View of the Gulf: The Johnson Administration and the Emerging New Order in the Gulf.” SHAFR, Columbus, Ohio.
- 2007** “Abu Dhabi: Great Britain and the Question of Jurisdiction, 1959–1960.” MESA, Montreal, Canada (November).
- 2006** “Building a Knowledge Society: The Arab Human Development Report 2003.” Estudios Semíticos, Medellín, Colombia (January).
- 2005** “América Latina y el mundo Árabe: Historias Entrelazadas.” Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Medellín, Colombia (January).
- 2003** “The Way to Jerusalem Goes through Managua: Sandinistas and Palestinian Links in the 1970s and 1980s.” SHAFR, Washington, D.C. (June).

SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION

- 2025** Reviewer of Journal Manuscript, *Historia Actual* (online): “La construcción de la identidad nacional en Uzbekistán: entre el nacionalismo étnico y el pragmatismo estatal.” Reviewed July 11, 2025.
- 2025** Reviewer of proposals for The Asian Conference on Arts & Humanities (ACAH2026), Tokyo, February–March 2026.

LANGUAGES

Spanish — native fluency. English — advanced fluency (speaking, reading, writing). Arabic — intermediate. French — conversational with high comprehension.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Latin American Studies Association (LASA); Middle East Studies Association (MESA); Society for Historians of United States Foreign Relations (SHAFR); British Society for Middle Eastern Studies.