

Mexico as a Core Strategic Partner
Engaging Our Neighbors
Prepared by IUPUI Mexico Interest Group
DRAFT: Updated Sept 2006

Introduction to Mexico as a Core Strategic Partner

IUPUI Core Strategic Partners will be universities, consortia of universities, nations, or regions outside the U.S. with which multiple IUPUI units are involved and long-term, sustainable relationships are being built. The selection of these partners will reflect critical regions of the world and university and community interests, and will have the potential to enhance international learning, research, and engagement. By focusing efforts and resources towards the building of strategic partnerships, IUPUI will develop each into a major source of collaboration and resource-sharing that brings an international dimension to teaching, research, institutional development, and civic engagement across the campus. Students and faculty from all of IUPUI's schools will encounter the strategic partner in multiple courses, projects, and public events. They will know students and faculty from the partner institutions and perhaps have traveled there themselves. IUPUI students and faculty will develop a knowledge base concerning that particular country that spreads across learning, research, and civic engagement.

The IUPUI Mexico Interest Group is a campus-wide body that is responsible for the development of Mexico as a possible strategic partner. This group will coordinate and make decisions collaboratively as it works toward establishing a cumulative and campus-wide base of knowledge, experience, and opportunity for teaching, visiting, researching, and collaborating with partners in Mexico.

Mexico presents unique opportunities for this endeavor. Due to local demographics, the porous nature of political, economic, and cultural borders, interconnected histories, and the diverse connections already established between this country and our campus and community, Mexico provides a distinctive platform on which to build a core strategic partnership. The bidirectional, transnational flows of people, currency, cultural values, histories, and materials between Mexico and the United States make it such that the IUPUI Mexico Interest Group finds it necessary to partner with the sovereign nation of Mexico as well as with the Mexican community of Central Indiana. Therefore, we intend not only to engage in institutional and community partnerships within Mexico but to collaborate with the Mexican community of Greater Indianapolis and Central Indiana as well. This binational community involvement is, in fact, one of the defining characteristics of this partnership and will certainly direct and shift the parameters of the partnership.

With this said, the Mexico Interest Group, as the main coordinating body for the development of Mexico as a strategic partner, has outlined the following rationale for the partnership and a list of short and long-term goals.

Rationale for Mexico as a Core Strategic Partner

- **ESTABLISHED CONNECTIONS:** IUPUI currently has a diverse array of programs, research experience, and institutional and community affiliations in Mexico (on both sides of the border). Numerous IUPUI faculty members, staff, and students have traveled to Mexico for service, research, study, teaching, and collaborative educational projects.
- **DEMOGRAPHICS OF LOCAL COMMUNITY:** We encourage active, mutually beneficial, and committed partnerships with the growing Mexican community of Indianapolis and Central Indiana.
- **HISTORICAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL CONNECTIONS:** Mexico and the United States have numerous intimate and transnational cultural, historical, political, and economic linkages.
- **PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION:** Given the professional orientation of the IUPUI campus, we have a responsibility to the community and to our students to prepare practitioners to work with Latino populations. This includes not only linguistic familiarity, but also cultural, historical, and political understanding.
- **CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY:** There is also a broader responsibility of IUPUI as a public institution of higher education to engage in public diplomacy and educate faculty, staff, students, and the local community about a nation with which we are so intertwined. (This is particularly relevant due to the on-going national debate over immigration.) The historical inequity of resources between the U.S. and Mexico also argues for collaborative projects that share resources today. . .
- **RECIPROCITY AND COLLABORATION:** Reciprocal, collaborative exchange is the base for all strategic partnerships and is also key for the working of the Mexico Interest Group itself. All units on the IUPUI campus have much to gain and learn from this relationship; it is not uni-directional. All partners will benefit. In this regard, the partnership will contribute to IUPUI's goals of internationalizing its curriculum, expanding its civic engagement, developing global competencies for its students, faculty, and staff, and conducting research on pressing and important issues such as diabetes and immigration.
- **FINANCES:** It is fairly easy and inexpensive to travel to Mexico, which indicates that a partnership could more readily get IUPUI students, staff, and faculty to Mexico and Mexican students, staff, and faculty to IUPUI.
- **INTERDISCIPLINARY SYNERGIES:** A strategic partnership would enable us to coordinate IUPUI's various Mexican connections in a strategic manner, and would bring the expertise of different schools into conjunction with each other. It would also prevent unnecessary duplication and promote resource sharing across our campus and community.
- **LANGUAGE CAPABILITIES:** Spanish is a vital language for employability in virtually all professional realms. With that said, students and staff also tend to study Spanish more than other languages, and the partnership would give them multiple opportunities to improve and apply their skills. Furthermore, IUPUI has numerous instructional programs in English as a second language.

Short-term Goals

- To establish criteria for determining which institutional partnerships in Mexico are most strategic, and how they can support each other
- To determine and outline the parameters for proposing a strategic partnership with Mexico
- To coordinate programs at IUPUI that educate students, staff, and faculty on issues involving Mexico
- To publicize and engage other units on campus to become involved in the development of Mexico as a strategic partner
- To solicit faculty, staff, and student input in the development of Mexico as a strategic partner
- To initiate or expand partnerships with Mexican institutions that involve a number of departments, units, and schools on both ends
- To set up website dedicated to Mexico as a core strategic partner
- To work with other campuses within the IU/PU system to support the development and implementation of the partnership
- To collaborate with the local community in the development of this partnership
- To gather and make a comprehensive list of the existing activities, research, programs, and initiatives involving Mexico at IUPUI and in the community
- To coordinate fall programs on Mexico as means toward fulfilling the above short-term goals
- To set up travel for working visits to institutions in Mexico
- To prepare and submit a dossier for Mexico as a strategic partner

Long-term Goals

- To establish a cumulative and campus-wide base of knowledge, experience, and opportunity for teaching, visiting, researching, and collaborating with Mexico
- To provide every student who graduates from IUPUI with the opportunity to learn something about Mexico
- To encourage faculty and staff to incorporate units on Mexico into their courses
- To develop new resources for additional learning (both course-based and co-curricular) on Mexico
- To establish IUPUI as an institution with particular expertise in Mexico
- To strengthen the infrastructure that supports faculty in doing research and professional projects on Mexico and with Mexican colleagues
- To increase IUPUI's ability to obtain external funding for projects on Mexico
- To encourage students from Mexico to think of IUPUI as a place to come
- To encourage IUPUI students to think of Mexico as a place for study abroad
- To develop relationships and civic engagement with Mexican communities, including the Mexican community of Indianapolis and Central Indiana
- To reduce stereotypes and enhance community understanding and respect for the Mexican community of Central Indiana, as well as for the greater Latino population
- To be a model as to what sustained, reciprocal, international, educational, and community partnerships are all about

- To create bridges and to breakdown ideological, physical, social, and political barriers that may currently thwart the fluid exchange of ideas, people, and resources between communities of students, scholars, educators, and citizens
- To expand already established institutional affiliations and to establish new or to activate relationships with already established partners
- To establish more study abroad, service-learning opportunities in Mexico
- To pool resources and avoid duplication in regards to programs on campus and in the community involving Mexico
- For IUPUI to become the university of first choice for Hispanics in Indiana
- To increase the number of students, faculty and staff who have a deep understanding of Mexican history, politics, economics, and culture
- To support faculty and staff travel to Mexico for service-learning, research, teaching, and other educational programs
- To set up joint degree programs with Mexican universities

SAVE THE DATE: OCTOBER 13, 2006 (1-5PM):
CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS:
MEXICO AS A POTENTIAL CORE STRATEGIC PARTNER
LILLY AUDITORIUM, UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, IUPUI

The Mexico Interest Group will be hosting a community and campus forum on October 13, 2006 (in the University Library) where we are inviting members of the Mexican community of Central Indiana and individuals from IUPUI with interests in Mexico to come together and converse about this potential core partnership. The goals of these conversations are multiple, but the primary aim by the end of the day is to produce another document such as this here document that will define the parameters of a partnership with Mexico though that is developed and based upon community and campus input. At this point, the partnership has been primarily defined from the perspective of the IUPUI Mexican Interest Group and we need and are eager to receive feedback from local community and other campus constituents. With this said, the goals of the Campus and Community Conversations are as such...

- To determine and outline the parameters for proposing a strategic partnership with Mexico
- To facilitate a conversation for those with links to Mexico on the IUPUI campus and in the Central Indiana community such that they provide feedback on how a strategic partnership with Mexico would be beneficial and would reinforce their own civic and academic initiatives.
- To have sufficient campus and community input to clearly define our next steps
- To gain community, faculty, staff, and student support for the future development of Mexico as a strategic partner
- To strengthen and further forge relationships and collaborative activities between campus and community
- To establish criteria for determining which institutional partnerships in Mexico are most strategic, and how they can support each other

- To provide the foundation, criteria, and short- and long-term goals for the core partnership with Mexico.
- To publicize and engage other units on campus to become involved in the development of Mexico as a strategic partner
- To promote the partnership across the campus and community
- To produce a detailed, comprehensive list of community and campus needs
- To have community and campus constituents fully involved in eventual preparation and submission of dossier for Mexico as a strategic core partner
- To produce another document, such as this here document, that details the parameters for and next steps in developing a strategic partnership with Mexico and that is produced with comprehensive input from campus and community constituents

Preliminary Format of Community and Campus Conversation

I Introduction (1/2 hour) 1:00-1:30

- Speakers include Chancellor Bantz, Dean Plater, and Associate Dean Susan Sutton

II First Breakout Sessions (We will have 4 focus groups) (55 minutes) 1:35-2:30pm

- Beginning to create vision of partnership through dialogue

III Refreshment Break (15 minutes) 2:30-2:45

IV Panel of Leaders/Deans (55 minutes) 2:45-3:40pm

- How They Define Their Vision of the Partnership
- Leaders/Deans will have a prepared statement that they will present to the group
- Speakers will include Consul Sergio Aguilera

V Short Breakout Session (1/2 hours) 3:40-4:10pm

- The 4 groups reconvene and to, if necessary, incorporate leaders sentiments in to their visions of the partnership and to prepare brief presentation

VI Round-up/Conclusion (45 minutes) 4:15-5:00pm

- The 4 Groups Present Their Visions of the Partnership (ideas, concerns, possible activities, institutional affiliations to pursue, purpose, goals, etc.)

This Community Conversation will be video- or audiotaped. Participants will be invited to reconvene in the spring to discuss the progress of the partnership.

For more information on any of the above events and discussions, please contact Hilary E. Kahn (hkahn@iupui.edu), 317-274-3812, IUPUI Office of International Affairs, 902 W. New York St., ES 2126, Indianapolis IN 46202-5197.