

ECON 4855 – 001: US-MEXICO ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Fall 2026

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Office: *344 Wooten Hall*
Class: *MW 11:10-12:30, Rm #117 Wooten Hall*
Office Hrs: *MW from 1-2 or by appointment*

Course Purpose and Objectives

This course is a study of the economic relations between the two countries with a particular emphasis on the relation between Texas-Mexico. This border is not only of significance because it is our border but because the U.S. and Mexico have the longest border between a first world economy and a developing economy. In addition, the US is the largest export and import country for Mexico and Mexico ranks among the largest external markets for the US. Mexico is a large source of labor for the US and Mexico receives a large portion of its international currency through remittances sent back by these workers. The economic ties also extend to illegal contraband. This includes the northbound drug trade and the southbound goods (including guns). To fully understand the economic ties we will review historical aspects, political aspects, environmental issues, as well as labor and capital mobility issues.

Required Text

There is no required text.

Recommended readings will be placed on CANVAS

Grading

This semester's course will be weighted as follows:

First Midterm	30%
Second Midterm	30%
Homework	10%
Final Exam (comprehensive)	30%

Subject

I) *Introduction*

Background: U.S.-Mexico war and establishment of the U.S. Border, US-Mexico Trade patterns, oil discoveries in Mexico, labor issues, etc.

II) *The Border and the Maquiladora Industry*

The Border Industrialization Program(BIP). The misnomer of the term “industry.” The integration of Mexican industrial production and US offshore production. The four stages of the Maquiladora industry.

II) *Maquiladora Industry (cont.)*

Maquiladora industry as the precursor to the NAFTA. Senator Lloyd Millard Bentsen (TX) attempts to create a Free Trade Zone (FTZ) between US and Mexico. USITC hearings on FTZ that sets a governmental blueprint for a US-Mexico Free Trade agreement (1985).

III) *International Economic Integration and NAFTA*

Different levels of economic integration. FTA is the least inclusive of all levels of economic integration. Early work by Sidney Weintraub (1984) entitled: ‘Free Trade Between Mexico and the U.S.’”

IV) *The Forces Behind NAFTA*

Fall of the Soviet Union and Mexico’s admittance to GATT. Political benefit and strategic benefit to establishing FTA with Mexico and Mexico’s desire to show national benefits to open markets. Transnationals interest in reducing tariffs, establishing clear dispute resolution procedures, increasing trucking availability on both sides of the border, and ensuring Mexico’s commitment to open markets. US having relative and absolute capital advantage, US labor oppose and join forces with environmental groups. Mexico having the relative labor advantage places Mexican labor in a economic and political conundrum.

V) *The NAFTA negotiations*

US desire to keep talks out of the public eye and Mexico’s desire to make them public. Canada joins into a tri-national negotiation as a means of renegotiating the US-Canada FTA particularly the automobile sector. Economic models used to predict outcome of a NAFTA (including computable general equilibrium models). Negotiations under a Uruguay-GATT format. The importance of the Anatole Hotel in Dallas as Mexico concedes maize. Fast-Track and WTO/NAFTA. Clinton’s side agreements.

VI) *NAFTA: Evaluation and Future Prospects*

U.S.-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT (USMCA) and current status

VIIa) *Migration (Labor Movement)*

The Bracero program and the exclusion of Texas. End of Bracero program and BIP. Models of migration. Migration networks. Impact of remittances to the Mexican economy. Unauthorized population in the US. Economic impact of migrants in the US.

VIIb) Remittances

The importance to Mexico

VIIc) Brain Drain

The impact on the US and Mexico

VIII) The Border

VIIIa) Transportation, Retail, Wellbeing along the border

The Drayage System, retail both north and south, Anderson and Gerber (2020). The US-Mexico Border Human Development Index, 1990–2015

VIIIb) Issues *Environmental Issues*

NAFTA and Environmental side agreement. NADBank. Industrial development along the border and the environment.

VIIIc) *The Militarization of the Border (War on Drugs and post 9/11)*

Increase of resources (both civilian and military) along the US Mexican border.

IX) *Regional Integration*

State export data to Mexico in absolute terms, as percentage of state total exports and as a percentage of State Domestic product. Unauthorized Mexican population in each state. Mexican state's exports of goods and services and migrants to the US

X) *Income Distribution and other economic issues*

Gini coefficient and other measurements of income distribution in each country. Impact of remittances and foreign direct investment on income distribution in Mexico as well as different regions.

Semester Schedule

Week	TOPIC
8/17	<i>I – Introduction</i>
8/19	<i>I - Continue ; II – The Border and the Maquiladora Industry</i>
8/24	<i>II – Continue; III - International Economic Integration and NAFTA</i>
8/31	<i>IV – Forces behind NAFTA; V The NAFTA negotiation</i>
9/9 (wed)	<i>VI - U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) and future prospects</i>

9/14 *First Exam (Tentative)*

9/21 VIIa Migration (Labor movement)

9/28 VIIa – Continue VIIb Remittances , VIIc – Brain Drain

10/5 VIII The Border

10/12 VIIla – Transportation, retail, wellbeing along the border

10/19 VIIlb environment and VIIlc - *The Militarization of the Border (War on Drugs and post 9/11) and The Wall*

11/9 *Second Exam (Tentative)*

11/16 IX - Regional Integration

11/23 *Thanksgiving Break (all week)*

11/30 X - Income Distribution and other economic issues



Final Exam (December 5, Saturday) 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (Note the day and time)

Attendance Policy

Attendance will be taken until the census date to ensure that you are on the roll. After that, attendance is encouraged. The exams will be guided by the time devoted to certain topics in the class sessions. In other words, missing class will reduce your knowledge of what topics will be covered more extensively in the exam.

Students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. It is important that you communicate with me prior to being absent, so you and I can discuss and mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of course learning goals. Please inform me if you are unable to attend class meetings because you are ill, in mindfulness of the health and safety of everyone in our community.

**Cheating
and
Plagiarism**

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. [Insert specific sanction or academic penalty for specific academic integrity violation].

ADA Accommodation

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will

provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to the UNT Learning Management System (LMS) for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 [insert administration dates] of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey, they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

Survivor Advocacy

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oco@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Blackboard online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional informa