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## UC San Diego Extends Global Partnership to University in Tijuana

### MOU will cement UC San Diego's partnership with Universidad Autonoma de Baja California, Mexico



*UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla meeting with scholars and researchers in Tijuana in May, 2013. Photos by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications*

The University of California, San Diego and the Universidad Autonoma de Baja California, Mexico (UABC) have embarked on an initiative to increase collaboration and exchange among students and faculty from both universities. The initiative was formalized by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla and UABC President Felipe Cuamea Velazquez.

“We are extremely proud that UC San Diego is strengthening our partnership with the Universidad Autonoma de Baja California,”

said Khosla. “Strategically, this initiative is very important to our campus, as we are located in an ideal space for cross-border collaborations with large student populations on both sides. Our unique location allows for the meaningful exchange of ideas and resources between our students and faculty.”

UC San Diego's collaboration with UABC will include any desirable and feasible activity to foster cooperation between both institutions. Such interaction may include: exchanges of faculty; exchanges of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars; joint research projects and publications; exchanges of publications, materials and information; and special short-term programs and visits.

“The MOU consolidates mutual visions of higher education, research and innovation, and serves to advance human resources and economic development for both countries,” Cuamea Velazquez said.

The five-year partnership supports the objectives of the Mexican program “Proyecta 100,000,” which looks to boost student mobility and academic exchanges between the two countries. The program’s primary goal is to have 100,000 Mexican students studying in U.S. colleges and universities by 2018. The program also aims for 50,000 U.S. students to study in Mexico.

The MOU between UC San Diego and UABC is building upon additional collaborations the campus has with higher education institutions in Mexico, according to Gordon Hanson, acting dean of the School of International Relations and Pacific Studies.

“UC San Diego has a long history of partnership with Mexico, especially through our Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies,” Hanson said. “Together, we are working on research to inform policy and industry decisions about investment in public infrastructure and workforce development on both sides of the border. The more we strengthen collaborations between the U.S. and Mexico, the more we can improve the lives of citizens in both countries.”

Olivia Graeve, a professor in the department of mechanical and aerospace engineering at the UC San Diego Jacobs School of Engineering and Francisco Villarreal, a professor at the UC San Diego School of Medicine, helped spearhead this initiative. Both Graeve and Villarreal are originally from Tijuana and UC San Diego alumni. Graeve is director of the REACH summer program which promotes cross-border friendships and academic collaboration by bringing high school students from both sides of the border to the UC San Diego campus to study science and engineering fields.

“I am thrilled this partnership has been established to deepen the relationship between UC San Diego and UABC to support many ongoing initiatives similar to the REACH program,” Graeve said. “UC San Diego also works with UABC faculty at the UC San Diego Health Frontiers in Tijuana (HFIT) clinic. The HFIT clinic, staffed with diverse demographics of UC San Diego and UABC faculty and students, provides healthcare for the medically underserved in Tijuana.”

The Center for U.S. Mexican Studies (USMEX), based at UC San Diego’s School of International Relations and Pacific Studies (IR/PS), has ongoing collaboration with UABC faculty in economics and international relations. In addition, some UABC faculty members are former fellows of the center, as it has one of the largest residential fellowship programs in the U.S. for multidisciplinary research on Mexico.

The center also helped UC San Diego establish a similar MOU with Colegio de la Frontera Norte (Colef), a prestigious Mexican institution focusing on social science research. USMEX engages in many collaborative research efforts with Colef. This fall, the partnership helped spur the “[Jobs without Borders: Employment, Industry Concentrations, and Comparative Advantage in the CaliBaja Region](#)” report. The findings of the report revealed opportunities for economic integration between San Diego and Tijuana.

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#### MEDIA CONTACT

**Christine Clark**, 858-534-7618, [ceclark@ucsd.edu](mailto:ceclark@ucsd.edu)

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