



2016-17 HIGHLIGHTS



CENTER FOR U.S.-MEXICAN STUDIES
UC San Diego School of Global Policy & Strategy

The Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies (USMEX), based at the UC San Diego School of Global Policy and Strategy (GPS), was founded in 1980 to study Mexico and the full range of issues affecting economic, social and political relations between Mexico and the U.S.

Spearheading the university’s engagement with Mexico, USMEX is a go-to source for rigorous academic research that can be applied to the creation, implementation and evaluation of public policy. The center is privileged with the unique opportunity to engage in research on Mexico, Mexicans in the U.S., and the U.S.-Mexico relationship from its location on the border.

MISSION

We contribute to the ongoing integration process between the U.S. and Mexico by providing a forum for thought leaders to engage in public dialogue; training and supporting a vibrant community of innovative scholars and practitioners; and undertaking cutting-edge research to guide policy decisions.

VISION

Our intellectual leadership improves the quality of life for Mexicans and Mexican Americans; deepens the economic integration of the border region; and supports the development of a dynamic cadre of leaders dedicated to the consolidation of the U.S.-Mexico relationship.



In October 2016, USMEX was the proud host of the GPS International Advisory Board meeting in Mexico City. Highlights from the trip included breakfast with Ambassador Roberta Jacobson and a visit to Mexico’s Central Bank hosted by Agustin Carstens. Board members also visited a number of important cultural institutions. In addition, Mexico Moving Forward was held at the Casa de California and highlighted innovative approaches to supporting entrepreneurs and solving complex social problems.



USMEX TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

- » Denise Moreno Ducheny was inducted into the Tijuana Hall of Fame and her oral history was included in the California State Archives.
- » Zaira Razu joined the team to oversee the center's growing research portfolio.
- » Melissa Floca was appointed to the UC Mexico Initiative Leadership Council.
- » Greg Mallinger graduated with an Especialidad en Estudios de la Frontera Mexico-Estados Unidos from the Colegio de la Frontera Norte.



CROSS-BORDER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- » The center published a comprehensive dataset that sheds light on the cross-border ties of young people in San Diego and Tijuana, and highlights the opportunities and challenges that these youth face in charting successful educational and professional pathways to adulthood.
- » Students participating in the Mexican Migration Field Research Program visited policymakers in Mexico City and Sacramento to share policy briefs on the unmet needs of binational youth in schools on both sides of the border.
- » The center participated in a daylong meeting in Mexico City organized by the UC Mexico Initiative between a delegation led by California Superintendent of Education Tom Torlakson and officials at Mexico's Ministry of Education to identify high priority binational education policies and programs.
- » USMEX launched a new collaboration with Foundation Escalera, an NGO based in Chiapas, that supports students during the transition from middle school to high school. The center will work with Escalera over the coming years to quantify the impact of their programs.
- » USMEX participated in an Idea Wave at the Universidad Autonoma de Baja California to design social interventions with impact evaluation strategies for the binational region.

THE U.S.-MEXICO ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP

- » Melissa Floca unveiled the most recent update of the center’s project on Calibaja Cross-Border Supply Chains at the Wilson Center’s Fourth Annual “Building a Competitive U.S.-Mexico Border” conference.
 - » The economic model behind this study shows that a \$2.5 billion dollar cross-border supply chain anchors a host of advanced manufacturing industries in the region.
 - » Next steps include case studies of specific products to understand the cross-border production processes behind trade flows, as well as the creation of a model of the California-Mexico supply chain.
- » USMEX hosted a daylong event titled “Conversations on the Future of the North American Economic Partnership” to engage thought leaders from policy circles, industry and academia in discussions around the consequences of revoking NAFTA on trade, diplomacy, security and the broader U.S.-Mexico relationship.
- » The Stubborn Facts campaign was launched to build a fact-based dialogue around the bilateral relationship. The project focuses on trade and migration because of the need for evidence-based policy decisions on these two issues at the core of the U.S.-Mexico relationship.
- » The center was honored to host a dinner for Agustin Carstens, head of Mexico’s Central bank, who visited campus to give the commencement speech at the School of Global Policy and Strategy.
- » USMEX worked with the San Diego-Tijuana team of stakeholders participating in the Brookings Global Cities Initiative to develop a regional profile for Tijuana highlighting the city’s economic drivers and comparative advantages.



FELLOWS PROGRAM

Each year, the center invites scholars to campus from a wide range of disciplines as part of its residential fellows program. The former fellows, now numbering over 670, are the core of the center's intellectual community and hold prominent positions in academia, government, civil society and the private sector. Highlights from the 2016-17 cohort include:

- » The launch of the Fulbright-Garcia Robles Mexico Studies Chair to include additional visiting faculty from Mexico in the Fellows program.
- » The annual Fellows Retreat to Baja California in collaboration with Esperanza International, an organization that supports families by organizing groups of volunteers to build homes.
- » Conferences and workshops organized by fellows around their areas of expertise including "Housing Across Borders: Mexican and U.S. Housing in Perspective"; "The Political Life of Cultural Production in the 21st Century"; and "Free Trade in the Age of Trump".



BUILDING THE BORDER COMMUNITY

- » The Border Legislative Academy brought together legislators from the ten U.S.-Mexico border states to participate in professional development training and build cross-border relationships.
- » The Border Mayors Association Binational Summit provided an opportunity for mayors from both sides of the border to discuss shared local issues of trade, public health, environment and border infrastructure.
- » The center sponsored the 30th Annual Congress of the Mexican Association of International Studies, which took place in Tijuana at the Universidad Autonoma de Baja California and focused on transborder cooperation and global development challenges.
- » The quarterly Frontera Fridays site visits continued to build connections between leaders from both sides of the border and UC San Diego by serving as a platform for learning, networking and discussion about what makes the binational region unique – visits included advanced manufacturing facilities, art and cultural institutions and craft beer breweries.