

**UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE BAJA CALIFORNIA
FACULTAD DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y POLÍTICAS
MAESTRÍA EN ADMINISTRACIÓN PÚBLICA**



**Tesis para obtener el grado de
Maestro en Administración Pública:**

**An evaluation of the joint Master's Program between
two border Universities: SDSU and UABC**

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Mexicali, B. C. Abril de 2006

MEXICALI, B. C., ABRIL DE 2006

**AN EVALUATION OF THE JOINT MASTER'S PROGRAM OFFERED
BY TWO BORDER UNIVERSITIES: SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY
AND UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE BAJA CALIFORNIA**

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
San Diego State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies:
Transborder Public Administration and Governance

by

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Spring 2006

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

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DEDICATION

A mis padres Ana y Rodolfo.

Para usted, Maye, mi pilar de fortaleza y ejemplo a seguir, y para usted, Padre, mi inspiración siempre presente. A mis hermanos José Luis, Héctor y Rodolfo; sé que cuento con su apoyo incondicional desde donde se encuentren.

Our shared border is not a threat. It is an opportunity for mutual development.

–Eugenio Elorduy Walther, Governor of Baja California

ABSTRACT OF THE PROJECT

An Evaluation of the Joint Master's Program Offered by
Two Border Universities: San Diego State University and
Universidad Autónoma de Baja California

by

Bertha Hernández

Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies:
Transborder Public Administration and Governance
San Diego State University, 2006

The U.S.-Mexican border region is not only an area in which complex situations emerge—especially critical in recent times with the increased security measures and the immigration debate—but it is also an area that provides great opportunities for addressing these matters in collaborative ways that extend across the border. In order to deal with these complexities and opportunities, though, there is a need for better prepared individuals at all government levels as well as in the private and not-for-profit sectors. Ideally, these individuals will have greater knowledge and appreciation of the border region and will be able to function effectively on both sides of the border.

Toward these efforts, San Diego State University (SDSU) and the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC) (Autonomous University of Baja California) were funded to develop and implement a joint Master's Degree in Transborder Public Administration and Governance. In sum, the program seeks to contribute to the sustainable development of the border region by way of forming its future leaders in the areas of public administration and governance. Both universities expect that the degree will become self-sustaining. This program was approved by the authorities of both universities and the first course got under way in November 2003. The intent of this thesis project, then, is to provide an overall evaluation of this first-ever program, from its development to its implementation. It will also provide observations on its effectiveness as well as recommendations for improvement.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My participation in this innovative and challenging program was indeed gratifying. I was not only a student seeking a graduate degree, but also a participant observer as a member of the SDSU administrative team. As such, when required, I was able to provide input to the team from the students' perspectives and input to the students from the administrators' perspectives. It has been a privilege, then, to be a member of the first generation of *fronterizos* that earns a joint master's degree offered by SDSU and UABC. Special thanks are due to my family for their patience and unwavering support. Many individuals helped to make this learning experience a memorable one, including my fellow students and new friends. I thank my professors from both universities for sharing their knowledge and transborder perspectives. My sincere gratitude to my committee members for their guidance: doctors Lou Rea, Glen Sparrow, and Patricia Moctezuma. Finally, I especially want to thank Dr. Paul Ganster who encouraged me to participate in this program. During those moments when everything was just too difficult, he was there to offer his unconditional support, understanding, and motivation, and for that I will be forever grateful.

INTRODUCTION

Through the years, the United States and Mexico have established many agreements that range from the protection of the environment to the fight against crime. There are also agreements in the field of education, but not many long-term plans in higher education have actually been implemented. At the level of higher education, the relationship is highly asymmetrical. The movement of students seeking undergraduate or graduate international experiences is generally from Mexico to the United States. Although there are exchanges for graduate degrees, there are really no *joint* programs between institutions of higher education of both countries. There are efforts under way, though, to change this one-way movement of students.

In 1997, Ganster predicted that “Higher education will play a key role in shaping a sustainable future for the border. Colleges and universities will train the leaders who will manage the region in the future. The next generation of border leaders will need the skills to enable them to function in two different systems, cultures, and languages. Border institutions will be challenged to fulfill this obligation.” As of December 2002, one effort that addresses this challenge in the areas of public administration and governance has been undertaken jointly by California’s San Diego State University (SDSU) and Baja California’s Autonomous University of Baja California (Universidad Autónoma de Baja California–UABC). Aware of this need for border leaders that are prepared to fully function at the local, state, and federal administration and governance arenas within a transborder context, SDSU and UABC developed and implemented a joint master’s degree. This joint venture—which was funded by the Training, Internships, Exchanges, and Scholarships (TIES) initiative developed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for the Partnership for Prosperity plan—is now nearing completion of studies for the first group of students. This report, then, will present an evaluation of this graduate program offered jointly by a United States border university (SDSU) and a Mexican border university (UABC).

Due to the uniqueness of this program and its applicability to other border regions of the world, this thesis project will provide an evaluation of the program and first generation of

graduates. A literature review will also be presented. As part of the research methodology, one survey each was developed for students and instructors (see Appendices A and B). First-hand observations, participation as a student and member of the SDSU administrative team, conversations with students and instructors, and the survey results helped develop recommendations for the program. They also serve as the bases for developing a handbook for faculty (Appendix C) and a handbook for students (Appendix D). The final two sections of this work include the reference list and the appendices.

The border region is growing at a very rapid rate and faces many problems that accompany this growth. It is therefore important that its leaders become knowledgeable and sensitive to the issues that will impact both sides of the border. It is imperative, then, to start planning now for the future of the region. This means preparing individuals who will become the leaders in the medium and longer term. In order for them to participate in the ever-increasing competitive workforce, they must be able to function on both sides of the border. This program is designed to create such a group of professionals who are bilingual and will have knowledge of the economic, political, social, cultural, and governmental structures and issues of both the United States and Mexico. Ideally, this group will be committed to establishing, maintaining, and improving working relationships and networking opportunities between counterparts not only in Baja California and California, but in the rest of both countries as well.

The area of public administration and governance is extremely important in a region that is becoming increasingly integrated. Many leaders from California and Baja California have realized that actions taken on one side of the border can have both positive and negative effects on the other side. Many are aware that they lack skills and knowledge in dealing with their counterparts from the other side. Thus, it is now crucial to shape the future generations of local and regional leaders with “transborder” experiences that will enable them to make decisions that will improve the quality of life of border residents.

Although Mexico and the United States have had in place since 1981 the U.S.-Mexico Binational Commission—the main mechanism for their cooperation and “cabinet-level discussions” (United States Department of Education [USDE], 2003) on a wide array of issues—it was not until August 1990 that both countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Education (United States Department of State [USDS], 2003).

As a result, the U.S.-Mexico Binational Commission Education Working Group was formed. Spearheaded by the U.S. Department of Education and Mexico's Secretaría de Educación, this group helps facilitate cooperation between both countries on educational-related matters of mutual concern. In 2002, the accomplishments listed by the Education Working Group were in the areas of (1) migrant education; (2) bilingual education; (3) adult education; (4) English teacher exchanges; (5) English language acquisition; (6) civics education; (7) educational technology; (8) special education; (9) Hispanic outreach; and (10) higher education (USDS, 2003). The area of higher education, though, indicates "Cooperation (involving Canada also) continues to promote student and faculty exchange, joint curriculum development, and information exchange" (USDS, 2003). It also specifies that this cooperation was mainly through U.S. teachers, students, and faculty participating in research and training projects under the Fulbright-Hays program. There is no specific information on whether graduate or joint degrees are part of the accomplishments of the Education Working Group.

Every two years a new annex is signed, signifying that the MOU is renewed. Annex VIII was signed in November 2004 and, in addition to the aforementioned areas, included new or modified areas of focus: (1) vocational (and adult) education; (2) language acquisition; (3) teacher exchange options; (4) visas for educational and cultural visits; and (5) development of bicultural study programs (USDE, 2004). Again, there is no mention of joint graduate programs.

Worldwide, most universities, if not all, have established student programs with other universities within their state, country, and abroad. These programs include cooperative and exchange agreements; short-term research visits; language immersion programs; and dual, joint, and concurrent degrees, among others. Participating students are able to gain invaluable experiences that will benefit their personal and professional growth.

In the United States, joint degrees are offered within the same state and with other states, but rarely with other countries. Many of these joint degrees are at the doctoral level. For example, SDSU has joint doctoral programs in several disciplines with the University of California at San Diego (UCSD), Claremont Graduate University, and the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB), but none with another country (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2005). SDSU also has a dual degree program called

Mexus with the Centro de Enseñanza Técnica y Superior (CETYS) University and UABC in the state of Baja California, but at the undergraduate level. For its part, UABC has collaborative exchange agreements with foreign institutions in Spain, Japan, the United States, and other European countries (Piñera Ramírez, 1997). However, there are no joint *master's* degrees, such as the one offered by SDSU and UABC, which is jointly implemented by the two universities with classes meeting interchangeably on both universities' campuses. In addition, it is unlikely that other joint programs are taught by one professor each from two universities as is the case of the SDSU-UABC transborder program. These factors, then, contribute to the distinctiveness of this joint master's degree.

**THE U.S.-MEXICO TRAINING, INTERNSHIPS,
EXCHANGES, AND SCHOLARSHIPS (TIES)
PROGRAM**

The U.S.-Mexico Training, Internships, Exchanges, and Scholarships (TIES) Initiative was launched by presidents Vicente Fox and George Bush in September 2001 under their Partnership for Prosperity plan (USEMC, 2004). According to U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Tony Garza (United States Embassy, Mexico City [USEMC], 2004), Mexico and the United States are faced with issues that call for sustained cooperation and this can be achieved with the help of institutions of higher education and through the TIES partnership. This program was proposed to assist in carrying out the objectives of NAFTA and universities could certainly be the implementing tools (Association Liaison Office for University Cooperation in Development and United States Agency for International Development [ALO/USAID], 2004). Its funding represents an eight-year US\$50 million public-private alliance “designed to spur social and economic growth in Mexico by supporting higher education institutional strengthening via university linkages and scholarship programs” (USEMC, 2005a, 2005b). Of the total investment, US\$35 million is provided by the U.S. government and US\$15 million is from collaborating partners (USEMC, 2004).

After responding to a request for proposal from USAID, SDSU and UABC were selected to participate in the TIES program. In response to the proposal’s “statement of development problem to be addressed,” SDSU and UABC indicated that “the central development problem to be addressed through this program is: How to improve delivery of services to border communities by government agencies in order to enhance quality of life of all residents and to promote sustainable development” (Ganster & Torres-Moye, n.d.).

THE SDSU-UABC PARTNERSHIP

SDSU and UABC have had longstanding collaborative relationships between and among a number of its schools and departments. Discussions about a joint graduate degree have existed for many years and the two universities have already implemented an undergraduate dual degree program. The TIES program provided the opportunity for both universities to participate in yet another collaborative effort: developing and implementing a joint graduate degree. So, in response to the increasing need for prepared individuals in the border region in the field of public administration and governance, faculty from both universities developed the very first graduate program offered *jointly* by two border universities: one located on the U.S. side and the other located on the Mexican side. SDSU President Stephen Weber and UABC's Rector Alejandro Mungaray officially inaugurated this Joint Master in Interdisciplinary Studies: Transborder Public Administration and Governance program on November 7, 2003. That same day, the first cohort of students began classes in this first-of-its-kind graduate degree program.

SDSU and UABC have had to accommodate the new program to the two different academic structures of SDSU and UABC. Both have proven, though, that the challenges presented by this joint venture can be overcome with hard work and dedication. UABC and SDSU now share the important responsibility of making sure that this degree is a permanent and successful part of their curriculum. They must also now make sure that this joint effort translates into real and long-term practical programs that will benefit the public administration and governance of both states.

In addition to the initiative taken by both universities, the advisory boards—made up of leaders from both sides of the border and formed especially for this program—were extremely supportive. Most importantly, though, the program would not have been possible without the startup funding by the USAID/ALO/TIES Program. It was through this financial support and vision that this program was able to take off. It is expected, however, that the program will become self-sustaining.

Several institutions were instrumental to the development and implementation of the program. Figure 1 provides an overview of the structure of the master's program.

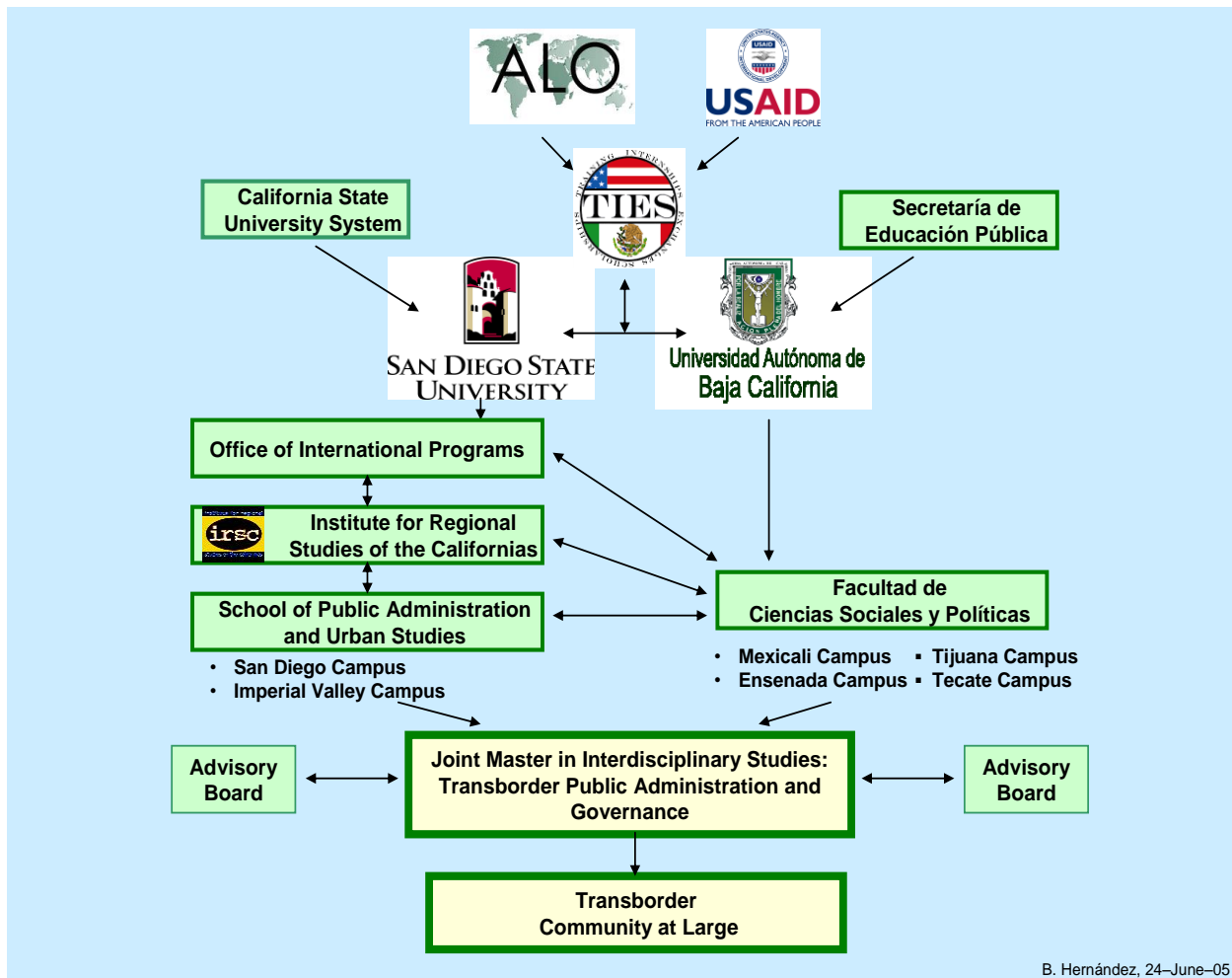


Figure 1. Basic structure of the master's degree.

SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

In the State of California, SDSU is the fifth largest public university with a four-year or above study plan (see Table 1; National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2005). It is the oldest and largest in the San Diego region; it is also one of the largest in the western United States (SDSU, 2005). Among the degrees offered are bachelor's in 81 areas, master's in 72, and research doctorates in 14. SDSU emphasizes its geographic location, bordering Mexico and the Pacific Rim, which along with its "diverse regional population, help make the area a dynamic international hub" (SDSU, 2005).

Table 1. Four-Year or Above Public Universities in California – Top Ten

No.	Institution	Student Population
1	University of California-Los Angeles	35,966
2	California State University-Long Beach	33,479
3	University of California-Berkeley	32,803
4	California State University-Fullerton	32,744
5	San Diego State University	32,043
6	California State University-Northridge	31,341
7	University of California-Davis	29,210
8	San Jose State University	29,044
9	San Francisco State University	28,804
10	California State University-Sacramento	27,972

Source: Adapted from NCES 2005.

The characteristics that SDSU possesses make it a logical institution of higher education to take on this challenging joint master's degree. It has a long history of collaborative education with Mexican border and regional institutions. From the early 1980s, SDSU had faculty exchange agreements with UABC and other Mexican universities that included graduate programs for Mexican faculty. In 1994, SDSU, UABC, and CETYS University established the Mexus program, an undergraduate dual degree program in international business. SDSU also has in place the nation's first transnational triple undergraduate degree program shared with Canada and Mexico. SDSU's administrative leadership supports diversity and internationalization. Interactions with UABC and other counterpart institutions in the state of Baja California support both these goals.

UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE BAJA CALIFORNIA

The Autonomous University of Baja California was founded in 1957, making it the oldest institution of higher education in the state of Baja California. In 2003, it was also the state's institution of higher education with the largest student population (Table 2). It has four campuses: Mexicali, Tijuana, Tecate, and Ensenada. UABC has five schools, 23 departments and seven institutes (UABC, 2005). In 2003, its student population pursuing bachelor's degrees was 24,408; those pursuing graduate studies numbered 589 (Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior [ANUIES], 2003a, 2003b).

Table 2. Baja California Institutions of Higher Education – Top Ten

No.	Institution	Student Population
1	Universidad Autónoma de Baja California	24,997
2	Instituto Tecnológico de Tijuana	5,088
3	Instituto Tecnológico de Mexicali	3,153
4	Centro de Enseñanza Técnica y Superior (Private) ^a	2,050
5	Universidad de Tijuana (Private)	1,695
6	Tecnológico de Baja California ^a	1,593
7	Instituto Tecnológico de Ensenada	792
8	Universidad Iberoamericana – Tijuana (Private)	732
9	Universidad Estatal de Estudios Pedagógicos de Mexicali (Private) ^b	417
10	Centro de Investigación Científica y Educación Superior de Ensenada ^b	360

Source: Adapted from ANUIES 2003a, 2003b.

^aCity not specified.

^bIdentified as a graduate institution.

UABC is an important player in the social and economic development of the state. It also continuous to develop international ties in an effort to provide its students with quality education that includes diverse experiences. It is one of the Latin American universities closest to the United States, and this facilitates UABC establishing alternatives to help improve the quality of its international content (Piñera Ramírez, 1997).

THE JOINT MASTER'S PROGRAM

The 10-course program content was developed by a group of UABC and SDSU faculty, with input from community leaders from both sides of the border. The group initially participated in a two-day retreat to design the specific courses, draft schedules, discuss administrative issues, and address other related matters. The program also had to be approved by both universities, especially since the educational systems are different.

In Mexico, the higher education system is highly centralized. Although autonomous, universities such as UABC and other educational institutions have requested that there be a federal decentralization of authority and resources to states and regions (Moctezuma, 2004). In the United States, the U.S. Department of Education does not need to be involved. Instead, State of California law gives more leeway to higher education, including the California State University (CSU) system, of which SDSU is part. SDSU's procedures for creating new graduate programs, then, fall within CSU requirements. After passing through Department and College committees, SDSU's Graduate Council unanimously approved the program, which it considered "in line with the university initiative to offer more cross-cultural, international programs" (SDSU, 2003). Once approval was achieved, the final program was established at both universities.

The joint program met several challenges before it could be included within both universities' graduate degrees. In order to fully take advantage of the USAID start-up funding and to not lose momentum, the program was able to initially offer a "Certificate in Transborder Studies." As the certificate phase was being implemented, the approval process for the joint degree was moving forward at both UABC and SDSU. This certificate, therefore, was a one-time offering. Future qualified students will be admitted directly into the master's program.

With regard to the matriculation costs that students would pay, the SDSU-UABC transborder program committee resolved this issue: Mexican students would enroll at UABC and pay regular fees there and U.S. students would enroll at SDSU through the College of Extended Studies and pay fees there. The cost at UABC was about US\$3,500 for the

program; the cost at SDSU was US\$1050 per course or US\$10,500 for the program. The start-up funding provided full scholarships for the Mexican students. The Office of International Programs and the School of Public Administration and Urban Studies were able to provide partial scholarships to qualified U.S. students that applied. Also, some U.S. students' employers were able to cover partial or full costs.

Another issue that emerged was the pay that faculty would receive. The solution that the program committee arrived at was that faculty members would be paid according to the rates of their respective institution.

The certificate consisted of six courses that became part of the master's degree. Completion of four additional courses allowed the student to earn the master's. In addition, students were required to register in a thesis course for three more units, making the master's degree a 33-unit program. The 10 courses—specifically developed for the master's degree (see Table 3 on page 13)—were taught on Friday-Saturday pairs for eight hours each day, with a two-week break. The total hours per course were 48. Classes were held on either side of the border at UABC's campuses (Mexicali, Tijuana, Tecate, Ensenada) and SDSU's campuses (San Diego, Calexico) (see "Locations" in Table 3). Part of the student group, then, had to travel to the class site. Oftentimes, they opted to arrive the night before. It became customary that each Friday evening, the students would get together to discuss class, share dinner, and even join in celebrations. Sometimes the instructors would also join in. The students have also established a strong network and frequently consult with each other on matters other than the master's program. For example, some have found new jobs or have made new professional contacts as a result of networking among the group. After more than two years of studying, networking, and socializing together, then, this group of students has become highly integrated.

Each of the 10 courses is bilingual—taught in both Spanish and English—and provides a comparative view of the issues covered. Most courses included field trips that help illustrate the topics that are being discussed in the classroom. In addition, the students are able to learn from the guest speakers—experts and leaders in their fields—who contribute their time and effort. The discussions were substantive and provided the binational perspectives needed for students to arrive at more informed opinions. Each course also

covers historical, cultural, and contemporary perspectives in its content. A brief description of the courses follows (SDSU-UABC, 2005):

1. Introductory Seminar in Transborder Public Administration and Governance. This course introduces the student to binational borders, focusing on the U.S.-Mexican border region. It provides a description of the governance structures of both Mexico and the United States and how they function. Students learn about the history, governance, economy, culture, and political structure of both nations.
2. Seminar in Comparative Federalism. The federal systems of both countries are described, as well as how they have evolved through history to present times. The course presents the evolution of federalism in both nations from a political and administrative perspective.
3. Seminar in Comparative Fiscal Structures: Mexico and the United States. Students learn about the fiscal organization and structure of both nations through a comparative analysis. They also learn to identify the sources of public income and expenditures and other fiscal-related topics.
4. Seminar in Transnational Criminal Justice in Mexico and the United States. This course introduces the student to the criminal justice systems of both nations. They learn about the history, structure, and function of these systems. In addition they analyze the similarities and differences. Special emphasis is placed on transnational crime and response to crime in the border region.
5. Seminar in Environmental Administration and Management in the Transborder Region. Students are introduced to the structure and function of environmental administration in the border region. Also covered are significant environmental topics including natural resources, biodiversity, sustainable development, water quality and quantity, air quality, and protected areas.
6. Practicum Border Research. From the beginning of the program, students are expected to carry out research pertaining to an issue of significance to the border region. Students develop and improve their research, teamwork, and presentation skills through the practicum. This research is carried out by binational teams. Each team is to critically analyze policies; identify binational sources of information; develop a PowerPoint presentation of their findings; and organize the presentation at a local venue and invite the local community that includes stakeholders, decision makers, and other interested parties. This practicum serves as the basis for the final thesis project.
7. Seminar in Comparative Urban Planning: Mexico and the United States. Students learn about and analyze urban planning and design practices followed in both nations. They are also introduced to the historical, constitutional, cultural, and political aspects of planning in both Mexico and the United States. Field trips and guest speakers also help students to understand urban planning.
8. Seminar in Data Sources and Policy Analysis for the U.S./Mexico Border. This course introduces the student to several data sources and methodologies that help them research and analyze their border-related issue.

9. Seminar in Organizational Theory: Comparative Application. Traditional and contemporary theories of public organizations are introduced in this course, with emphasis on those organizations that promote transborder relationships. Students also learn to analyze the makeup of organizations and their role in the border region.
10. Seminar in Special Topics in the Border Region. The last course of the program focuses on advising and guiding students as they prepare their thesis project. It also includes discussion and guest speakers on other relevant border-related issues that might not have been covered in the other courses. Students prepare their thesis projects to comply with the requirements from both universities in order to obtain their master's degree.
11. Interdisciplinary Studies: Thesis or Project. All students were required to register for INT S 799A in order to complete their master's degree thesis or project.

Table 3. First Joint Certificate-Master's Program

Course	Instructors	Fri/Sat Dates	Locations
1. Introductory Seminar in Transborder Public Administration and Governance	Glen Sparrow, SDSU José María Ramos, UABC	Nov 7–8, 2003 Nov. 21–22 Dec. 12–13	SDSU-San Diego UABC-Tijuana UABC-Mexicali
2. Seminar in Comparative Federalism: Mexico and the United States	Susan Baer, SDSU Tonatiuh Guillén, UABC	Jan 9–10, 2004 Jan 30–31 Feb 20–21	SDSU-San Diego UABC-Tijuana SDSU-San Diego
3. Seminal in Comparative Fiscal Structures: Mexico and the United Status	Richard Parker, SDSU Salvador Ramos G., UABC	March 5–6 March 26–27 April 16–17	SDSU-San Diego UABC-Mexicali SDSU-Calexico SDSU-San Diego UABC-Tijuana
4. Seminal in Transnational Criminal Justice in Mexico and the United Status	Dana Nurge, SDSU Marco Carrillo, UABC	April 30–May 1 May 21–22 June 11–12	UABC-Mexicali UABC-Tijuana SDSU-San Diego
5. Seminar in Environmental Administration and Management in the Transborder Region	Paul Ganster, SDSU Ileana Espejel, UABC	June 25–26 July 23–24 Aug 6–7	SDSU-San Diego UABC-Ensenada UABC-Tecate
6. Border Practicum	Breena Coates, SDSU Felipe Cuamea, UABC	Aug 20–21 Aug 27–28 Sept 10–11	SDSU-Calexico UABC-Mexicali SDSU-San Diego
7. Seminar in Comparative Urban Planning: Mexico and the United States	Nico Calavita, SDSU Carlos Graizbord, UABC	Jan 7–8, 2005 Jan 21–22 Feb 18–19	SDSU-San Diego UABC-Tijuana SDSU-San Diego
8. Seminar in Data Sources and Policy Analysis on the U.S./Mexico Border	Sherry Ryan, SDSU Felipe Cuamea, UABC	April 8–9 April 22–23 May 6–7	SDSU-San Diego UABC-Mexicali UABC-Tijuana
9. Seminar in Organization Theory: Comparative Application	Richard Ryan, SDSU Sheila Delhumeau, UABC	May 13–14 June 24–25 July 8–9	SDSU-Calexico SDSU-San Diego UABC-Tijuana
10. Seminar in Special Topics of the Border Region	Lou Rea, SDSU Patricia Moctezuma, UABC	Sept 23–24 Oct 7–8 Nov 3–5	UABC-Mexicali SDSU-San Diego UABC-Tijuana SDSU-San Diego
11. Thesis or Project	Lou Rea, SDSU	Spring 2006	SDSU-San Diego

The program started with 21 students: seven from the United States and 14 from Mexico. One U.S. student and two Mexican students withdrew after the second or third course. Two of the Mexican students completed the certificate phase of the program, but did not pursue the master's degree. The students pursuing the master's degree were 10 from Mexico (3 female; 7 male) and 6 from the United States (1 male; 5 females). Two males from Mexico were from Tijuana and the remaining eight students were from Mexicali. The U.S. students were all from the San Diego County region.

The undergraduate degrees of the students were from a wide array of disciplines. Students from the United States had majored in Communications/Intercultural Studies; International Business and Economics; Journalism and Mexican American Studies; Psychology; Biological Sciences, and Latino Studies. The students from Mexico had undergraduate degrees in, among other areas, Industrial Administration; Business Administration; International Business; and Economics. One U.S. student and one Mexican student had graduate degrees; one Mexican student had a Mexican doctor of law degree. The occupations of the students were just as varied. From the United States, there was a national forest district ranger and an administrator, an aide to a senator, a university administrator and a border research coordinator, and a nongovernmental organization (NGO) employee. From Mexico, there were three attorneys: one in private practice, one a university professor, and one employed by the Municipality of Mexicali. Four students worked for the Baja California state government: one in the Ministry of Foreign Relations, one in the Governor's public relations division, one for Congress, and one in the State Educational System. One student worked as a Mexicali councilmember and then in an NGO. Another student worked in the private sector for an electronics company. One student worked in the public affairs section of the U.S. Consulate. Each student, therefore, brought with him/her a diverse background into the transborder program.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most educational efforts in higher education between Mexico and the United States have been analyzed, researched, and discussed in relation to the North American Free Trade Agreement—a trade agreement among Mexico, the United States, and Canada—that was implemented in 1994. Much of NAFTA's education emphasis was on accountancy, engineering, and accepting the degrees in partner countries. It suddenly became important to have well-prepared individuals with technical expertise, especially in the cities located along the U.S.-Mexican border region where many of the *maquiladoras*¹ were established.

U.S. universities included *maquilas*² as part of their research agenda. Some U.S. and many Mexican higher education institutions responded with technical and trade-related training for technicians, managers, and other specific and related fields. So, many technological institutes in the region established courses geared to employees within the *maquiladora* sector, focusing on the technological field, especially as it refers to industry in the border region. Also, border universities found themselves in the need to respond to the impacts brought to the region by the *maquiladora* industry and NAFTA. To some extent, both the *maquila* sector and NAFTA influenced the efforts in research and education of the border institutions of education (Moctezuma, 2004), largely on the Mexican side of the U.S. border.

NAFTA increased interest in higher education. Many scholars, however, point out that collaboration in higher education would have taken place regardless of NAFTA (Clement & Sparrow, 1998). The many economic, political, and social changes, among other, that were occurring worldwide would have also brought the realization for the need to collaborate. The efforts to integrate higher education across borders would have eventually taken place with or without NAFTA.

¹ According to Clement, et al. (1989), these are companies in Mexico, generally foreign owned, that assemble imported components and/or transform them into a product that is then exported back to the country of origin (usually the United States).

² Short for *maquiladora*.

According to Stoddard (2002), U.S. and Mexican colleges and universities developed cross-border exchange studies in the 1970s. These were mainly in the fields of history and culture. Most of the educational issues of mutual concern to Mexico and the United States were at the elementary and secondary levels. It can be said that, in addition to the environment, the topic of higher education in a transborder context gained focus with the advent of NAFTA.

Ibarra (2002) provides an analysis of the trends in Mexico's higher education and the transformations that universities have undergone in the era of globalization. Information technologies have all but eliminated geographical boundaries and concerns for time, since one is now able to access all types of information and even participate in online courses via the Internet, for example. The ongoing transformations worldwide are almost forcing universities to take the forefront in meeting the demands in order for Mexico to compete in the world's economic race. Ibarra (2002) also mentions free trade agreements; in this respect, he makes reference to the training of academicians in multidisciplinary areas so that the "national academic market" expands "as a result of free trade agreements encouraged by the government in the international setting" (p. 9).

NAFTA is again credited with serving as a type of catalyst for discussions in the areas of higher education, especially establishing collaborative programs with Canada and Mexico (Marmolejo, 2001). Konrad (1995) also concurred that NAFTA played an indirect role in higher education, not only of Mexico but of Canada and the United States. Although a trade agreement, the economic implications were many and required prepared and highly skilled people. Not only will the economies become integrated, but the partners must realize that "business relationships depend on mutual understanding and extensive integration of higher education approaches to promote more shared knowledge, coordinated skills and competitive outlooks" (Konrad, 1995, p. 354). Konrad (1995) also discusses the disparities that exist among the NAFTA partners' higher education as well as concerns of Mexico and Canada of the United States potential dominion, since it has the world's most reputable academic system. However, he also presents some positive steps by way of education exchanges, agreements, and incentives; he is the only source found that makes specific mention of educational exchanges—although not joint degree programs—that are specifically located in the border states of not only Mexico but also Canada (Konrad, 1995).

The states of Baja California and California have established close relationships in many areas, including the economy. The distance from the production centers in Mexico also contribute to Baja California's close association with its neighbor to the north (Moctezuma, 2004). With time, the California-Baja California region has become a manufacturing zone for the world market and this translates to important regional and binational impacts. These economic activities have contributed to industrial growth and demand for professional services, hence the need for better prepared individuals at the higher education level.

For his part, Mungaray (2004) touches upon the changes that are imperative for the Autonomous University of Baja California in order to meet the challenges of the contemporary world as well as meet the needs of its community. The social environment that surrounds higher education is highly important. Mungaray also states that knowledge has surpassed financial capital and natural resources as the main sources that generate wealth. He emphasizes that decentralization and greater autonomy are necessary so that the university makes timely decisions that will benefit its students, faculty, and staff. Although he does not specifically discuss any type of collaborative program with its neighbor to the north (SDSU), he briefly touches upon interinstitutional collaboration at the national and international level. Mungaray (2004) makes it clear that these types of collaborations are important in order for the students to become not only citizens of Mexico, but "citizens of the world."

According to Knight (2005), demand for higher education surpasses the ability of some countries to meet their students' needs. As a result, many students pursue their professional studies in a foreign land. A report cited by Knight predicts that by the year 2025, the number of students that will demand international education will reach 7.2 million, compared to 1.8 million in 2000. In addition, this situation has triggered the development of higher education providers, which are finding innovative ways to respond to the demands of higher education. These providers—such as Laureate Education (former Sylvan Learning Systems), Phoenix University, London School of Economics, Harvard, among others—are reaching out by using a wide range of modes to deliver courses across the globe. As Knight indicates, "it is no longer students who are moving across borders. The world has now entered a new era of cross-border education" (2005). However, some of these internet providers are not recognized, are dishonest, and are in it for commercial interests.

Nonetheless, there are many other providers that focus on quality education. Among these are the two main universities involved in this joint master's program.

Just as there are many common challenges presented by this program, so are there many benefits and areas of opportunity that come from a transnational higher education program. These benefits can include domestic capacity building, shared resources, broader student choice, minimal outflow of resources, reduced brain drain, and enhanced innovation and competitiveness (Verbik & Jokivirta, 2005).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In addition to the library and internet research and academic literature reviewed, the program proposal to the funding agency was also reviewed. The program files were also made available, so there was access to documents that described from the first partner meetings to the development of each course proposal.

An important tool for the research component was a survey that was developed to get the students' opinion on their experiences as participants in this first program (See Appendix A). Questions ranged from how they found out about the program to their most difficult situation while in the program. They were also asked to evaluate each of the courses. A similar survey was applied to the instructors (See Appendix B). They were asked about both their positive and negative experiences, as well as their recommendations for future courses. The main purpose of these surveys is to learn what was done right and what can be improved.

Also important were the many conversations and discussions that were shared with both students and instructors during the course of the program. Many Friday afternoons—which became the students' main time to bond and socialize with each other—were spent not only discussing the course in progress, but the transborder experience in general. Oftentimes, the instructors would join the students in these informal gatherings. The evaluation of this first program, then, would not have been possible without the input from both students and instructors.

A total of 17 students were sent surveys. Students that only completed the certificate component were also included, since they completed more than half the program. A total of 19 surveys were sent out to the instructors; the number is not an even 20 because one Mexican professor was the assigned instructor for two courses. Once the surveys were returned, the results were computed using the SPSS program.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Of the 17 surveys sent to students, 11 were returned: six (three male; three females) were from students registered through UABC and five (one male; four females) from those registered through SDSU (Tables 4 and 5). Students were asked a series of quantitative questions, as well as one qualitative (open-ended) question and additional comments about their experiences. They were also asked 12 quantitative questions and three qualitative (open-ended) questions about each instructor (one from UABC, one from SDSU) for nine of the 10 courses. The tenth course was the thesis project, so students were asked five quantitative questions and any comments about their program advisors (one each from UABC and SDSU). Finally, students were asked five quantitative questions and any comments about the program coordinators (two each from UABC and SDSU). The eleventh course was added after the survey was applied, but upon review, it would not have affected the results.

Table 4. Gender of Transborder Students

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	7	63.6
Male	4	36.4
Total	11	100.0

Table 5. University Registration

University	Frequency	Percent
UABC	6	54.5
SDSU	5	45.5
Total	11	100.0

The instructors' response was slightly better. Fourteen of the 19 instructors returned their surveys: five females (three from SDSU and two from UABC) and nine males (five from SDSU and four from UABC) (Table 6). They were asked nine quantitative questions. The tenth was a qualitative question that asked them to provide recommendations for improving the program.

Table 6. Gender of Program Instructors

Response	Frequency	Percent
Female	5	35.7
Male	9	64.3
Total	14	100.0

The following section provides the results for the rest of the survey questions that were asked of both the students and instructors.

STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

Students were asked how they found out about the program and their one most important motivation for applying to it. As Table 7 shows, most of them learned about the program by word of mouth. Their motivation was about evenly divided among professional growth, personal growth, and interest (Table 8). Although asked to select only one option, one student indicated both personal and professional growth.

Table 7. How Students Found Out About Program

Response	Frequency	Percent
Newspaper ad	1	9.1
University website	1	9.1
Flyer/brochure	1	9.1
Word of mouth (friend, professor, etc.)	8	72.7
Total	11	100.0

Table 8. Motivation for Applying to Program

Response	Frequency	Percent
Professional growth	4	36.4
Personal growth	4	36.4
Interest in program	3	27.3
Total	11	100.0

Most students found the program challenging. About one-fourth found it somewhat challenging, but none found that it was not challenging (Table 9).

Three questions related to the impact of the program on the students' immediate plans after graduating, the impact (if any) on their current employment status, and their involvement with improving the border region (Tables 10–12).

Table 9. Overall Challenge Presented by Program

Response	Frequency	Percent
Challenging	8	72.7
Somewhat challenging	3	27.3
Total	11	100.0

Table 10. Immediate Plans upon Graduation

Response	Frequency	Percent
Public sector employment	7	63.6
Private sector employment	1	9.1
Other: (1) Academic field (2) Learn 3 rd language and eventually work for public sector (3) continue at present job	3	27.3
Total	11	100.0

Table 11. Impact of Program on Current Job

Response	Frequency	Percent
No impact; will remain the same	3	27.3
Same employer, but with promotion	1	9.1
Will look for new job	5	45.5
Have been offered new job	1	9.1
Other: program helped to better understand border issues and that facilitated job	1	9.1
Total	11	100.0

Table 12. How Program Will Help Student Contribute to Improvement of Border Region

Response	Frequency	Percent
Through work-related activities	7	63.6
By participating in border-related organizations	.33	3.0
Becoming involved in local politics	2.33	21.2
Attending public forums on border-related issues and voicing opinions that impact policy making	1.33	12.1
Total	11	100.0

In Table 12, several students selected more than one answer. These answers were divided to equal one. For example, if a student chose “through work related activities” and

“becoming involved in local politics,” then each answer was assigned a value of .5 to equal one whole number.

One question focused on issues with which the students had difficulties (Table 13, p. 24). They were asked to rank the identified issues as (1) difficult, (2) somewhat difficult, and (3) not difficult. Answers on all the issues were quite varied.

Students were also asked to rank how positive they found a series of identified experiences (Table 14, p. 25). They were asked to rank these as (1) positive, (2) somewhat positive, and (3) not positive. Most students considered their experiences as somewhat positive or positive.

Since the program involved a considerable amount of travel time to the different UABC and SDSU campuses, the survey asked students if this enhanced their learning experience (Table 15). The group considered that the travel indeed enhanced their learning experience, with nine definite yeses and two with some level of learning.

Table 15. Did travel to different campuses enhance learning experience?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Definitely yes	9	81.8
Somewhat	2	18.2
Total	11	100.0

Eight students surveyed considered their overall experience in being part of a binational group of students an excellent one, while three rated it as good (Table 16). The other two options were “fair” and “poor” and neither was selected by the students.

Table 16. Overall Experience in Forming Part of Binational Student Group

Response	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	8	72.7
Good	3	27.3
Total	11	100.0

Table 13. Student Experiences that Presented Difficulty Levels

Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Application Process at SDSU	Difficult	2	18.2
	Somewhat difficult	2	18.2
	Not difficult	6	54.5
	No response	1	9.1
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Application Process at UABC	Difficult	4	36.4
	Not difficult	6	54.5
	No response	1	9.1
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Spanish language instruction	Somewhat difficult	3	27.3
	Not difficult	8	72.7
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
English language instruction	Difficult	1	9.1
	Somewhat difficult	1	9.1
	Not difficult	9	81.8
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Communication (phone, email, etc.)	Somewhat difficult	6	54.5
	Not difficult	5	45.5
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Employer Support	Difficult	3	27.3
	Somewhat difficult	2	18.2
	Not difficult	5	45.5
	No response	1	9.1
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Cultural Differences	Difficult	3	27.3
	Somewhat difficult	2	18.2
	Not difficult	6	54.5
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Working as part of a team	Difficult	3	27.3
	Somewhat difficult	4	36.4
	Not difficult	4	36.4
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Travel-related	Somewhat difficult	5	45.5
	Not difficult	6	54.5
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Financial	Difficult	1	9.1
	Somewhat difficult	5	45.5
	Not difficult	5	45.5
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Friday-Saturday schedule; 8-hour day	Difficult	2	18.2
	Somewhat difficult	3	27.3
	Not difficult	6	54.5
	Total	11	100.0

Table 14. Student Experiences that Presented Positive Levels

Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Studying in another country	Positive	10	90.9
	Somewhat positive	1	9.1
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Having two instructors	Positive	7	63.6
	Somewhat positive	4	36.4
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
The make up of the program	Positive	8	72.7
	Somewhat positive	3	27.3
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Being part of a first-time-ever program	Positive	8	72.7
	Somewhat positive	2	18.2
	Not positive	1	9.1
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Scheduling	Positive	4	36.4
	Somewhat positive	5	45.5
	Not positive	2	18.2
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Friendships made	Positive	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Networking opportunities	Positive	8	72.7
	Somewhat positive	3	27.3
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Practicing other language	Positive	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Course field trips	Positive	9	81.8
	Somewhat positive	2	18.2
	Total	11	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Working in teams	Positive	7	63.6
	Somewhat positive	3	27.3
	Not positive	1	9.1
	Total	11	100.0

As far as the students' expectations being met, the answers were about evenly divided with five indicating "definitely yes" and six indicating "somewhat" (Table 17). None selected the option of "definitely not."

Most of the students surveyed would definitely recommend this transborder program to others (Table 18). Only one would "somewhat" recommend it. The option of "definitely not" was not selected.

Table 17. Student Expectations Met

Response	Frequency	Percent
Definitely yes	5	45.5
Somewhat	6	54.5
Total	11	100.0

Table 18. Would Student Recommend Program to Others?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Definitely yes	10	90.9
Somewhat	1	9.1
Total	11	100.0

Students were also asked to evaluate themselves on the amount of effort they invested in different components of the program (Table 19). The amount of effort invested in the courses in general was about evenly divided between “significant effort” and “maximum effort.” One student candidly indicated that his/her effort was just enough to get by. With regard to studying for exams, the majority thought their effort was significant. The effort put into class assignments was about evenly divided between “significant” and “maximum,” although two students did enough to get by. Class participation was considered by most (seven students) as a “significant effort” on their part, followed by a couple who thought theirs was a “maximum effort.” Another indicated “some effort” and one other indicated “enough effort to get by.”

In addition, students were asked to provide a percentage for the assignments they completed and for their level of attendance (Table 20). Only four students considered that they had completed 100 percent of their assignments, followed by five students who completed 75 percent and under 100 percent, and two students who completed 50 and under 75 percent. With regard to attendance, seven students thought their percentage was 75 and under 100 percent, while four indicated a 100 percent attendance.

Students were also asked to evaluate the instructors for the 10 courses. The same questions were asked for the SDSU instructor and for the UABC instructor (Table 21). They were asked to rate the instructors based on a scale of (1) strongly disagree; (2) disagree; (3) neither agree/disagree; (4) agree; and (5) strongly agree.

Table 19. Amount of Student Effort Invested in Program

Effort	Response	Frequency	Percent
Amount of effort you put into the course in general	Enough effort to get by (average/medium effort)	1	9.1
	Significant effort	5	45.5
	Maximum effort	5	45.5
	Total	11	100.0
Effort	Response	Frequency	Percent
Amount of effort you put into studying for exams	Enough effort to get by (average/medium effort)	2	18.2
	Significant effort	7	63.6
	Maximum effort	2	18.2
	Total	11	100.0
Effort	Response	Frequency	Percent
Amount of effort you put into class assignments	Enough effort to get by (average/medium effort)	2	18.2
	Significant effort	5	45.5
	Maximum effort	4	36.4
	Total	11	100.0
Effort	Response	Frequency	Percent
Amount of effort you put into class participation	Some effort	1	9.1
	Enough effort to get by (average/medium effort)	1	9.1
	Significant effort	7	63.6
	Maximum effort	2	18.2
	Total	11	100.0

Table 20. Percentage of Assignments Completed and Class Attendance

Percentage	Response	Frequency	Percent
Overall, what percentage of the assignments did you complete?	50 and under 75	2	18.2
	75 and under 100	5	45.5
	100	4	36.4
	Total	11	100.0
Percentage	Response	Frequency	Percent
Overall, what percentage of class meetings did you attend?	75 and under 100	7	63.6
	100	4	36.4
	Total	11	100.0

One concern raised by the students was that not all instructors devoted sufficient time to the course. For most instructors, this was an extra course in addition to their regular teaching schedule. Also, communication with students and other faculty was more difficult because students and counterparts were working full time. A significant number of students felt that their instructors did not provide timely feedback. They indicated that this lack of feedback was both at the administrative and instructional levels. The uncertainty and insecurity of the students heightened their anxiety levels. Students from the two different systems did not all have a good sense of what the expectations and requirements would be.

Table 21. Student Evaluation of Instructors

[Class Title and Schedule indicated in this cell]	SDSU Instructor	UABC Instructor
The course objectives were communicated clearly		
Class performance expectations were made clear; I understood what was expected of me		
The course stimulated my interest		
I have learned a great deal from this course		
The instructor used a variety of instructional materials/ methods (e.g., lectures, case studies, group discussions, written assignments, outside class assignments, etc.)		
The instructor conducted class in an organized way		
The instructor was responsive to questions from students		
The instructor is knowledgeable about the subject matter		
The instructor encouraged student participation/involvement		
The assignments helped me to understand the subject		
The instructor provided feedback when requested in a timely manner		
I would recommend this instructor to others		

Although not considered a critical issue, some students pointed out that faculty of each institution were not always fully bilingual. However, this was not a major problem because staff and students were willing to help out. This is an issue that will need better scheduling so that at least one instructor is fully bilingual.

Overall, students considered that the program curriculum was adequate and covered the critical issues they associated with the border region. Their evaluations provided mixed results with regard to the course content and instructors. There were courses that they considered excellent, although one or both instructors might have been rated as average. There were other courses that they considered average, although the instructors might have been considered excellent. So, some of the students were very harsh in their evaluations, while others were not. The professors with more years of teaching experience at both universities received the highest marks.

Each SDSU and UABC program advisors and coordinators were also evaluated by the students (Table 22). Students were asked to rate both of these positions based on a scale of (1) strongly disagree; (2) disagree; (3) neither agree/disagree; (4) agree; and (5) strongly agree. With regard to the special topics (thesis project) advisors from both SDSU and UABC, the major complaint raised by students was that they did not receive timely feedback. They felt that they needed more guidance and individual time dedicated to them as they completed their project. During the more than two years of the program, there were a couple of

coordinators from both SDSU and UABC that assisted with the program. Although some students considered that they were not always provided responses to their questions, nonetheless, they considered that this position in both universities was helpful and should be kept as part of the program.

Table 22. Student Evaluation of Advisors and Coordinators

Special Topics - Program Advisors	SDSU Advisor	UABC Advisor
The thesis project advisor was effective in communicating guidelines and expectations		
The advisor's input helped focus my work		
The advisor provided feedback in a timely manner		
The advisor's time dedicated to me was sufficient		
My work was enhanced as a result of the advisor's input		
Program Coordinators	SDSU Coordinator	UABC Coordinator
The coordinator was helpful in a timely manner		
The coordinator was responsive to questions from students		
The coordinator facilitated communication with instructor		
The role of the coordinator proved useful		
The role of the coordinator can be eliminated		

All students who participated in the survey provided recommendations and observations about the program, including the following:

- Add or reduce number speakers in some courses; better selection of speakers
- More time for feedback on thesis projects from both fellow-students and instructors
- Instructors should jointly plan courses to complement them; more communication between them; better balance of their lecture time, readings, and assignments (so that no one instructor dominates the course)
- Consider changing order of courses; e.g., organization theory and data sources and policy analysis should be earlier in the program
- Evaluate each course upon conclusion
- Field trips were excellent; they reinforced lectures
- Most courses had good mix of lectures, on-site learning, and guest speakers
- Consider changing scheduling format
- Key strength of program was learning to work in teams
- More theory and best practices of transborder public administration
- More assignments and tests to make sure students are up-to-date on readings

- Required presentations were strength of the program; many students greatly improved their speaking skills
- Some courses need to be more challenging; all should have a similar level of readings, assignments, presentations, etc., so that not one course is considered the “easy” one
- Students need to think about thesis project/practicum at beginning of program
- Include legal structures/legal foundations in the United States and Mexico; provide practical descriptions of cross-border problems

INSTRUCTOR SURVEY RESULTS

SDSU instructors were asked to rate their level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in Spanish and UABC instructors were asked to rate these areas in the English language. The rating was beginning, intermediate, advanced, and fluent. Of the SDSU instructors, only one considered his level of proficiency as advanced; one as intermediate; one indicated speaking and writing at the intermediate level and reading in the advanced level; the remaining five considered their skills in the three areas at the beginning level. Of the UABC instructors two considered themselves fluent in the three areas; two rated themselves as advanced in speaking and writing, and fluent in reading English; one rated his skills as speaking and writing at an intermediate level and reading at an advanced level; and one instructor rated himself at the beginning level in the three areas.

Instructors were asked what motivated them to participate in the program. Some of the options provided were: (1) professional growth, (2) personal growth, (3) recruited by colleague/director, (4) interest in new teaching experiences brought by program, (5) uniqueness of program, and (6) other. Interestingly, one instructor indicated none of these answers, but did not provide another. Two instructors selected only the uniqueness of the program. The rest of the instructors selected between two and all the options provided.

Most instructors that participated in the program brought with them many years of teaching experience (Table 23). Those instructors with fewer years in teaching coincidentally were paired with a counterpart with many years in teaching at the higher education level. The instructor with the least number of years in the teaching field was an UABC professor with two years; the professor with the most number of years was from SDSU, with more than 31 years of teaching.

Table 23. Instructor Years of Teaching Experience

Years of Teaching/University	Frequency	Percent
2 – UABC	1	7.14
5 – SDSU	1	7.14
8 – UABC	1	7.14
10 – SDSU	1	7.14
13 – SDSU	1	7.14
16 – UABC	1	7.14
20 – UABC	1	7.14
21 – SDSU	1	7.14
25 – UABC & SDSU	2	14.3
26 – UABC & SDSU	2	14.3
30 – SDSU	1	7.14
30+ - SDSU	1	7.14
Total	14	100.0

The instructors were required to teach at different UABC and SDSU campuses. The survey asked if teaching at these campuses enhanced their teaching experience (Table 24). Most instructors considered their experienced definitely enhanced, a couple thought it was somewhat enhanced, one said definitely not, and one did not provide a response.

Table 24. Teaching at Different Campuses Enhance Experience

Response	Frequency	Percent
Definitely yes	10	71.4
Somewhat	2	14.3
Definitely not	1	7.1
No response	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0

Table 25 shows the responses of the instructors with regard to rating their overall experience in being part of a binational group of instructors. Six rated their experience as excellent; seven thought it was good; one considered it fair, but not one thought it was poor, the final option provided.

More than half of the instructors listed in Table 26 considered that their expectations of the program had been met (eight). Another 35.7 percent indicated that their expectations were somewhat met (five), while 7.1 percent did not respond to the question. No one selected the option of “definitely no.”

Table 25. Overall Experience in Forming Part of Binational Group of Instructors

Response	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	6	42.9
Good	7	50.0
Fair	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0

Table 26. Instructor Expectations Met

Response	Frequency	Percent
Definitely yes	8	57.1
Somewhat	5	35.7
No response	1	7.1
Total	14	100.0

Table 27 shows that most of the instructors would definitely recommend teaching in the transborder program. Four of them somewhat recommended teaching, and none responded “definitely no”—the final option provided.

Table 27. Recommend Teaching in Program

Response	Frequency	Percent
Definitely yes	10	71.4
Somewhat	4	28.6
Total	14	100.0

In Table 28 the instructors were presented with a series of issues and were asked to rate them according to how positive (if at all) these issues had been for them. The options provide were (1) very positive; (2) somewhat positive; and (3) not positive. Some opted not to respond to some of the questions. Most of the responses were very positive or somewhat positive experiences. Four issues each received a “not positive”: learning from the students and colleagues; Friday-Saturday classes; practicing other language; and traveling to different border cities.

The instructors were also asked to rate those issues or experiences with which they had some level of difficulty. The options provide were (1) very difficult; (2) somewhat difficult; and (3) not difficult. Only one issue received a “no response” by one instructor. The variety of responses is shown in Table 29 on pages 34–35.

Table 28. Instructor Experiences that Presented Positive Levels

Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Teaching students from two countries	Very positive	13	92.9
	Somewhat positive	1	7.1
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
The make up of the program	Very positive	8	57.1
	Somewhat positive	5	35.7
	No response	1	7.1
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Being part of a first-time-ever program	Very positive	9	64.3
	Somewhat positive	5	35.7
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Learning from the students and colleagues	Very positive	12	85.7
	Somewhat positive	1	7.1
	not positive	1	7.1
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Friday-Saturday classes	Very positive	8	57.1
	Somewhat positive	5	35.7
	not positive	1	7.1
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Friendships made	Very positive	8	57.1
	Somewhat positive	5	35.7
	No response	1	7.1
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Practicing other language	Very positive	6	42.9
	Somewhat positive	6	42.9
	not positive	1	7.1
	No response	1	7.1
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Traveling to different border cities	Very positive	8	57.1
	Somewhat positive	4	28.6
	not positive	1	7.1
	No response	1	7.1
	Total	14	100.0

Table 29. Instructor Experiences that Presented Difficulty Levels

Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Teaching jointly	Somewhat difficult	5	35.7
	Not difficult	9	64.3
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Dividing the teaching time	Very difficult	1	7.1
	Somewhat difficult	4	28.6
	Not difficult	9	64.3
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Coordinating the class syllabus	Very difficult	2	14.3
	Somewhat difficult	5	35.7
	Not difficult	7	50.0
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Communications with colleague/counterpart (phone, email, etc.)	Very difficult	4	28.6
	Somewhat difficult	5	35.7
	Not difficult	5	35.7
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Teaching in a bilingual program	Very difficult	1	7.1
	Somewhat difficult	4	28.6
	Not difficult	9	64.3
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Communicating with students	Somewhat difficult	6	42.9
	Not difficult	8	57.1
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Cultural differences	Somewhat difficult	1	7.1
	Not difficult	13	92.9
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Too much travel	Very difficult	1	7.1
	Somewhat difficult	4	28.6
	Not difficult	9	64.3
	Total	14	100.0

(table continues)

Table 29. (cont.)

Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Too much travel	Very difficult	1	7.1
	Somewhat difficult	4	28.6
	Not difficult	9	64.3
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Crossing the border	Somewhat difficult	5	35.7
	Not difficult	8	57.1
	No response	1	7.1
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Teaching at other campuses	Somewhat difficult	4	28.6
	Not difficult	10	71.4
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Friday-Saturday classes; 8-hour days	Somewhat difficult	9	64.3
	Not difficult	5	35.7
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Resources and facilities	Somewhat difficult	3	21.4
	Not difficult	11	78.6
	Total	14	100.0
Issue	Response	Frequency	Percent
Coordinating assignments and tests	Very difficult	1	7.1
	Somewhat difficult	7	50.0
	Not difficult	6	42.9
	Total	14	100.0

Instructors were also asked to evaluate the role of the program coordinators (Table 30) based on a scale of (1) strongly disagree; (2) disagree; (3) neither agree/disagree; (4) agree; and (5) strongly agree. Most instructors found that the role of the coordinator was useful and should be kept as part of the transborder program.

In the final open-ended question in the survey, instructors were asked to provide recommendations for improving the program. The following are their suggestions:

- Use bilingual faculty; or, arrange that one instructor is very fluent in the other language
- Select faculty who are devoted to the program

Table 30. Instructor Evaluation of Program Coordinators

Program Coordinators	SDSU Coordinator	UABC Coordinator
The coordinator helped facilitate the organization of the course		
The coordinator provide the assistance required in an efficient manner		
The coordinator facilitated communication with counterpart instructor and with students		
The role of the coordinator proved useful		
The role of the coordinator can be eliminated		

- Data sources class moved to beginning of program so students have guidance in collecting data; consider adding an introduction to ArcView course
- Better coordination with grading in each course; better communication with counterpart
- Border practicum/research project needs to get started in first course and be monitored throughout
- Need more students from U.S. side; have a greater selection of students
- More communication/input from instructors teaching courses; could be used to make improvements for other courses/instructors
- Meeting of all faculty and administrators would be useful to provide better understanding of overall program (goals and requirements) and how one course fits with the rest (how much overlap there might be)
- Improve coordination between Mexican and U.S. faculty members though a more proactive role of Mexican and U.S. program directors and coordinators
- Formal planning session for each pair of instructors and program directors and coordinators
- Include cross-cultural communications and international negotiations
- Less asymmetries between U.S. and Mexican institutions (in terms of budget)
- Participation of instructors according to their experience and academic level (not by friendships with coordinators)
- Provide students with hands-on experiences in agencies on both sides of the border that deal with the environment, trade, immigration issues, public safety, and so forth

PROGRAM CHALLENGES

There were several challenges that the program had to confront on either side of the border. One was getting the program approved for inclusion in the universities' curriculum. This process took a significant amount of time and the first six courses were taught under a

certificate phase. This allowed time for the required approvals from both universities' administrative authorities.

Another challenge was harmonizing the universities' systems with regard to course equivalencies, grades (letter grade in the United States; number grade in Mexico), and the application process. The differences and inflexibility in the administrative structures of both universities made the matriculation process more difficult than expected. Documents had to be translated, copied, verified, notarized, apostilled—given legal authentication—and so forth. Some of the application requirements for both universities seem to be excessive. For example, on the one hand, UABC requires that the foreign student's degree and transcripts are apostilled by the secretary of state of where they graduated. This process was fairly easy and not too costly for California students, but it requires additional time when the student is from a state other than California. Also, different states had different rules and fees. On the other hand, the U.S. federal government requires that universities, SDSU included, have foreign students provide proof of financial support. These two examples become more "unnecessary" when, in fact, the students are able to return to their country of residence in the same day. The application process at both universities was one of the experiences that students expressed difficulty achieving. However, they understood that this is part of the border experience.

With regard to the administration of the program, the first year proved extremely challenging in submitting progress and financial reports to the funding agency. Both universities have different accounting systems and there were areas that were asymmetrical. For example, SDSU has budget categories that are more detailed than UABC's. SDSU will have separate line items for supplies and printing, while UABC includes both under one category. In addition, in order to be competitive with other proposals, SDSU was required to meet an extremely high cost-sharing rate. This meant obtaining from all those departments that had invested any of their time in the program the equivalency to an hour rate per person involved; estimating hourly rates for guest speakers; and estimating other costs that were not covered by the program's USAID funding. The progress reports were prepared by the SDSU coordinator. They were then sent to UABC for their review and input. However, UABC failed to meet the deadlines that were provided for their input. Eventually, and due to the

timeliness involved, the reports were sent without UABC's input. Once the program becomes self-sustaining, this will become a non-issue.

As a result of 9/11, the tighter security measures carried out by the centralized Department of Homeland Security also affected this program. TIES required that the Mexican students have a student visa. The process to obtain the visa was significantly challenging and time consuming. The Mexican students had to have a Mexican passport, a drug certification form, and medical form signed by a medical doctor. The fact that bureaucrats in Mexico City and Washington, D.C., were handling the visas, and their lack of knowledge of the border experience, delayed this process. They do not realize that Mexican border residents can cross back and forth with a laser visa, which does not require that they have a Mexican passport to process. They also failed to conceive that no overnight stays are necessary for this type of transborder program. So, the Mexican students not only had to process their student visas, but most of them had to first process their Mexican passport and all had to get a physical exam, both unexpected costs.

Although the TIES funding for this program was specifically for Mexican students (residing in Mexico) who had a bachelor's degree, several students did not quite meet these requirements. Nationality and residency, though, are not always clear in the border region. For example, one student lives and works in Mexico, but was actually born in the United States. Other students had U.S. resident cards, but actually live and work in Mexico. In addition, one student had the credits for a bachelor's, but lacked an actual degree.

The start-up funding provided full scholarships for the Mexican students at both UABC and SDSU, estimated at US\$3,500 per student for the entire master's program. Their English language tests and graduate record examinations required by SDSU were also covered. U.S. students, however, had to pay US\$1,050 per course (US\$10,500 total) through SDSU's College of Extended Studies. Nonetheless, the Office of International Programs and the School of Public Administration and Urban Studies were able to provide partial scholarships for those students that applied. Also, some students' employers were able to cover partial or full costs.

Students pointed out that a requirement that must be strictly enforced is that students are truly bilingual. Several of the Mexican students would not qualify as bilingual. Also, one U.S. student had to leave the program because she found it extremely difficult to

communicate in Spanish. The level of their language skills were reflected in their written work and presentations. These students would rely on their bilingual fellow students for interpretation, which proved disruptive to others. In addition, those students interpreting missed part of the class lectures or discussions.

Although all students were Mexican or of Mexican descent, it was surprising that some of them expressed experiencing cultural differences. At times, these created some discomfort and tensions. When asked to illustrate, some U.S. students pointed out that most students that were habitually late for class happened to be from the Mexican side, even when classes were held in their city. They felt that this not only delayed the start of class, but many instructors found they had to repeat themselves, to the irritation of those students who were on time. Several Mexican students expressed some annoyance when the U.S. students made reference to their country as “America.” Some of them also felt that the U.S. students were “too intense” and took everything too personal. Others pointed out that these differences became more evident when working on team projects. Few of the students were not able to work with their partners and complained to their instructors. However, both U.S. and Mexican students agreed that, as time progressed and they got to know each other better, most were able to hold discussions and even disagree without harm done.

One student wrote in the survey that students “need to be respectful toward professors, class schedules, deadlines, and telephone etiquette.” Cellular phones became an annoyance. Loud conversations between or among friends were also disruptive. Also, at times, some of the students would open a magazine or newspaper while the instructor, guest speaker, or fellow students were addressing the group; if a computer was available, some students would check their emails or navigate the web. Other students abused the breaks, leaving for extremely long periods of time. Yet others just did not pick up after themselves. Since it was a small group, these behaviors were all the more evident.

Some of the instructors from either side were not bilingual. Normally the situation worked out because one of them had the necessary skills in the other language. However, there were a few situations that were complicated when both instructors did not speak the other’s language. Students felt that this sometimes affected the coordination between them. Even the instructors expressed some level of frustration. Some of them indicated in the survey that they strongly suggest that at least one instructor be truly bilingual.

It became obvious when both instructors were meeting in class for the first time. Students said that they could tell because of a lack of coordination or duplication with regard to the course content. Also, students felt that this was reflected when some instructors did not keep in mind the course structure of three Friday-Saturday pairs of eight hours each. Some tried to squeeze in too much information when they realized the class time they had remaining. Thus, students considered that poor planning affected some of the courses. Some expressed that the instructors owed it to them to be prepared. In the instructor survey, some of them also expressed the need to meet with the counterpart instructor to better plan the course content and related activities.

Students thought it was evident that several instructors from both sides did not quite know how to “discipline” this new transborder group. Some instructors expressed that they tolerated behavior that normally they would not have accepted in their regular university teaching. Although few, there were some instructors that actually failed students. Even though the instructors themselves felt they were lenient and provided second chances, several of these students did not respond. Those students who worked hard, were always present, met deadlines, and presented/submitted quality work expressed their disappointment when they realized that some of these students were getting grades that were actually quite similar to theirs. Some instructors recommended in the survey that there needs to be more rigor in the courses. Several students also expressed this opinion.

Students and instructors provided thoughtful analysis of the challenges presented by the program. Several provided excellent suggestions on confronting these issues. Both also expressed that despite these challenges, the program is well worth pursuing or teaching.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on first-hand observations; student and instructor survey results; personal conversations and communications with students, instructors, and program directors; and attendance of meetings held by the SDSU-UABC program directors and administrators.

The number of students that seems to be optimum for this program is 24: 12 from Mexico and 12 from the United States. This size will permit adequate class discussions, interactions, teamwork, and time for feedback. For this first program, UABC was able to recruit a good number of students. SDSU, however, did not. Due to the relatively high cost at SDSU, it is also important in the recruiting process to seek support of outside sources. For example, since the program is designed for working adults, recruitment efforts could be geared toward those agencies or companies that support employee development. In addition, these efforts need to be carried out with plenty of lead time in order to secure this minimum number of students. As part of this effort, there were suggestions to schedule visits with organizations that have business relations with the other side to give them an information packet and a brief presentation about the program. Advisory members could be asked for assistance in identifying those organizations that are willing to invest in at least one special employee's education. Ideally, these employers could partially or fully support their employees into joining this program. It was also stressed that these organizations need to be made aware that they will, in turn, benefit on the short, medium, and long term from their employee's education. They will have better prepared and knowledgeable employees who can function in both cultures, in both languages, and can work effectively, efficiently, and confidently on the other side of the border.

Some students, instructors, and coordinators suggest that students be screened initially to make sure that they meet the program requirements, especially that they are bilingual (English and Spanish). As stated previously, one U.S. student who was admitted to the program realized that her Spanish-language skills were not as advanced to continue.

Several Mexican students have struggled in the program because of their English-language skills not being up to par.

Students' responses to the survey indicate that one area that merits special attention and that should be more clearly defined is the application process. It is especially important to provide the applicant very clear instructions on each document that is required since he/she will have to apply to both SDSU and UABC. Most importantly, the applications must be reviewed and the student interviewed before classes start. ***Students should not start the program if they do not meet the requirements.***

As mentioned earlier, the program is costly, especially on the U.S. side. Both universities, then, should seek funding for students that are qualified and meet program requirements, but who might not have the financial means to pursue it. The program could greatly benefit from partial or full scholarships, as well as low-interest student loans.

In the analysis of experiences of the initial group, it became obvious that staff support is very important. Each university needs to have a staff member that is prepared to address the issues related to the program and provide students with any related information. Students felt that this is especially important since classes are held at different sites on both sides of the border region. So, all of them need to plan accordingly, including the instructors.

In the Mexican system, if students fail a course, they are allowed to take makeup exams (*extraordinarias*). Since this is not the case in the United States system, Mexican students need to be made aware that this is not the norm and they will not be given a second chance. Another difference in the systems that took U.S. students by surprise is that at UABC grades are made public and include the student's name.

All students agree that the guest speakers and field trips that have been part of this program have been an excellent component and a smart move on the part of both universities. It is extremely important that these universities continue to work in close cooperation with the sectors visited and represented by these guests. This not only increases the value of the courses for the students, but it ensures that they are exposed to their communities' priorities, policies, goals, and needs. Also, the networking opportunities were highly valued by the students.

Students recommend that instructors commit some of their time to being available to their program needs, especially through electronic mail. One general complaint students had

was the lack of response to their queries. Since this program is not held in one location only, and both instructors and students are from different cities, electronic mail communications become extremely important. Students strongly emphasized the need to get timely feedback on their assignments and other related questions. Instructors in this program must expect to invest a considerable amount of time communicating via email with their counterpart and, most importantly, with the students.

A significant number of students also complained about the lack of response and feedback at the administrative level. Their questions, concerns, and doubts were not always answered, especially in a timely manner. It must be reiterated that the uniqueness of this program demands a timely response.

One final suggestion that students made as they approached their graduation, was that they be provided with advanced detailed information about the graduation process. Both universities have different requirements and deadlines for completion of a master's program. Although this program was exempt from some administrative requirements at both universities—because it is the first such joint degree and issues were being resolved as they emerged—there were no exceptions made about graduation requirements. For example, at UABC students had to present their preliminary theses projects at a colloquium and then present an individual defense of their work before being able to graduate. At SDSU, students had to register for a thesis project course and also follow the strict formatting guidelines for their written work.

This program has had two very challenging years that have provided great learning experiences at the administrative, instructional, and student levels. Fortunately, none of these challenges were considered impossible to overcome, especially since the program directors and coordinators took extra steps to help solve those problems that emerged.

CONCLUSIONS

As mentioned, most written works on the U.S.-Mexico relationship concentrate on issues such as trade, the economy, immigration, and the environment. In reviewing the literature that related to transborder experiences in the field of higher education, one common theme seemed to emerge: NAFTA and its role in higher education. Although scholars believe that the efforts for integrating education across the border would have occurred eventually, there is no doubt that NAFTA increased interest in the issue. The TIES program, then, is a culmination of this process: to increase higher education efforts although not specific to border regions.

Every new program, including an educational one, is confronted with many anticipated challenges as well as surprising ones. The master's program was no exception. The partner universities involved in its inception, development, and implementation expected that the process would require dedication and the ability to resolve those issues that would likely emerge. SDSU and UABC have had a longstanding collaborative relationship and it was fundamental in both universities working together to resolve the expected and unexpected challenges of offering this joint degree. They have a vested interest in the formation of future leaders who will have knowledge of the public administration and governance, as well as the laws, economy, culture, social, and other issues on both sides of the border region. Administrative and faculty members from both institutions, then, are paying close attention to the progress of this master's degree since they want the success of this program to serve as a model to be implemented elsewhere. Furthermore, it is expected that this program will become self-sustaining by the fall of 2006.

Students and instructors also played a key role in the success of the program. They understood that this program was new and that it would be a learning experience for all involved. They were patient and understanding as the program directors resolved related issues. Several students and instructors also contributed to the promotion of the program, sharing their experiences with the media and highlighting the importance of such a program, especially in the shared transborder region. For example, several students were invited to a

special event in which they interacted with Baja California governor Eugenio Elorduy and California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and spoke about the importance of joint educational collaboration. This event was covered by national and international media.

This first generation was the “pilot program” that “tested” this new “product.” Overall, most of its participants felt that their expectations had been met and that they would recommend the program to others. Any criticisms that the program received were in few areas, the main one being the lack of feedback from instructors and administrators. Not one person expressed that the program was not worth his/her time. Several instructors and students from this first generation also realized that they were participating in what can be labeled a historic achievement: the creation of a true transborder program implemented equally by two partner universities from two neighboring countries. This innovative program, then, has begun to form those future leaders that are expected to contribute to an improved quality of life in the transborder region.

It is important to reiterate that this program can be implemented in other border regions not only of the United States and Mexico, but elsewhere in the world. The more globalized society becomes, the more its leaders will need to be on a similar level of preparedness to confront those problems that will emerge and to share those successes that can result from collaborative relationships. The growth of collaborative relations across the U.S.-Mexican border has been in several areas, including higher education. According to Ganster (1997), the result of this growth has “been to significantly expand the number of people involved in transborder activities and to move the entire binational region toward increased interdependence and integration.” It is imperative, then, to start preparing those leaders now. This interdependence and this integration, though, have to provide for mutually beneficial results. This program is providing that opportunity, one that is expected to be around for many years to come.

FURTHER RESEARCH

There are some who believe that the only symmetry between the United States and Mexico is the border line itself (Andere, 2005). In some of the readings, a sense of frustration is perceived in the works of several authors that write about higher education, especially in the border region. According to Andere (2005), four words summarize the collaboration

between the United States and Mexico in the area of education: asymmetric, fragmented, aimless, and “institution-less.” However, institutions such as SDSU and UABC are working on these issues and are offering alternatives and seeking solutions.

The field of higher education in a U.S.-Mexican transborder context needs more research. The few sources found on the topic of transborder higher education certainly make sense because of the lack of transborder programs. This is especially the case with regard to graduate studies. Any mention of higher-education topics is almost but a line or paragraph in most writings found. It would be interesting to follow up on the impact that this joint master’s degree has had on this first cohort of students and, in turn, the impact that this group will have on the shared transborder community. Perhaps in the not too distant future some of these students or instructors will consider contributing to the field of transborder higher education by writing about their experiences in this innovative program.

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APPENDIX A
STUDENT SURVEY

Name (optional): _____ Date: _____

Female Male Registered through: UABC PSU

Degree(s)/Major/University: _____

1. How did you find out about this program? Please check all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Newspaper ad
<input type="checkbox"/>	University website
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flyer/brochure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Word of mouth (friend; professor; etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):

2. What motivated you to apply to this program? (Check the most important one only.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment advancement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Interest in program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):

3. Overall, did you find the program?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Challenging
<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat challenging
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not challenging

4. What are your immediate plans upon graduation?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Public sector employment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Private sector employment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-employment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):

5. How do you believe this program will impact your current job?

<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact; will remain the same
<input type="checkbox"/>	Same employer, but with promotion
<input type="checkbox"/>	Will look for new job
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have been offered new job
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):

6. How do you believe this program will help you contribute to the improvement of the border region?

	Through work-related activities
	By participating in border-related organizations
	Becoming involved in local politics
	Volunteering in community organizations
	Attending public forums on border-related issues and voicing opinions that impact policy making
	Other (please specify):

- 7a-i. Please rate the program courses/instructors using the following scale:
[ONE SURVEY COMPLETED PER INSTRUCTOR TEAM]

- 1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = neither agree/disagree
4 = agree
5 = strongly agree

[Course Title and Schedule]	SDSU Instructor	UABC Instructor
The course objectives were communicated clearly		
Class performance expectations were made clear; I understood what was expected of me		
The course stimulated my interest		
I have learned a great deal from this course		
The instructor used a variety of instructional materials/methods (e.g., lectures, case studies, group discussions, written assignments, outside class assignments, etc.)		
The instructor conducted class in an organized way		
The instructor was responsive to questions from students		
The instructor is knowledgeable about the subject matter		
The instructor encouraged student participation/involvement		
The assignments helped me to understand the subject		
The instructor provided feedback when requested in a timely manner		
I would recommend this instructor to others		

Regarding the overall course—guest speakers, assignments, videos, case studies, role playing, group reports/presentations, exams, amount of work required, hours, and so forth—please answer the following questions (use the back of this sheet, if needed): If not submitting electronically, please print legibly.

What are the key strengths of the course? _____

How can this course be improved? _____

Additional comments about course and/or instructors: _____

8–9. Please rate the participation of the thesis project advisors and program coordinators using the following scale:

- 1 = strongly disagree
- 2 = disagree
- 3 = neither agree/disagree
- 4 = agree
- 5 = strongly agree

Special Topics - Program Advisors (Sept. 23–24; Oct. 7–8; Nov. 3–5, 2005)	SDSU Advisor	UABC Advisor
The thesis project advisor was effective in communicating guidelines and expectations		
The advisor's input helped focus my work		
The advisor provided feedback in a timely manner		
The advisor's time dedicated to me was sufficient		
My work was enhanced as a result of the advisor's input		

Comments: _____

Program Coordinators	SDSU	UABC
The coordinator was helpful in a timely manner		
The coordinator was responsive to questions from students		
The coordinator facilitated communication with instructor		
The role of the coordinator proved useful		
The role of the coordinator can be eliminated		

Comments: _____

10. How difficult were the following issues? Please rate using the following scale:

- 1 = difficult
2 = somewhat difficult
3 = not difficult

	Application process at SDSU
	Application process at UABC
	Spanish language instruction
	English language instruction
	Communication (phone, email, etc.)
	Employer support
	Cultural differences
	Working as part of a team
	Travel-related
	Financial
	Friday-Saturday schedule; 8-hour day
	Other (please specify):

11. How positive were the following experiences? Please rate using the following scale:

- 1 = positive
2 = somewhat positive
3 = not positive

	Studying in another country
	Having two instructors
	The make up of the program
	Being part of a first-time-ever program
	Scheduling
	Friendships made
	Networking opportunities
	Practicing other language
	Course field trips
	Working in teams
	Other (please specify):

12. Did traveling to different campus sites enhance your learning experience?

	Definitely yes
	Somewhat
	Definitely not

13. How would you describe your overall experience in being part of this binational group of students?

	Excellent
	Good
	Fair
	Poor
	Very poor

14. Were your expectations met?

	Definitely yes
	Somewhat
	Definitely not

15. Would you recommend this program?

	Definitely yes
	Somewhat
	Definitely not

16. Please provide your self-evaluation using the following scale:

- 1 = little to no effort
- 2 = some effort
- 3 = enough effort to get by (average/medium effort)
- 4 = significant effort
- 5 = maximum effort

	Amount of effort you put into the course in general
	Amount of effort you put into studying for exams
	Amount of effort you put into class assignments
	Amount of effort you put into class participation

17. Please respond to the following questions using the following scale.

- 1 = under 25
- 2 = 25 and under 50
- 3 = 50 and under 75
- 4 = 75 and under 100
- 5 = 100

	Overall, what percentage of the assignments did you complete?
	Overall, what percentage of class meetings did you attend?

18. What are your recommendations for improving this program? (Please use the back of this sheet, if needed).

19. Additional comments or general recommendations:

Your time is greatly appreciated – thank you!

APPENDIX B
INSTRUCTOR SURVEY

Name (optional): _____

Date: _____

Female Male

Years of teaching experience? _____

1. Please check your proficiency in the Spanish language, if you teach at SDSU, and in the English language, if you teach at UABC. Please check language: Spanish English

Language Areas	Beginning	Intermediate	Advanced	Fluent
Speak				
Read				
Write				

2. What motivated you to participate in this program? Please check all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal growth
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recruited by colleague/director
<input type="checkbox"/>	Interest in new teaching experiences brought by program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Uniqueness of program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):

3. Did teaching in different campus sites, especially on the other side of the border, enhance your experience?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Definitely yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat
<input type="checkbox"/>	Definitely not

4. How would you describe your overall experience in being part of this binational group of instructors?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Excellent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Good
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair
<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Very poor

5. Were your expectations met?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Definitely yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat
<input type="checkbox"/>	Definitely not

6. Would you recommend teaching in this program?

	Definitely yes
	Somewhat
	Definitely not

7. Please rate the participation of the program coordinators using the following scale:

- 1 = strongly disagree
- 2 = disagree
- 3 = neither agree/disagree
- 4 = agree
- 5 = strongly agree

Program Coordinators	SDSU		UABC
The coordinator helped facilitate the organization of the course			
The coordinator provided the assistance required in an efficient manner			
The coordinator facilitated communication with counterpart and with students			
The role of the coordinator proved useful			
The role of the coordinator can be eliminated			

Comments: _____

8. How positive were the following experiences/issues? Please rate using the following scale:

- 1 = very positive
- 2 = somewhat positive
- 3 = not positive

	Teaching in another country
	Teaching jointly with a colleague from another country
	Teaching students from two countries
	The make up of the program
	Being part of a first-time-ever program
	Learning from the students and colleagues
	Friday-Saturday classes
	Friendships made
	Practicing other language
	Traveling to different border cities
	Other (please specify):

9. How difficult were the following situations/issues? Please rate using the following scale:

- 1 = very difficult
 2 = somewhat difficult
 3 = not difficult

	Teaching jointly
	Dividing the teaching time
	Coordinating the class syllabus
	Communications with colleague/counterpart (phone, email, etc.)
	Teaching in a bilingual program
	Communicating with students
	Cultural differences
	Coordinating assignments and tests
	Too much travel
	Crossing the border
	Teaching at other campuses
	Friday-Saturday classes; 8-hour days
	Resources and facilities
	Other (please specify):

10. What are your recommendations for improving this program? (Please use the back of this sheet, if needed).

Your time is greatly appreciated – thank you!

APPENDIX C
STUDENT HANDBOOK



SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY

**Joint Master in Interdisciplinary Studies:
Transborder Public Administration
and Governance**

Student Handbook

Contact Information:

Bertha Hernández, Program Coordinator
Phone: (619) 594-5423; Fax: (619) 594-5474
Office Location: Nasatir Hall 103
Mail Code: 4403
E-mail: bhernand@mail.sdsu.edu
Web site: www.transborder.sdsu.edu

Welcome

We welcome you as you start your participation in this unique master's degree program offered jointly by San Diego State University and Universidad Autónoma de Baja California. We believe that your experience in this transborder program will be positive and rewarding. This handbook is to assist you with the organizational and logistical aspects of the program. It also offers suggestions on things to consider when you attend class at different sites on the U.S.-Mexican border region. Please feel free to contact the Department Chair or the Program Coordinator if you have any questions.

Before You Begin the Program

You will be provided with the tentative calendar—will include dates, faculty, and sites—for the program so that you can plan accordingly. Please be apprised that some of these dates will be subject to change. You will be notified immediately when and if this occurs.

Faculty

The SDSU professor and the UABC professor are leading experts in their fields. They will both have direct and ongoing coordination of the course content, mode of delivery, guest speakers, field trips, and other activities. Both professors will be available for your questions and related matters.

Syllabus

You will receive the syllabus for each course at least one week before the first class meeting. This will allow you to acquire the assigned readings and learn about the course content. In addition to the assigned readings, homework, projects, and tests, the syllabus will include specific information other requirements, such as attendance, punctuality, and class participation. Due to the intensive nature of the course, these matters are important.

Reading Materials

Please acquire your reading materials as soon as you receive your list. These might be in Spanish and/or English. In addition to readings purchased in bookstores and/or copy centers, some of the materials might be provided by your professors in hard copies, on CDs, and via the electronic reserve at the SDSU library. It is strongly suggested that you start your reading immediately to be better prepared for class.

Schedule

The meetings for each class of this program are three Friday-Saturday pairs, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated by your professors. Class will start promptly and we

suggest that you plan accordingly if travel—including crossing the border—is involved. The professors will determine the class breaks; please observe the time allotted. Lunch and break times are determined by the professors.

Email Correspondence

Email is of utmost importance in communicating with your professors and fellow students. Students and professors in the program might be from different Baja California and Southern California locations. Please be prepared to invest a significant amount of time in communicating via email and make a concerted effort to reply as promptly as you possibly can.

Assignments and Grades

Students are to email or deliver their homework, projects, and other course assignments directly to both professors by the deadlines established. Your work will be evaluated and graded accordingly. Grades will be assigned on the following scale:

UABC-SDSU Grade Equivalencies

UABC	SDSU	SDSU	
9.4 – 10	94 – 100	A	4.0
9 – 9.3	90 – 93	A-	3.7
8.7 – 8.9	87 – 89	B+	3.3
8.4 – 8.6	84 – 86	B	3.0
8 – 8.3	80 – 83	B-	2.7
7.7 – 7.9	77 – 79	C+	2.3
7.4 – 7.6	74 – 76	C	2.0
7 – 7.3	70 – 73	C-	1.7
6.7 – 6.9	67 – 69	D+	1.3
6.4 – 6.6	64 – 66	D	1.0
6 – 6.3	60 – 63	D-	0.7
0 – 5.9	0 – 59	F	0

If you receive a grade of less than 8 or B-, you will fail the course. To earn the master's degree, you will have to repeat the failed course the next time it is offered. The program does not offer extraordinary makeup exams/assignments, as is often the case at UABC.

After the end of each course, both professors calculate ONE final grade for each student, and report it to each student individually, and to SDSU and UABC.

Class Dynamics

Although you are required to be bilingual (Spanish and English), it is a good idea to speak clearly and slowly for the benefit of your professors and fellow students who might find it a bit difficult to follow.

Out of common courtesy and respect for your instructors, guest speakers, and fellow students, please follow these basic guidelines:

- Notify your professors if you will be absent or late, or if you will need to leave early or for a portion of the day
- Be on time and return from the breaks on time
- Keep the number of personal breaks at a minimum (if at all possible, wait for the regular break)
- Pay due attention to your professors and guest speakers, as well as to the comments, questions, or final presentations of classmates (it is not acceptable to read newspapers or other materials, or to engage in personal talk, during class)
- Be ready to participate with questions or observations that may enrich the learning process of everyone
- Turn off cell phones or, if absolutely necessary, keep them in vibrate mode; do not answer your phone inside the classroom
- Leave computers off, unless given instructions to turn them on (it is not acceptable to navigate the web or email during class)
- Pick up all your belongings and trash (paper cups, napkins, soda cans, etc.) at the end of the day

Role of the Program Coordinator

The program coordinator will be able to assist you with the following:

- Application process to SDSU and UABC
- Administrative questions
- Requests for audiovisual equipment for your presentations
- Other

Academic Calendars

These calendars are provided for your information. Please note that your courses follow a different calendar.

SDSU

[INSERT CURRENT CALENDAR HERE]

UABC

[INSERT CURRENT CALENDAR HERE]

APPENDIX D
FACULTY HANDBOOK



SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY

**Joint Master in Interdisciplinary Studies:
Transborder Public Administration
and Governance**

Faculty Handbook

Contact Information:

Bertha Hernández, Program Coordinator
Phone: (619) 594-5423; Fax: (619) 594-5474
Office Location: Nasatir Hall 103
Mail Code: 4403
E-mail: bhernand@mail.sdsu.edu
Web site: www.transborder.sdsu.edu

Welcome

Thank you for your participation in and dedication to the master's degree program offered jointly by San Diego State University and Universidad Autónoma de Baja California. We believe that your experience in this transborder program will be positive and rewarding. This handbook is to assist you with the organizational and logistical aspects as you prepare for your course. It includes information based on policies and practices at SDSU and UABC, as well as experiences in the 10 courses from the first cohort of students to complete the program. It also offers suggestions on things to consider when teaching with a colleague from UABC and holding class at different sites in the U.S.-Mexican border region. Please feel free to contact the Department Chair or the Program Coordinator if you have any questions.

Before Class Begins

You will be provided with the recommended calendar for your course. It is strongly suggested that you meet with your counterpart to discuss the calendar, plan the class syllabus, reading assignments, division of tasks, grading, location of class meetings, and any other pertinent issues. Once you have agreed on these matters, please notify the program coordinator from your respective university if he/she needs to make any type of arrangements for the course or if you need other type of assistance.

Faculty

The SDSU instructor and the UABC instructor are both expected to have direct and ongoing coordination of the course content, mode of delivery, guest speakers, field trips, and other activities. If one professor takes more time than initially planned (guest speaker, field trip, other), it is important to discuss with her/his colleague ways of compensating. It is also highly recommended that both professors are present throughout the day, especially at the end of the day, when students raise questions and want to speak to their professors.

Syllabus

Faculty should send students the syllabus at least one week before the first class meeting. This will allow students to acquire the readings and have a head start on the course content. In addition to the assigned readings, homework, projects, and tests, the syllabus should also include specific information about the attendance, punctuality, and class participation requirements. Due to the intensive nature of the course, these matters are very important. Please provide a copy of the syllabus to the coordinator to keep on file.

Reading Materials

Please make timely arrangements for the assigned reading materials. If the materials are provided in hard copies or on CDs, make sure that these are organized and clearly marked. Students should be able to easily identify the assigned readings. If you use the electronic

reserve at the SDSU library, please make sure that the scanned copies are of good quality. However, please note that in the first cohort, not everyone was able to access the electronic reserve.

Schedule

The class meetings for this program are three Friday-Saturday pairs, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., unless you and your colleague decide on different times. During the first cohort, there were problems with students showing up more than 30 minutes late and exceeding their break times. Some students disappeared for long periods of times. Some of the students and faculty were from different locations; many experienced difficulties with the long border-crossing times and travel time. Thus, please alert students that they need to plan accordingly and to allow extra time to get to class on the scheduled time. Lunch and break times are determined by the instructors.

Email Correspondence

Email is of utmost importance in communicating with your colleague and students. In addition, the Mexican students might be from different Baja California locations and the U.S. students might be from different Southern California locations. You will be provided with a class roster that includes all students' emails and other contact information. Please be prepared to invest a significant amount of time in communicating with students as well as your counterpart via email. Due to the nature of the course, students rely heavily on feedback from instructors by way of electronic correspondence. Please make a concerted effort to reply as promptly as you possibly can. Students will greatly appreciate this!

Assignments and Grades

Students are to email or deliver their homework, projects, and other course assignments directly to both professors by the deadlines established. A copy may be sent to the coordinator. Both professors are to evaluate the student's work and grade accordingly. The equivalencies of the SDSU and UABC grading scale are as follows:

UABC	SDSU	SDSU	
9.4 – 10	94 – 100	A	4.0
9 – 9.3	90 – 93	A-	3.7
8.7 – 8.9	87 – 89	B+	3.3
8.4 – 8.6	84 – 86	B	3.0
8 – 8.3	80 – 83	B-	2.7
7.7 – 7.9	77 – 79	C+	2.3
7.4 – 7.6	74 – 76	C	2.0
7 – 7.3	70 – 73	C-	1.7
6.7 – 6.9	67 – 69	D+	1.3
6.4 – 6.6	64 – 66	D	1.0
6 – 6.3	60 – 63	D-	0.7
0 – 5.9	0 – 59	F	0

If the student receives a grade of less than 8 or B-, he or she fails the course. To earn the master's degree, the student will have to repeat the failed course the next time it is offered. The program does not offer extraordinary makeup exams/assignments, as is often the case at UABC.

After the end of each course, both professors calculate ONE final grade for each student, and report it to each student individually, and to SDSU and UABC (please use table above). Please provide the coordinator with a copy of the final grades for both SDSU and UABC students.

You will report grades for U.S. students using the Web Portal system. Class rosters and grading are all accessed via the SDSU Web Portal (<http://www.sdsu.edu/webportal>). Your colleague will report grades for the Mexican students at UABC.

Class Dynamics

Although students are required to be bilingual (Spanish and English), it is a good idea to speak clearly and slowly; check if students are following the lecture.

Out of common courtesy and respect for instructors, guest speakers, and fellow students, you should expect the students:

- To notify you if they will be absent or late, or if they will need to leave early or for a portion of the day
- To arrive to class and return from the breaks on time
- To keep the number of personal breaks at a minimum (if at all possible, wait for the regular break)
- To pay due attention to you and to guest speakers, as well as to the comments, questions, or final presentations of classmates (it is not acceptable to read newspapers or other materials, or to engage in personal talk, during class)
- To be ready to participate with questions or observations that may enrich the learning process of everyone
- To keep cell phones in vibrate mode and respond to phone calls only during scheduled breaks
- To leave computers off, unless given instructions to turn them on (it is not acceptable to navigate the web or email during class)
- To pick up all their belongings and trash (paper cups, napkins, soda cans, etc.) at the end of the day

If you feel that some behavior is unacceptable, you should express this to the class. Please keep in mind that you should treat this group of students as you would any group that you teach in your regular semester load.

Student Complaints

If an individual faculty member cannot resolve a dispute with a student (for example, an assigned grade), then contact the Chair, write out the situation in detail, and refer the student to set up an appointment with the Chair.

Contact Information

Immediately at the beginning of the course, please provide your contact information to the program coordinator. Let him/her know the information that can be shared with students. Please update as necessary.

Evaluations

Students are to complete evaluations at the end of each semester. Since the faculty cannot administer the evaluations themselves, the program coordinator can assist with this task. After grades are turned in, evaluations are distributed along with grade and evaluation statistics for you.

Other Information

Absent-unable to teach/meet a class:

Please notify your colleague and the coordinator immediately if you are unable to teach class. If your colleague is not able to cover the full day, please sure make to arrangements and to notify students.

Role of the Program Coordinator

The program coordinator will be able to assist you with the following:

- Contact your counterpart to arrange your first meeting
- Reserve your classroom—usually the Gateway Center at the main campus or a classroom at SDSU's Imperial Valley campus in Calexico
- Request audiovisual equipment
- Make arrangements for assigned readings (duplicate, order, email, electronic reserve)
- Plan field trips
- Other

Academic Calendars

SDSU

[INSERT CURRENT CALENDAR HERE]

UABC

[INSERT CURRENT CALENDAR HERE]

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS PROJECT

An Evaluation of the Joint Master's Program Offered by Two Border Universities:
San Diego State University and Universidad Autónoma de Baja California

by

Bertha Hernández

Joint Master in Interdisciplinary Studies: Transborder Public Administration and Governance
San Diego State University, 2006

The U.S.-Mexican border region is not only an area in which complex situations emerge—especially critical in recent times with the increased security measures and the immigration debate—but it is also an area that provides great opportunities for addressing these matters in collaborative ways that extend across the border. In order to deal with these complexities and opportunities, though, there is a need for better prepared individuals at all government levels as well as in the private and not-for-profit sectors. Ideally, these individuals will have greater knowledge and appreciation of the border region and will be able to function effectively on both sides of the border.

Toward these efforts, San Diego State University (SDSU) and the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California (UABC) (Autonomous University of Baja California) were funded to develop and implement a joint Master's Degree in Transborder Public Administration and Governance. In sum, the program seeks to contribute to the sustainable development of the border region by way of forming its future leaders in the areas of public administration and governance. Both universities expect that the degree will become self-sustaining. This program was approved by the authorities of both universities and the first course got under way in November 2003. The intent of this thesis project, then, is to provide an overall evaluation of this first-ever program, from its development to its implementation. It will also provide observations on its effectiveness as well as recommendations for improvement.