

# THE GLOBAL NEXT DOOR

The background of the page is a collage of three national flags. The United States flag is in the bottom-left corner, showing the stars and stripes. The Mexican flag is in the bottom-right corner, showing the green, white, and red vertical stripes and the national coat of arms. The Canadian flag is in the top-left corner, showing the red maple leaf. The flags are arranged in a way that they appear to be overlapping and slightly tilted.

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Report of the Mexican Academic Mobility Assessment Committee

# Presenters

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## Survey Questions

1. Does your institution send students to study abroad in Mexico?
2. If yes, about how many students do you send a year?
3. Is the number of students you send a year increasing or decreasing?
4. Where do you send students?
5. What is your greatest challenge in sending students to Mexico?



# Mexico Academic Mobility Assessment Committee (MAMAC) Purpose

To expand safe and affordable opportunities to U.S. and Canadian students to study abroad in Mexico, and to evaluate trends in existing information regarding travel in Mexico including best practices.

Full report found at: <https://global.arizona.edu/mamac>



## **MAMAC Committee Members**

Suzanne Panferov Reese, University of Arizona

Britta Baron, University of Alberta

Jim Citron, Dartmouth University

Exequiel Ezcurra, University of California, Riverside

Ahmad Ezzeddine, Wayne State University

Magdaleno Manzanárez, Western New Mexico  
University

Karl Markgraf, University of Minnesota - Duluth



## Key Elements of the Report

1. Includes background on academic mobility between the U.S., Canada and Mexico.
2. Describes governments' travel advice systems and how these affect academic mobility to Mexico.
3. Discusses challenges institutions face with regards to risk assessment, insurance and travel policies for Mexico.



## Recent History Provides Important Context

- The number of U.S. students studying abroad in Mexico dropped from nearly 10,000 in 2007-2008 to a low of just 3,730 in 2012-2013.
- The numbers grew in 2013-2014 for the first time in six years; student mobility was up 19.2% compared to the previous year.
- The numbers continued to grow to 4,712 in 2014-2015 and 5,178 in 2015-2016.
- However, this still represents a small number of students studying in Mexico as compared to 39,140 students who studied in the United Kingdom in 2015-2016.



## Survey Results

To create the report, 69 institutions were surveyed on their policies for Mexico travel.

- 94% of institutions allow travel to Mexico, either without restriction or on a case-by-case basis.
- When advance review/approval for Mexico travel is required, this is most often performed by an international risk assessment committee.
- Institutions wield less influence over employee travel to Mexico; at 51% of responding institutions, there are no restrictions at all.





## Recommendations

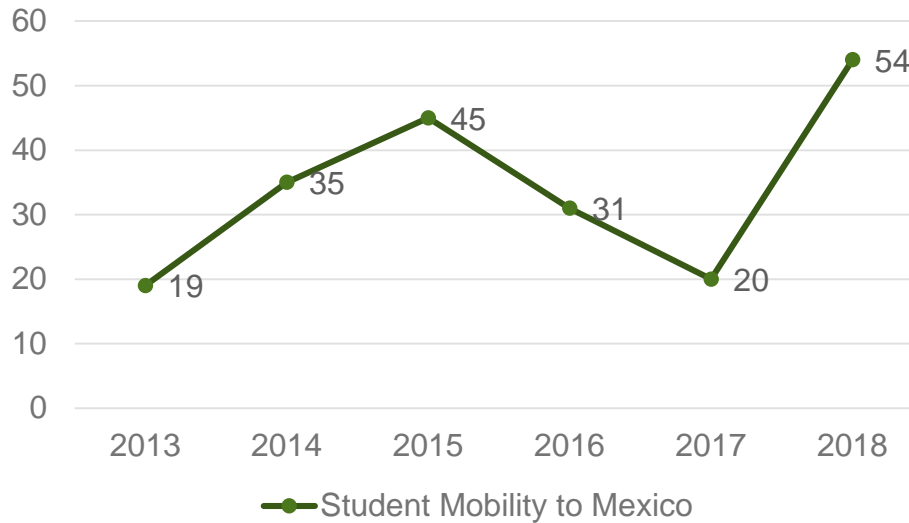
MAMAC recommends improved communication, knowledge-sharing and implementation of best practices to ensure that the vast potential that lies in collaboration is reached.

- Read the travel warning carefully; it is very specific to certain regions.
- Prepare and educate travelers with region-specific information, links to useful websites, explanation of insurance coverage and behavioral expectations.
- Work closely with counterparts at Mexican institutions to determine the necessary level of support for students travelling to Mexico.



# University of Arizona Student Mobility to Mexico

## Student Mobility to Mexico



# University of Arizona

## Vivir en Mexico Study Abroad Program

- Five-week, faculty-led program that familiarizes undergraduate students with the history, culture and heritage throughout Mexico City, Puebla and Guanajuato.
- Diversifies the demographic makeup of students sent abroad, with 92% classified as minority student participants.
- Sends an average of 30 students per summer and costs \$2,800 per student.



**University of Arizona  
National Autonomous University of Mexico  
Center for Mexican Studies - Tucson Office**

UNAM –Tucson Key Objectives:

- To deepen and expand the development of joint research projects on social and natural sciences, engineering, humanities and other fields.
- To develop and enhance student and faculty mobility programs.
- To conduct in partnership with UA, activities related to teaching Spanish and Spanish certification.



# University of Arizona/ITESM Little Wings Program

- A Study Arizona: Short-Term Programs/UA Study Abroad Program that connects students from Tecnológico de Monterrey in Hermosillo (ITESM-Sonora Norte) with students from the UA Bluechip Leadership Experience, a program that encourages leadership outside the classroom.
- Students worked together remotely for a week to develop the “Little Wings” platform to encourage children near Hermosillo to finish school with the use of activities, games and creative events.
- 13 students and 10 volunteers implemented the project in Hermosillo during spring break 2018.



# Instituto Politécnico Nacional

## Mobility and the “Buddy Program”

- IPN has 83 academic units distributed across 23 states.
- Approximately 110,000 students are enrolled in our 264 undergraduate and graduate programs.
- Of which only 149 (0.14%), on average from 2016-2018, have been international mobility students.
- Only 33 of those 149 have come from outside of the Americas, none of them from the U.S. or Canada.



## Instituto Politécnico Nacional Mobility and the “Buddy Program”

- Identified causes for this include the small amount of courses taught in English, a lack of international projection of IPN’s academic offer, and the perceived sense of insecurity associated with living in Mexico.
- In spite of this, international mobility is rising, especially in the case of incoming students hailing from Europe.



## **Instituto Politécnico Nacional Mobility and the “Buddy Program”**

- This is greatly thanks to the “Buddy Program” established in 2017.
- Buddies provide orientation to incoming students on arriving at, setting up in and adjusting to Mexico City, as well as help them with adjusting to campus life at their selected Academic Unit.





# Instituto Politécnico Nacional Mobility and the “Buddy Program”



## Instituto Politécnico Nacional Mobility and the “Buddy Program”

- Buddies are required to take an introduction course, and their participation is voluntary.
- The first generation program (Fall 2017) saw a total of 50 volunteers, the current generation is made up of 78 volunteers.



# Wayne State University – University of Guadalajara Exchange Program

- Part of the Office of the University's Internationalization strategy – increasing student mobility
- Focus on North America (NAFTA)
- Affordable and short term alternatives to support the needs and interests of our students



# Wayne State University - University of Guadalajara Exchange

- PEPE Spanish Language program
  - Started in 2015 – one direction
  - Summer language/culture program
  - 10-12 students/year
  - Became exchange in 2017
    - Up to 10 WSU students participate in PEPE program = up to 5 UG students spend a semester at WSU
  - Looking at expanding partnership beyond exchange



## **University of Alberta Ales Mexico Tour**

Partnering with the University of Guadalajara, the tour delivers an annual education abroad/field trip on agri-food trade, nutrition and agricultural resource management exploring issues of food culture, consumption trends, nutritional security, agricultural and land conservation practices, as well as market access and trade between Canada and Mexico.



## Group Discussion of Best Practices

How do your institutions deal with these suggested best practices?

1. All faculty traveling with students should complete relevant health and safety preparation, planning, and mitigation annually.
2. Consider arrangements and logistics for travel outside the official itinerary. In some cases, potential restrictions on such travel may be warranted.
3. Work closely with counterparts to determine the necessary level of on-the-ground support needed.



## Next Steps

MAMAC will continue to examine, publicize and expand upon best practices while attempting to address perceived challenges to ensure the vast potential that lies in collaborating with Mexico is reached.



## Additional Resources

- University of Texas at Austin's "A Roadmap to (Re)Engaging with Mexico" Report:  
<https://world.utexas.edu/abroad/explore/initiatives/mexico-roadmap>
- "U.S.-Mexico Higher Education Engagement: Current Activities, Future Directions" Report: <http://www.acenet.edu/news-room/Documents/US-Mexico-Higher-Education-Engagement.pdf>





**Questions?**





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