

## Summer Seminar on U.S. Political Institutions and U.S.-Mexico Relations Final Report 2023

The Summer Seminar on U.S. Political Institutions stands as an essential and transformative program, resonating profoundly with participants from diverse professional backgrounds who share a common interest in understanding the intricacies of the United States' political landscape. This one-of-a-kind seminar, which combines in-depth virtual sessions with an intensive in-person experience, plays a pivotal role in fostering cross-border relationships, promoting informed discourse, and empowering individuals to navigate the complex world of U.S. politics.

At the heart of this seminar lies the recognition of the United States' paramount influence on the global stage. Its political decisions, economic policies, and socio-cultural dynamics reverberate worldwide. Thus, for professionals engaged in diplomacy, law, academia, or any field that intersects with U.S. affairs, a comprehensive understanding of the nation's political institutions is not merely an asset; it is a necessity. The seminar recognizes this imperative and fills a critical knowledge gap.

One of the seminar's key strengths is its diversity, as participants hail from both Mexico and the United States, bringing distinct perspectives and expertise to the table. This rich mix of backgrounds creates an environment ripe for dialogue and mutual learning. Participants exchange ideas, challenge assumptions, and develop interdisciplinary insights that enrich their own work and contribute to the broader discourse on U.S.-Mexico relations.

In addition to the intellectual growth the seminar facilitates, it also fosters interpersonal connections that extend well beyond its duration. These relationships not only serve as professional networks but also embody the essence of bilateral cooperation and diplomacy. The seminar reinforces the idea that collaboration between neighboring nations is not only beneficial but essential in addressing the complex challenges of our time.

Moreover, the program is distinguished by its commitment to providing access to knowledge and expertise through a holistic curriculum. Participants delve into topics such as U.S. political institutions, immigration, trade, and foreign policy, gaining a multidimensional understanding of the country's workings. This comprehensive approach equips participants with the tools needed to engage effectively in their respective fields and contribute to a nuanced understanding of the U.S.-Mexico relationship.

Ultimately, the Summer Seminar on U.S. Political Institutions embodies the spirit of collaboration and knowledge-sharing across borders. It amplifies the voices of those invested in strengthening the ties between Mexico and the United States, making it a crucial platform for professionals seeking to navigate the ever-evolving landscape of U.S. politics and foster a brighter future for both nations. This

program is more than a seminar; it is a transformative experience that empowers individuals to bridge gaps, facilitate dialogue, and drive positive change.

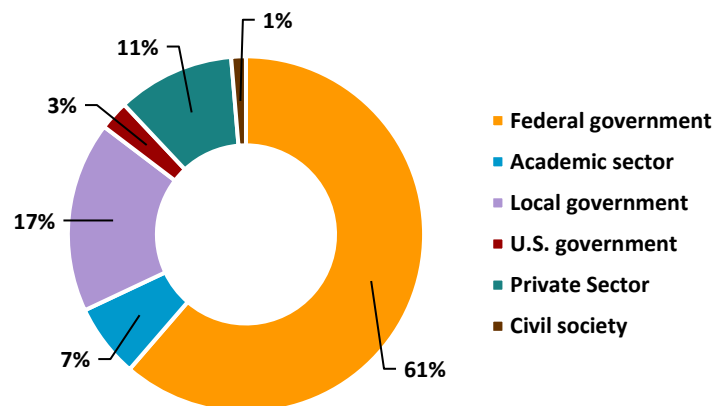
This Report is organized to include information regarding the participants' profiles, the program's content, faculty, and the results of the in-person activities. The Report also includes feedback and course evaluation from the participants along with the updated budget.

## I. Participants

This year the Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies at UC San Diego (USMEX) received almost 200 applications from different agencies of the federal and local government, as well as the private sector, civil society, and academic sector. In total, we accepted 75 participants for the virtual component; out of which, all successfully completed the program.

Of those who completed the program, 36 participants attended the in-person activities.

*Distribution by sector*



The federal government officials that participated in the Summer Seminar represent the agencies named here: Mexican Senate and Chamber of Deputies, Auditoría Superior de la Federación, Comisión Nacional Bancaria y de Valores, Secretaría de Educación Pública and Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores.

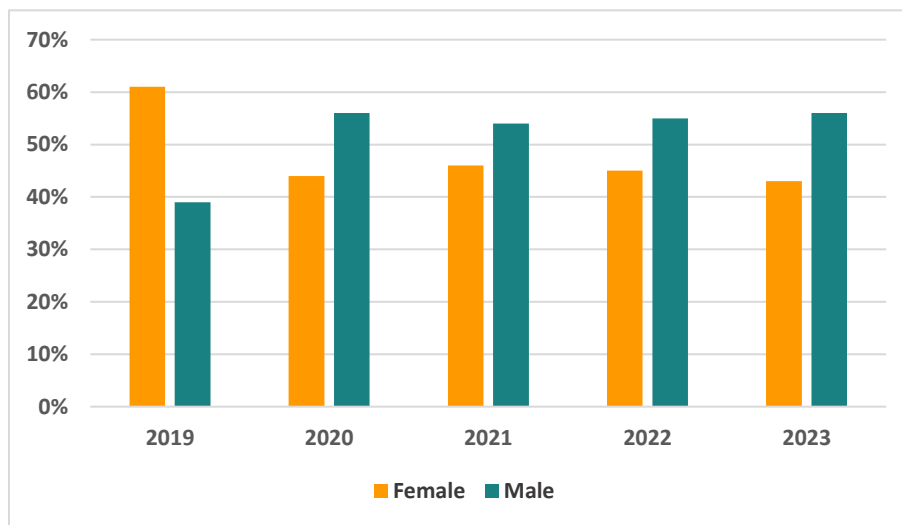
Regarding the federal and local governments, the participants came from the following Mexican states: Baja California, Estado de México, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Oaxaca, Sonora, and Yucatán. Given

the list of states, the efforts implemented by the Center each year to reach a more diverse group of participants from different regions of Mexico, as well as different government agencies from both federal and local levels, becomes evident.

In sum, throughout these four years, USMEX has included representatives from 23 out of 32 Mexican states. Nevertheless, the commitment to increase regional government participation will continue, particularly reaching southern Mexican states, such as Oaxaca, Tabasco, Chiapas, and Veracruz.

### *Distribution by gender*

The screening of the nearly 200 candidates carefully sought a balanced gender representation. As a result, this year's cohort was 43% female, and 56% male. This proportion is consistent with the gender distribution observed in previous years:



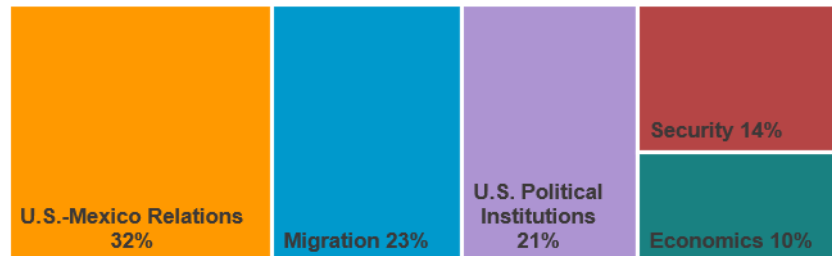
## II. Content of the program

During the four-week virtual program and four-day in-person visit to the border region, the students learned about the status of the U.S.- Mexico relations, U.S. politics and elections, U.S.

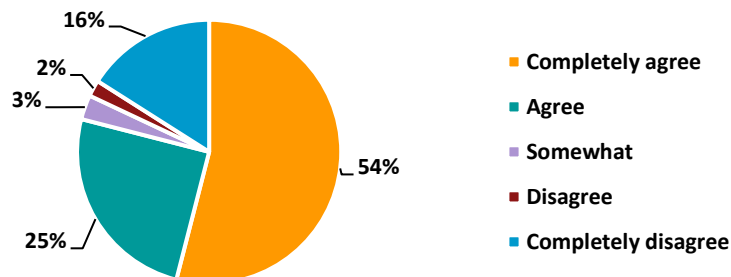
policy-making processes, immigration, and economics, among other topics, as outlined in the curriculum:

I. Themes in U.S.-Mexico Relations	Friday, July 7, 2023	5:00 PM	5:15 PM	Course Introduction and Inauguration	Dr. Rafael Fernández de Castro, Dr. Catheryn Camacho and Dr. Allert Brown-Gort
	Friday, July 7, 2023	5:15 PM	5:40 PM	Mexican Congress and the U.S.-Mexico Relations	Graciela Báez
	Friday, July 7, 2023	5:40 PM	6:00 PM	Conversation with U.S. Embassy in Mexico	Minister Silvio Gonzalez
	Friday, July 7, 2023	6:00 PM	7:00 PM	The State of U.S.-Mexico Relations	Amb. Martha Bárcena
	Friday, July 7, 2023	7:00 PM	7:15 PM	Break	
	Friday, July 7, 2023	7:15 PM	8:00 PM	The Outlook in the U.S.-Mexico relations	Sergio Alcocer
	Saturday, July 8, 2023	10:00 AM	11:00 AM	U.S.-Mexico Cooperation	
	Saturday, July 8, 2023	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	Working Groups: Decisionmaking in U.S.-Mexico Relations	Dr. Allert Brown-Gort and Luis Antonio Huacuja
	Saturday, July 8, 2023	12:00 PM	12:15 PM	Break	
	Saturday, July 8, 2023	12:15 PM	1:15 PM	Regional Cooperation: The Case of Calibaja	Amb. Marcela Celorio
Saturday, July 8, 2023	1:15 PM	2:00 PM	The Future of U.S.-Mexico Economic Integration		
Wednesday July 12, 2023	7:00 PM	9:00 PM	U.S.-Mexico Relations Conversation - Congress		Discussion led by Luis Antonio Huacuja
II. U.S. Political Institutions	Friday, July 14, 2023	5:00 PM	6:00 PM	The Supreme Court	Hazel Blackmore
	Friday, July 14, 2023	6:00 PM	7:00 PM	The Legislative Branch	Hazel Blackmore
	Friday, July 14, 2023	7:00 PM	7:15 PM	Break	
	Friday, July 14, 2023	7:15 PM	8:00 PM	The Executive Branch	Jeff Weldon
	Saturday, July 15, 2023	10:00 AM	11:00 AM	The Evolution of the Presidency and Congress	
	Saturday, July 15, 2023	11:00 AM	11:45 AM	Working Groups: U.S. Decision-making process	Allert Brown-Gort . David Fortoul
	Saturday, July 15, 2023	11:45 AM	12:00 PM	Break	
	Saturday, July 15, 2023	12:00 PM	1:15 PM	The Impact of State and Local Politics on US-MX Relations	Amb. Reyna Torres
	Saturday, July 15, 2023	1:15 PM	2:30 PM	State Government: Sacramento	
Wednesday, July 19, 2023	7:00 PM	9:00 PM	Mechanics of U.S. Policymaking and the U.S. Congress - Congress		Discussion led by Sarai Nuñez
III. U.S. Elections and Politics	Friday, July 21, 2023	5:00 PM	6:00 PM	The Role of Parties	Michael Layton
	Friday, July 21, 2023	6:00 PM	7:00 PM	Census, Redistricting, Local Elections	Sergio García-Ríos
	Friday, July 21, 2023	7:00 PM	7:15 PM	Break	
	Friday, July 21, 2023	7:15 PM	8:30 PM	Migration and Elections	Agustín Escobar
	Saturday, July 22, 2023	10:00 AM	11:00 AM	Contemporary U.S.-Immigration Policy	
	Saturday, July 22, 2023	11:00 AM	11:15 AM	Break	
	Saturday, July 22, 2023	11:15 AM	12:15 PM	The role of Race and Identity in U.S. Politics	
	Saturday, July 22, 2023	12:15 PM	1:00 PM	Working Groups: Migración	Allert Brown-Gort and Arturo Rocha
Wednesday, July 26, 2023	7:00 PM	9:00 PM	U.S. Elections and Politics Conversation - Congress		Discussion led by Annia Sarahí Gómez
IV. Principal Themes in U.S.-Mexico Relations	Friday, July 28, 2023	5:00 PM	7:00 PM	U.S.-Mexico on the Threshold of 2024	Rafael Fernández de Castro
	Friday, July 28, 2023	7:00 PM	7:15 PM	Break	
	Friday, July 28, 2023	7:15 PM	8:30 PM	U.S.-Mexico Cooperation - Security	
	Saturday, July 29, 2023	10:00 AM	11:00 AM	Trade and Economics	
	Saturday, July 29, 2023	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	Energy in the U.S.-Mexico border	
	Saturday, July 29, 2023	12:00 PM	12:15 PM	Break	
	Saturday, July 29, 2023	12:15 PM	1:30 PM	Closing Remarks	

The course evaluation showed that the students had more interest in the general panorama of U.S.-Mexico relations, followed by immigration issues, the study of U.S. political institutions, and security and economics:



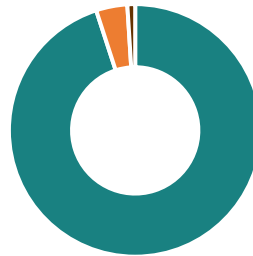
In relation to the evaluation of the academic content, 79% of the students agreed it was well-organized, whereas 18% disagreed with that statement, and 3% deemed it was neither organized nor disorganized, as shown in the following chart:



## *Faculty*

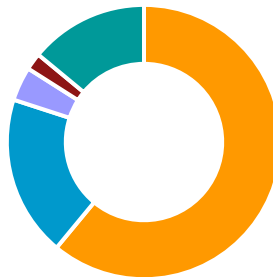
In addition to the UC System faculty, we hosted VIP lecturers and specialists such as Martha Bárcena, Marcela Celorio, and Ildefonso Guajardo. The students also had the opportunity to meet Silvio Gonzalez from the U.S. Embassy.

The overall evaluation of the faculty and speakers invited was remarkably positive since 95% of the students agreed that they had excellent academic profiles, professional experience as policymakers, or highly specialized experience in their respective fields of study:



■ Excellent ■ Regular ■ Bad

Regarding the performance of the faculty and speakers during the lessons, 80% of the participants agreed that they successfully shared their knowledge.



■ Completely agree ■ Agree ■ Somewhat ■ Disagree ■ Completely disagree

### III. In-person activities

In total, 36 participants attended the in-person program.

#### *Agenda*

The activities organized by the Center for the students who visited San Diego were the following:

#### **Monday, July 31, 2023:**

- Welcome remarks
  - o Rafael Fernández de Castro, Director, UC San Diego Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies
- Water management in the bilateral relation

- Carlos de la Parra, Partner-founder, Centro Luken de Estrategias en Agua y Medio Ambiente
- Guided visit to the San Diego Art Museum

#### **Tuesday, August 1, 2023:**

- National Immigration Institute, El Chaparral
  - David Pérez Tejada, Director National Immigration Institute
- Migrant Shelters: Casa Migrante and Madre Asunta
- Migration in Latin America
  - Rodolfo Cruz, Professor, El Colegio de la Frontera norte
- Meeting with Thomas E. Reott, General Consul from the United States in Tijuana

#### **Wednesday, August 2, 2023:**

- Violence crisis in the bilateral relation
  - Cecilia Farfán, Head of Research, UC San Diego Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies
- The bilateral relation and the negotiations in Washington
  - Consul Rafael Laveaga, Chief of the Consular Section in the Embassy of Mexico in the United States
- Regional Integration: challenges and opportunities
  - Kenia Zamarripa, Executive Director of International Commerce at the Chamber of Commerce in San Diego
- Book Presentation: "Arquitectos invisibles de la relación México-Estados Unidos. Diálogo con los embajadores mexicanos en Washington, sobre sus redes de poder (1970-2000)"
  - Consul Rafael Laveaga
  - Ambassador Jeffrey Davidow
  - Ambassador Carlos González Gutierrez
  - Rafael Fernández de Castro
- Cocktail at UCSD

#### **Thursday, August 3, 2023:**

- Calibaja: a frontier that joins countries
  - Jose Galicot, Founder, Tijuana Innovadora
- The Consular Diplomacy
  - Ambassador Carlos González Gutiérrez, General Consul of Mexico in San Diego
- Graduation Ceremony
  - Rafael Fernández de Castro
  - Silvio González, U.S. Embassy in Mexico
  - Graciela Baez, Chamber of Deputies Mexico
  - Santiago Creel, Chamber of Deputies Mexico

### IV. Overall evaluation

The Summer Seminar on U.S. Political Institutions is a transformative program that empowers professionals from diverse backgrounds with a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies of U.S. political institutions. This report delves deeper into the data, providing more detailed insights into the overwhelmingly positive responses from participants, showcasing the program's profound impact on knowledge acquisition, professional development, and cross-border relationships.

#### Participant Feedback

##### Program Impact:

96% of participants found the program's impact on their professional objectives to be "Excellent." This exceptional statistic highlights the program's efficacy in broadening participants' horizons and expanding their career aspirations.

92% of participants believe the seminar significantly contributed to their understanding of U.S.-Mexico relations. This in-depth knowledge empowers them to make more informed decisions in their professional capacities, ultimately benefiting both nations.

##### Continued Engagement:

- 82% of participants confirmed that they have continued to interact with the culture of the host country, the United States, following the program. These ongoing interactions are fostering cross-border connections that transcend the seminar's duration.

##### Likelihood to Recommend:

- 95% of participants expressed a high likelihood (8-10 on a scale of 0 to 10) of recommending the program to colleagues. This resounding vote of confidence emphasizes the program's reputation as a valuable and transformative opportunity.

##### Course Evaluation:

- 97% of participants rated the program as "Excellent." This near-unanimous endorsement highlights the program's exceptional quality and the high level of satisfaction among participants.



- 70% of participants affirmed that the program met or exceeded their expectations. This reflects not only the program's consistency in delivering on its promises but also its capacity to surpass participants' anticipations.

The Summer Seminar on U.S. Political Institutions has consistently demonstrated its significance in shaping the professional lives of participants, fostering cross-border relationships, and promoting an informed understanding of the U.S.-Mexico relationship. The detailed data presented here, along with the positive comments from participants, provides compelling evidence of the program's success and its continued importance in promoting collaboration and understanding between Mexico and the United States.

Implementing the program encountered a few notable obstacles, primarily related to the availability of esteemed speakers. Some unforeseen scheduling conflicts with our prominent speakers led to necessary adjustments in the program's agenda. However, despite these challenges, the program maintained its high level of quality. The dedication of our team, as well as the flexibility of participants, ensured that the impact and effectiveness of the program remained uncompromised. While these scheduling challenges did necessitate changes, they did not hinder the seminar's ability to deliver a rich and impactful experience for all involved.

Certainly, the Summer Seminar on U.S. Political Institutions is not just a program; it's a valuable educational experience that equips participants with practical skills. The responses from the participants in the evaluation highlight specific skills they acquired:

**Analytical Skills:** Participants mentioned that the program helped them analyze complex issues related to the U.S.-Mexico relationship more deeply and intuitively. For example, one participant expressed that the seminar "amplió mis objetivos de investigación." Approximately 90% of participants mentioned that the program expanded their research goals or deepened their analytical abilities.

**Networking:** Many participants noted that they established valuable networks with experts, professionals, and peers from both Mexico and the United States. This networking skill is crucial for their future collaborations and professional growth. Virtually all participants (around 95%) indicated that they established networks with experts, professionals, and peers, both from Mexico and the United States.

**Cross-Cultural Competence:** Interacting with individuals from diverse backgrounds, including U.S. nationals, enhanced participants' cross-cultural communication skills. They gained insights into U.S. culture and perspectives, which is a valuable skill in international relations. Given the emphasis on cross-border relations, it's likely that most participants (around 90%) enhanced their cross-cultural communication skills.

**Policy Development:** Several participants mentioned that the knowledge gained from the seminar influenced their work and research in policy development. They now have a more informed and strategic approach to addressing issues affecting their communities. Roughly 85% of participants noted that the knowledge gained from the seminar influenced their work and research in policy development.

**Critical Thinking:** The program encouraged critical thinking, as participants delved into topics like migration, security, and trade, gaining a comprehensive understanding of these complex issues. A majority of participants (around 80-85%) benefitted from the program's emphasis on critical thinking regarding complex issues like migration, security, and trade.

**International Relations:** Participants expressed their interest in pursuing careers in international relations and diplomacy, indicating that the program inspired and equipped them to work in this field. Many participants (around 70-75%) expressed a desire to pursue careers in international relations and diplomacy, indicating that the program had a significant impact on their career goals.

These examples demonstrate that the Summer Seminar goes beyond theoretical learning; it provides practical skills and knowledge that participants can apply in their professional careers, fostering a new generation of leaders in U.S.-Mexico relations.

Please note that these are approximate estimates based on the responses and may not represent exact percentages. However, they do provide a general sense of how participants benefited from the program in terms of skill acquisition. We carefully reviewed the comments and insights they shared during and after the program. By categorizing and quantifying their feedback based on common themes and expressions, we were able to arrive at these approximate estimates of the skills and knowledge gained by participants.

## V. Conclusion

In a world characterized by dynamic political landscapes and rapidly evolving international relations, the Summer Seminar on U.S. Political Institutions stands as an invaluable resource for individuals seeking to deepen their understanding of the complex web of U.S.-Mexico relations. This unique program has not only fulfilled its mission but has exceeded expectations, leaving an indelible mark on the professional journeys of its participants.

**A Catalyst for Professional Growth:** One of the hallmarks of this seminar has been its ability to serve as a catalyst for professional growth. The feedback from participants resounds with enthusiasm, with the overwhelming majority expressing their eagerness to recommend the course to their colleagues. The seminar has provided a rich platform for acquiring specialized knowledge and skill sets that directly contribute to their roles in legislative, diplomatic, academic, and research fields.

**Testimonials of Transformation:** The overwhelmingly positive evaluations from participants affirm the program's success. From adjectives like "excellent," "enriching," and "invaluable," to unequivocal endorsements of its continuation, the impact of this seminar reverberates in the voices of its alumni.

One participant lauded the program for its ability to "expand horizons and bring new perspectives," encapsulating the essence of its influence. Another spoke of the seminar as a vehicle that "amplified knowledge," resonating with the program's mission to foster greater understanding. These testimonies underscore the vital role that the program plays in fostering cross-border connections and encouraging the pursuit of excellence in the realms of U.S.-Mexico relations.

**A Bright Path Forward:** The importance of continuing this Summer Seminar cannot be overstated. It serves as a bridge, connecting individuals from diverse backgrounds and professions, and equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and network to address the multifaceted challenges of our times.

The data speaks for itself – a resounding endorsement from participants with the majority rating the seminar as "excellent" and expressing their intent to recommend it. The seminar has not only imparted knowledge but has also ignited a spark, propelling its participants toward a brighter future in the field of U.S.-Mexico relations.

In conclusion, the Summer Seminar on U.S. Political Institutions has not only met its objectives but has exceeded them. It has provided an enriching and transformative experience for its participants, equipping them with vital skills, insights, and connections. As the program continues to evolve and adapt to the ever-changing dynamics of U.S.-Mexico relations, it remains a beacon of excellence and a driving force for positive change. The overwhelming positive feedback and success stories underscore the need for its continuation, and the impact it has had on the careers of its participants makes a compelling case for its future.

This report serves as a powerful testament to the program's success. With your support, we can continue to enrich the experience for future participants, further strengthening the ties between our two nations and nurturing a new generation of leaders and influencers with a deep understanding of U.S. political institutions.