



Inquiry into Australia's relationship with Mexico

TR point "c": potential opportunities for enhanced trade and investment ties, in particular those emanating from the proposed Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP);”

“Submission into the viability of establishing an Australia-Mexico/Latin America Institute’ (TPP countries Mexico/Peru/Chile)”

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“The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.”

Albert Einstein-

Executive Summary



Governments worldwide recognise the critical role of “Think Tanks” and research institutions” to develop evidence-based policy-making (EBP). Australia has a number of strong university based research centres and institutes and government institutions focused on Latin America, but Australia does not have an “Australia-Mexico Institute” either for Mexico or for Latin America to serve as a platform for public discussion of contemporary Latin America and Australia’s relations with the region. We believe that such an institute, which could serve as a space for collaborative contributions from multiple sectors, including government, universities, media and business communities (from both Australia, Mexico and other Latin American countries) would be of great value on a number of fronts, including for improving Australia’s relations with the region, informing policy decisions, improving public education about the region, and engaging meaningfully with the increasing number of highly skilled migrants arriving from the region.

It is clear that Australian political and academic interest in Mexico and the region is growing exponentially. For instance, on the political front, Hon Julie Bishop, Australian Foreign Affairs Minister visited Mexico in April 2014. Australia and Mexico signed, as members of the 12 countries grouping, the TPP agreement on the 6th of October 2015¹. Mexico appointed Rodolfo Esau Garza as its first ever trade representative (ProMexico) in Australia in March 2015. On the academic front, in less than 18 months, two books dealing with the strategic importance of this relationship² have or will be published. In 2014, Professor Barry Carr and Dr John Minns, launched their book *Australia and Latin America: Challenges and Opportunities in the new Millennium*³ (funded by COALAR). This was the first multi-authored and refereed strategic study of its kind published in Australia. In the first half of 2016, a second book of essays, *Australian-Latin American Relations: New Links in A Changing Global Landscape*⁴ will see the light of the day, edited by Dr Elizabeth Kath. However, we need more and regular research efforts that track and analyse a broader

¹ <http://www.skynews.com.au/news/top-stories/2015/10/06/pacific-countries-seal-free-trade-pact.html>

² Dr Del Rio is one of the many contributors to both books

³ Barry Carr and John Minns, eds (2014). *Australia and Latin America Challenges and Opportunities in the New Millennium*, ANU Press, Canberra.

⁴ Kath, E. ed (2016). *Australian-Latin American Relations New Links in a Changing Global Landscape*, Palgrave MacMillan. <http://www.palgrave.com/page/detail/AustralianLatin-American-Relations/?K=9781137501912>



range of specific trade, economic and political contemporary issues in some depth, research that can be used to develop, modify and/or influence Australia's policy for the Latin American region.

In this brief submission we propose the establishment of an Australian-Mexico-Latin America Institute that focuses firstly on Mexico and at a later date, can expand its scope to include other countries that will be part of the TPP trade grouping and subsequently to other countries in Latin America. This submission provides evidence of the intellectual resources currently available in Australia and on which the Institute can draw, as well as the range of research centres and universities in Australia, Mexico (we are attaching two support letters from research Institutes in Mexico) and Latin America that might participate in this project.

Based on our analysis, we recommend that the Senate's Committee consider proposing the following five recommendations to the Government:

- 1 Forming a joint Australia-Mexico/ Latin America Institute- AMLAI taking as models organisations like the Centre for Latin American Studies (CLAS) of the University of California, at Berkeley.
- 2 Providing funding of \$500,000 a year, for a period of five years to establish the AMLAI.
- 3 Inviting a range of universities and research organisations in Australia and Mexico to be part of this Institute.
- 4 Expanding the research portfolio of the Institute to include other Latin American countries members of the TPP's grouping (Peru and Chile) by July 2017.
- 5 Include other Latin American countries (Argentina, Colombia, Uruguay and Brazil) as part of the Institute's core research responsibilities by July 2018.

Introduction



Governments worldwide recognise the critical role of “Think Tank” and research institutions” to develop evidence-based policy-making (EBP)⁵. Governments find EBP a lot easier to implement across party lines as these policies are sound and less subject to open criticism⁶. Although there are some centres of this kind in Australia (APEC/ Lowy Institute) and Mexico (El Colegio de Mexico, CIDE, UNAM, APEC Centres/Consortium) that undertake research trade, investment and other economic areas, there is no specific organisation conducting ongoing and specialised in these fields. An Australia-Mexico-Latin America Institute could provide evidence based research to support policy initiatives for the Australian Government, DFAT and Austrade, and the Institute’s counterparts in Mexico for the Mexican Government, (Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs-SRE and ProMexico) concerning strategic sectors involving Australia and Mexico that are rarely studied, such as: infrastructure, energy, water, mining, pharmaceuticals, agribusiness, climate change etc. DFAT is fully aware of the benefits of these types of organizations, as it has supported similar endeavors like the establishment of the Australia-Indonesia Center⁷ and the Australia-India Institute (within the University of Melbourne)⁸.

In this brief Submission we map the idea for the establishment of a mostly virtual Institute that it may focus firstly, in Mexico and at a later date, expands its research scope to other countries members of the TPP trade grouping and subsequently to other countries in Latin America. It is envisage that this would be a small Institute in nature, that it would carry most of its activities by networking and relying on the intellectual talent already in place in Australia and leveraging its research resources with sister organizations in Mexico and Latin America. The Institute could provide 10 annual research grants for \$15,000 to researchers working on strategic areas aligned with Australia’s political, trade and economic interests and its economic diplomacy Agenda. It would also organize two major events, every year, to allow networking and the flow of information among interested parties.

This analysis provides an overall description of the most prominent organisations

⁵ McGann, J. G. (2005). Think Tank and Policy Advice in The US, Foreign Policy Research Institute Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

⁶ Rich, A. and others (2011) Think Tank in Policy Making – Do They Matter? Briefing Paper Special Issue | September 2011, The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)

⁷ <http://australiaindonesiacentre.org>

⁸ <http://www.aii.unimelb.edu.au/funding-partners>



researching/working towards strengthening Australia's relationship in Latin America. It highlights their strengths and weaknesses. It also describes the attempts made in 2008 by Melbourne University and a group of interested parties to create a Centre of Excellence on Australia-Latin America. Finally, based on our analysis, we propose the creation of a *mostly virtual* Australia-Mexico Institute Centre (modeled on organisations such as CLAS at Berkeley University).

Developing stronger relationships with Mexico and Latin America

There are many ways to encourage researchers to share their knowledge on a particular subject: the organization of conferences, dialogues and forums has been the method of choice in Australia when dealing with Latin America. In the last five years, the federal, state governments and several universities have organized events to explore the possibility of Australia developing stronger relationships with Latin America by finding common strategic and economic interests. Some of the most widely know events in the last five years have been the Latin American Dialogue, organised by the University of Melbourne, on the 29-30 August 2012⁹, (on the 20th of March 2013 the University of Melbourne organized another country-specific dialogue in Brazil)¹⁰, the Melbourne Latin America Education Symposium¹¹ organized by the Victorian Government on the 12-14 of March 2014, Swinburne University- organized Symposium “Rediscovering El Dorado: Leadership in building relations with Latin America” on the 28th of March 2015¹². The University of Queensland organized a Australia Latin American Colloquium in October 2014¹³ and is organizing the 2015 Australia Latin American Colloquium for mid October 2015¹⁴, and the Australian-Latin America Business Council (ALABAC) has been very active in promoting annual business events , in particular in the area of mining and energy. More specific to Mexico, in June 2014, “the Council for Australia Latin America Relations (COALAR) supported the inaugural Australia-Mexico Second Track Dialogue at the ANU’s Australian National Centre for Latin American Studies (ANCLAS)”¹⁵. While these events have been very successful and form part of a whole set of activities to develop strong relationships with a particular country or region, they have been very sporadic and isolated in nature. It would be very positive if some of these

⁹<http://www.latinamericadialogue.unimelb.edu.au/sites/default/files/docs/MLAD%20Extended%20Program.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.latinamericadialogue.unimelb.edu.au/brazil-australia-dialogue>

¹¹ <http://dsdbi.vic.gov.au/what-we-do/promote-trade-and-industry/international-education/melbourne-latin-america-education-symposium>

¹² <http://www.swinburne.edu.au/leadership-institute/events/rediscovering-el-dorado/>

¹³ <http://www.uq.edu.au/international/latin-american-colloquium>

¹⁴ <http://www.uq.edu.au/international/2015-latin-american-colloquium>

¹⁵ <http://dfat.gov.au/geo/mexico/pages/mexico-country-brief.aspx>



events and activities are better aligned to Australia's federal and state priorities in Latin America.

There are individuals who have also contributed to the Latin America research agenda. Dr. Elizabeth Kath from the School of Global, Urban & Social Studies, RMIT University has been very active since 2013, organizing events and/or producing research related to the strategic relationship between Australia and Latin America. Also within the RMIT, Angel Calderón has been very prolific producing research about higher education issues related to Australia and Latin America. Alexis Esposito, from Swinburne University, has also been active organizing events in Australia and Latin America on economic related issues, funded by COALAR¹⁶. Melbourne University does not have a Latin American Studies Centre but it has a number of Latin American experts working for the University. The UniMelb experts' database includes 24 researchers with expertise in Mexico in a variety of disciplines¹⁷. There are two experts in Mexico, well known in the Latin American Studies circles, one is A/P Adrian Hearn from Languages and Linguistics and the second one is Professor John Sinclair who is an Honorary Professorial Fellow in the School of Historical and Philosophical Studies. Nevertheless this submission is focusing in established Centres for Latin American Studies rather than individual expertise.

Organizations in Australia focused in Mexico/Latin America

Australia has a variety of high quality organizations that have a research focus in Latin America and that could be an integral part of the virtual Australia-Mexico Institute proposed in this Submission. In this section we analyse four of the most prominent ones (ILAS, ANCLAS, SURCLAS and the APEC Centre), one government organization (COALAR) and one association that covers Australasia (AILASA).

Overview of Latin American Studies Centers (LASC) in Australia

Attempting to synthesize the breadth of the research conducted by all the Latin American Studies Centres is a big challenge and something that is not our intention to carry out in detail. However, for the purpose of this submission we have produced the following summary for *indicative* purposes only:

¹⁶ Dr. Alexis Esposito is imparting the Seminar: History of Microeconomic Reform in Australia: Lessons for Latin America? In Argentina, Peru, Colombia, Chile and Brazil during October/November 2015.

¹⁷ http://unimelbourne-search.clients.funnelback.com/s/search.html?query=Mexico&collection=unimelb-researchers&start_rank=11



- 1 Based on the Information reported on each of the LASC websites¹⁸, we identified researchers and their research interests. If this information was not included on the website, we did not include the researcher in question.
- 2 We did include: staff, honorary senior research fellows, honorary research fellows and visiting academics.
- 3 We did not include PhD' research students and/or topics
- 4 Following the criteria on the “Capacity of the researchers and/or policy makers to define and/or influence policy based on the research outcomes”, we classified the researchers interest in the categories:
 - a. Very aligned to the objectives of the proposed Australia-Mexico Institute
 - b. Somewhat aligned to the objectives of the proposed Australia-Mexico Institute
 - c. Not aligned to the objectives of the proposed Australia-Mexico Institute

We have to note that no conclusion about the quality of the research can be drawn from our analysis as all research conducted on Latin America is important in various disciplines for a variety of purposes. We are just making the classification on the likelihood that this research can be sourced to produce, modify and/or influence Australian evidence-based policy regarding Mexico and other Latin American countries.

ILAS at Latrobe University

The first body is the Institute for Latin American Studies at Latrobe University (ILAS)¹⁹. This Institute was the first of its kind in Australia focusing on Latin America. ILAS was founded in 1976 at La Trobe University by Barry Carr, Stephen Niblo and Rowen Ireland in 1976.

ILAS has been particularly successful carrying out research in Latin American history, sociology, politics, economics, archaeology, languages, and culture. Through a network of Honorary Research Fellows (of which, I am a member) ILAS is working

¹⁸ Organization do to always keep their Website up-to-date. We tried as much as possible to include more updated information from different sources.

¹⁹ <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/humanities/research/institutes/institute-of-latin-american-studies>



towards expanding its interests to trade, and other related areas. Led by Dr. Ralph Newmark, it runs a very successful ongoing seminar, roundtables and symposia. We can see in Table 1, the impressive expertise of ILAS on many issues related to Latin America.

There is enough expertise in ILAS to expand the research portfolio to focus more on contemporary political, economic and trade issues. ILAS has the privilege to count on some of the most widely recognized experts in Mexico and Brazil. For instance: Professor Barry Carr, is probably, the most widely known “Mexicanista” in Australian academic circles. In 2006 ILAS, led at the time by Barry Carr, was the host of the Center for Mexican Studies a project funded by La Trobe University to promote research Mexico-related issues. The concept was based on an annual alternate funding between Latrobe University and the Mexican Ministry of Education (SEP). Its core activity was going to be a major Annual Academic Conference (it did organize one Conference in 2006 inviting two high profile Mexican speakers). However funding difficulties led to the suspension of the Center after 12 months.

Rowan Ireland is an institution related to all Brazilian issues. ILAS has also the knowledge and expertise edge coming from Dr Ruth Adler currently Australian Ambassador to Ireland and Charles Mott, former Australian ambassador to Brazil.



Table 1: ILAS at Latrobe University

No.	Researcher	Research Projects	Category	Aligned with the proposed TT objectives (*)	Country Specific
1	Dr Ralph Newmark	Brazil, Cuba, Mexico, Argentina, Latin American popular culture, U.S.-Latin American relations, development studies/international development, Jamaica and the Caribbean	Popular Culture, Latin America Internat	Very Aligned	
2	Dr Heidi Zogbaum	Mexico, NAFTA, colonial Latin America, EU-Latin American relations.	Foreign Relations, Political, Economics	Very Aligned	Mexico
3	Dr Raul Sanchez Urribarri	Interests: comparative Legal Studies, judicial politics in Latin America, political regimes, r rule of law, law and development, Andean countries (Venezuela in particular).	Legal, Politics	Very Aligned	Venezuela
4	Dr Isabel Moutinho	Research interests: Contemporary fiction in Portuguese. Cultural memory and identity. Postcolonial literatures. African fiction from the Portuguese-speaking countries. Latin American (especially Colombian) literature	Literature	No	
5	Dr Laura Tolton	Colombia, violence and language against women, literature, linguistics.	Literature, Linguistics	Somewhat aligned	Colombia
6	Dr Claudia Haake	Native American history, Mexico, historical justice.	History	Somewhat aligned	Mexico
7	Carolina Rodriguez	International Development Manager, Europe and the Americas	International development	Somewhat aligned	
8	Professor Barry Carr	History, Mexico, Cuba, labour and agrarian history, history of tourism and leisure.	History, Politics, Tourism, Leisure	Very Aligned	Mexico, Cuba
9	Dr Rowan Ireland	Sociology, Brazil, religion in Latin America, development studies.	International development	Very Aligned	Brazil
10	Dr Peter Mathews	Maya and Mesoamerican archaeology, Maya hieroglyphic writing, the archaeology of compl	Archeology	Somewhat aligned	Mexico
11	Dr Gabrelle Murray	Latin American cinema, Mexico, Latin American popular culture	Culture (Cinema)	Somewhat aligned	Mexico
12	Dr Bill Murray	History, Sport, Brazil	Sports	Somewhat aligned	Brazil
13	Professor Charles Mott	International university relationships, former Australian Ambassador to Brazil	International Relations	Very Aligned	Brazil
14	Dr Ruth Adler	International relations, environmental policy, labour history, Mexico	International Relations	Very Aligned	Mexico
15	Dr Mary Aitken	history, Literature, culture, Brazil	History, Literature	No	Brazil
16	Dr Guillermo Arnad	literature, music - Tango, Argentina	Literature, Music	No	Argentina
17	Dr Zuleika Arashiro	politics, international relations, Brazil	International Relations, Politics	Very Aligned	Brazil
18	Dr Faye Bendrups	(already mentioned in ANCLAS)			
19	Dr Diana Bourne	anthropology, womens' health, Colombia	Anthropology, Health	Somewhat aligned	Colombia
20	Dr Helga Geovannini	archaeology, Mayans, Mexico	Archeology	Somewhat aligned	Mexico
21	Dr Andrew Harvey	history, William Lane, Paraguay	History	No	Paraguay
22	Dr Anne Jones	unionism, international solidarity, Chile	Unionism, Political	Somewhat aligned	Chile
23	Dr Beryl Langer	sociology, migration, Central America	Migration	Somewhat aligned	
24	Ms Anna Lanyon	colonial history, literature, Mexico	History, Literature	No	Mexico
25	Dr Simon Overall	Indigenous languages, linguistics, Peru, Ecuador	Languages, Linguistics	Somewhat aligned	Peru, Ecuador
26	Dr Goetz Ottmann	sociology, Brazil	Sociology	Somewhat aligned	Brazil
27	Dr Peter Woodruff	history, development, Peru	Development	Somewhat aligned	Peru
28	Dr Les Hazell	archaeology, Olmecs, indigenous voyaging, prehistoric engineering, Mexico	Archeology	No	Mexico
29	Dr Michelle Carmody	history, nationalism, human rights, Argentina	Human Rights	Very Aligned	Argentina
30	Dr Randal Sheppard	history, modern Mexican politics, Mexico	Politics	Very Aligned	Mexico
31	Dr Sylvia Whitmore	Archaeology, Mexico	Archeology	No	Mexico
32	Dr Guy Emerson	politics, regional co-operation, Venezuela.	Politics	Very Aligned	Venezuela
33	Dr Andrew Soh	Economics, Venezuela	Economics	Very Aligned	Venezuela
34	Dr Victor Albert	Sociology, Brazil	Sociology	Somewhat aligned	Brazil
35	Dr Carl Callaway	Archaeology, Mexico	Archeology	No	Mexico
36	Dr Mario Trinidad	History, Guatemala	History	Somewhat aligned	Guatemala
37	Dr Michaela Callaghan	History Peru	History	Somewhat aligned	Peru
38	Dr Victor del Rio	Management, Education, Commerce, Mexico	Commerce, Education	Very Aligned	Mexico
39	Dr Tyson White	Archaeology, Mexico	Archeology	No	Mexico

(*) Criteria: Capacity of the researchers and/or policy makers to define and/or influence policy based on the research outcomes
Source: Information as stated in the ILAS Website: <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/humanities/research/institutes/institute-of-latin-american-studies>



Table 2: ANCLAS Australian National University

No.	Researcher	Research Projects	Category	Aligned with the proposed TT objectives (*)	Country Specific
		NAFTA US foreign policy and Latin America Paulo Freire Worker cooperatives in Argentina and alternatives to the market			
1	Dr John Minns	Mining and indigenous people in Peru	Policy, Mining, Cooperatives	Very Aligned	Mexico, Argentina, Peru
2	Dr Faye Bendrups	New social movements in Latin America	Social movements	Very Aligned	
3	Dr Tom Chodor	Book: Neoliberal hegemony and the pink tide in Latin America: breaking up with TINA?	Latin American Politics	Very Aligned	
		Book Chapter: Post-liberal regionalism in Latin America and the influence of Hugo Chavez	Latin American Politics	Very Aligned	Venezuela
4	Dr Eugenia Demuro (1)	Contemporary Latin American literature through the lens of Decolonial Theory. She is also interested in looking at contemporary Latin American social movements from a decolonial perspective.	History, Literature	No	
5	Dr Ian Farrington	South America, Inka archaeology and ethnohistory, Landscape Archaeology, particularly aspects of the sacred.	Archeology	No	
		The Rights of Nature in Ecuador: Battles over Legal Animism; Erin Fitz-Henry 2015,			
6	Dr Erin Fitz-Henry (2)	'Greening the Petrochemical State: Between Energy Sovereignty and Sumak Kawsay in Coastal Ecuador',	Anthropology	Very Aligned	Ecuador
		Contemporary Latin American Literature (cultural revitalization and reencounter) Hispanic language and culture through cinema and AVESPE (Acquisition of varieties of Spanish through Films). Indigenous language policies and Intercultural Bilingual Education Critical Discourse Analysis written and oral texts (literary short stories and indigenous cultural representations through various mediums: documentary and feature films, poetry, the media) Multimedia and technology in Foreign Language Teaching and Task Based Language Teaching	Languages and Literature	Somewhat aligned	
7	Dr Martha Florez				
8	Associate Professor Alastair Greig	Challenging Global Inequality, radical Latin American politics	Industrial sociology; Urban Sociology; Housing Studies; Globalisation, Environmental Sociology	Somewhat aligned	
9	Dr Mario Daniel Martin	Iberian Languages Creative Writing (Incl. Playwriting) Literature In Spanish And Portuguese	Languages and Literature		
10	Dr Anthea McCarthy-Jones (3)	Venezuelan politics; Latin American regionalism; policy-making; developing nations	Politics	Very Aligned	Venezuela
		Criminology Sociology Sociological Methodology And Research Methods Urban Sociology And Community Studies Causes And Prevention Of Crime Criminological Theories Other Studies In Human Society Social Theory			
11	Dr Rolando Ochoa Hernandez		Crime (Kidnapping)	Very Aligned	Mexico
12	Dr Sean Burgess (4)	Brazilian foreign and development policy, inter-American affairs, the international aspects of democratization, South-South relations and the evolution of the global political economy viewed from the South.	Foreign Policy, Democracy	Very Aligned	Brazil

(1) Works for Deakin University since 2014

(2) Works at the University of Melbourne

(3) working for the University of Canberra

(4) Working for ANCLAS but not included in the Website

(*) Criteria: Capacity of the researchers and/or policy makers to define and/or influence policy based on the research outcomes

Source: Information as stated in the ANCLAS Website: <http://politicsir.cass.anu.edu.au/centres/australian-national-centre-for-latin-american-studies/people>



ANCLAS

The Australian National Centre for Latin American Studies (ANCLAS)²⁰ is led by John Minns. The Center “...exists to develop research and teaching in Latin American Studies, particularly in the fields of the social sciences and humanities, business and economics. ANCLAS aims to promote mutual interest and exchange between Australian and Latin American scholars and to raise broader public awareness and understanding of Latin America in Australia.”²¹ The proximity of ANCLAS to the Federal Parliament and to Latin American Embassies in Canberra gives this Center a lot of clout and enables it to draw on political talent and overseas VIP visits from Latin America. COALAR and ANCLAS organized, for example, the Australia-Mexico Second Track Dialogue. ANCLAS has formed a high profile Board, a strong ten academic member’s team and one adjunct fellow and has managed to attract a substantial number of past and present visiting fellows (9) and visitors (2)²². Table 2 shows the staff’s expertise available at ANCLAS:

ANCLAS has strong research expertise in Mexico, Brazil and Venezuela. It’s Director, John Minns has shown a strong willingness to expand ANCLAS research portfolio on Latin America.

There is also scope to widen ANCLAS’s research agenda to focus more on politics and trade. ANCLAS has been and could contribute more to the Australia-Mexico Institute Center.

SURCLA

The Sydney University Research Community for Latin America (SURCLA) is “...is an academic research network that was originally conceived by the Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies (School of Languages and Cultures)” and “provides a dynamic forum for scholarly communication and interaction, a site of debate where members share their ideas, strategies and research experiences with the common goal of advancing knowledge of Latin America”²³. SURCLA has only three staff members

²⁰ <http://politicsir.cass.anu.edu.au/centres/australian-national-centre-for-latin-american-studies>

²¹ <http://politicsir.cass.anu.edu.au/centres/australian-national-centre-for-latin-american-studies/about>

²² <http://politicsir.cass.anu.edu.au/centres/australian-national-centre-for-latin-american-studies/people>

²³ http://sydney.edu.au/arts/spanish_latin_american/surcla/



dedicated to the Centre. It relies on a strong network of academics and students mainly conducting research at the University of Sydney, in a variety of topics related to Latin America. It organizes regular events related to the region. SURCLA organized the AILASA 2014 - Voicing Dissent International Conference. Table 3 shows a summary of the research topics reported in the SURCLA's website.

Table 3: SURCLA at the University of Sydney

No.	Researcher	Research Projects	Category	Aligned with the proposed IT objectives (*)	Country Specific
1	Dr Vek Lewis, Fernanda Peñaloza and Dr Verónica Quinteros	Latin American Migration in Sydney: The Chilean Case'	Ethnographic Studies	Somewhat aligned	Chile
2	Dr Vek Lewis,	Study on sexuality, gender identity and Latin American migrants in Sydney	Gender Studies	No	
	Other researchers working in topics related to Mexico not listed in the SURCLA's Website as staff members				
3	Professor Adam Morton	Revolution and State in Modern Mexico	Politics, History	Very aligned	Mexico
4	César Albarrán-Torres, Prof. Gerard Goggan, Dr Fernanda Peñaloza	MEMES AND POLITICAL SATIRE IN MEXICO: THE MANY INTERNET	Media Studies	Very aligned	Mexico

(*) Criteria: Capacity of the researchers and/or policy makers to define and/or influence policy based on the research outcomes
Source: Information as stated in the ILAS Website: <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/humanities/research/institutes/institute-of-latin-american-studies>

AILASA

AILASA²⁴ was established in 1993 with several aims, including:

- To promote research into and the teaching of Iberian and Latin American Studies in Australasia;
- To promote public awareness of and interest in the Iberian Peninsula and Latin America²⁵;

AILASA has more than 100 active members. Its main event is a biannual Conference and it produces the JILAR – Journal of Iberian and Latin American Research which appears three times each year. "...The journal is fully refereed, edited by an editorial committee based in Sydney and is genuinely inter-disciplinary, covering such fields as history, politics, international relations, sociology, literature, linguistics, cultural studies and popular culture. JILAR publishes contributions in Spanish, Portuguese and English."²⁶ The former editors of JILAR, Blanca Tovas and Prof. David Cahill are some of the most respected academic "latinamericanistas" in Australia.

AILASA is seen as the most reputable Latin American studies' academic association in Australia and New Zealand. The biannual AILASA conferences tend to be highly successful and attract academics, government officials and practitioners with strong interest in Latin America. AILASA could be a strong source of talent and networking for the proposed Australia-Mexico Institute Centre.

²⁴ <http://ailasa.org>

²⁵ <http://ailasa.org/about/about-ailasa/>

²⁶ <http://ailasa.org/jilar-journal/what-is-jilar/>



COALAR

The COALAR website states: "... The Council on Australia Latin America Relations (COALAR) was established by the Australian Government in 2001 to enhance Australia's economic, political and social relations with Latin America.

The Council's objectives are the achievement of:

- a enhanced and strengthened links between Australia and Latin America in the priority areas of business, education, sustainability, tourism and cultural promotion;
- b a closer engagement between corporate Australia with Latin America
- c an increased awareness and understanding of Australia in Latin America, and of Latin America in Australia"²⁷.

COALAR has played a central role to move forward the Australia- Latin America Agenda by funding initiatives that bring together both regions and events that increases our mutual understanding.

While there is a strong connection between COALAR and ALABAC and the Latin American diplomatic representatives in Canberra, there are some strategic connections lacking. There is room to improve.

The 2007 House of Representatives enquiry on the relationship between Australia and Mexico recommended that COALAR should:

"...strengthen links with Australian academics engaged in the delivery of Spanish language and Latin American studies"

The implementation of this 2007 Inquiry's recommendation is yet to be fully implemented. However, COALAR has an education subcommittee whose main goal is to export Australian educational services to Latin America. This is the only formal

²⁷ <http://dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/foundations-councils-institutes/coalar/pages/council-for-australia-latin-america-relations-coalar.aspx>



academic link between COALAR and the Academic World²⁸. No members of COALAR have ever attended any of AILASA's biannual meetings.

There is not a clear link between COALAR and the individual Latin American Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Australia and overseas and/or COALAR and the Latin America community in Australia. Most importantly there is not a clear linkage between COALAR and the State Governments. COALAR, DFAT and Embassies, Austrade, the APEC Centre and the State Governments could be an important conduit to identify/fund research priorities for our proposed Australia-Mexico Institute Centre. COALAR may also benefit from an extended Council that would bring all the missing connections described above to the decision making table.

APEC

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation APEC Centre at RMIT University is "... a centre of excellence for regional capacity building in policy areas related to trade, finance, investment, infrastructure, and structural reform". The APEC Centre also aims: "...to organise conferences, workshops, regional dialogues, symposia, research and training programs involving regional and international policy markets, regulators and businesses in support of APEC's objectives and wider regional interests". These are two important components of the Australia-Mexico Institute Centre proposed. APEC has Mexico, Peru and Chile as members. There are four APEC research centres in Mexico (known in Mexico as Consortium-CEA) which carried out research related to APEC²⁹. The different research APEC Centres are linked and collaborate and exchange research information.

The research of the APEC Centres in Australia are aligned and focus with the goals of making this trade organization successful. This issue constrains, while aligned to the spirit of the APEC's grouping, limits the breadth of its research. Interestingly there are no formal connections between any of the University research centres in Australia

²⁸ There are exceptions like the funding of the second Australia-Mexico Track Dialogue (COALAR-ANCLAS) and the funding for the book *Australia and Latin America: Challenges and Opportunities in the new Millenium* (ANCLAS and ILAS via Prof. Barry Carr). Prof. Margaret Gardner- the then Vice-chancellor of the RMIT was a member of COALAR). COALAR has an education Subcommittee, which focuses mainly in working strategies to exporting education services to Latin America.

²⁹ Melba E. Falck Reyes, Consorcio Mexicano de Centros de Estudios del APEC, Departamento de Estudios del Pacífico(DEP), del Centro Universitario de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades (CUCSH), de la Universidad de Guadalajara (UdeG).



described above and the APEC Centre at the RMIT.

Melbourne University's endeavors to create an Australian-Latin America Centre of Excellence

The closest we have ever been of seeing an Australia- Latin America Centre of Excellence becoming a reality was in August 2008.

[In November 2007] the University and the Latin American Diplomatic Corps jointly hosted a high-level seminar on foreign affairs relations between Australia and Latin America, in the areas of Mining, Agriculture and Foreign Affairs. The seminar was supported by the Heads of Mission of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela. The forum offered an opportunity for heads of diplomatic missions, government officials, academics and employers to exchange ideas that could enhance relations between Latin America and Australia in the economic, political and social arenas. The seminar was held on Thursday 22 November at the Woodward Conference Centre”³⁰.

This was a very successful academic/diplomatic gathering, which opened the landscape to explore further engagement opportunities. As a follow up of the Latin American seminar, the Deputy-Vice chancellor Research, Professor Frank Larkin, Telmo Languiller MP and Ben Foskett (Investment Victoria) backed the idea of a Centre of Excellence. Professor Larkin convened a group of people within Melbourne University and the Victorian Government – to work on a project to expand the relationship between Australia, Spain and Latin America and to explore in more detail the viability of a Centre of Excellence. The working group was formed by Telmo Languiller MP and people associated with Melbourne University: Professors Joseph Le Bianco, John Griffiths, Richard Roush, Rodrigo Marino, John Sinclair and myself, Dr. Victor Del Rio. Out of this group, we formed an informal sub-group to further discuss the different options to move forward this agenda. As a result of our discussions at the Subcommittee level, on the 18th of April 2008, we agreed to the following (Summary only):

- adopt a strategy where the political, economic, trade, educational social and

³⁰ <http://archive.uninews.unimelb.edu.au/view-62042.html>



cultural (artistic) of this relationship are understood as a package. If we want to increase the specific relationship between the University of Melbourne and Spain and Latin America this approach should be followed.

- The teaching of the Spanish language and its re-introduction to school curriculum is a first step towards developing awareness in the Australian community regarding the importance of Spain and Latin America. This re-introduction will be on the basis of “adding” to the teaching of other languages than English, rather than “competing” with already established language teaching program
- Victor Del Rio will explore the possibility of creating a Centre of Excellence Centre within the University of Melbourne to influence public policy, enhance the political and trade relationships with Spain and Latin America and provide training and consulting services to community and private organisations engaging within this scope of action and as a second step and after the introduction of Spanish language into schools.

In July 2008, COALAR announced a new round of Grants. Professor Larkin saw this announcement as an opportunity to get support from COALAR to fund a “Feasibility study to establish a Latin American Center of Excellence” within Melbourne University and he assigned the responsibility to process the relevant documentation to Dr. Susanne Haywood, Senior Policy Advisor, International Relations. The total funding requested for the initiative was \$100,000 thousand dollars, of which \$50,000 would come from the University of Melbourne, as seed funding.

Although all the signing-posts previous to the COALAR decision were very positive about the possibility to get the matching \$50,000 dollars from COALAR, on the 25th of August 2008 we received a communication from Dr. Haywood informing us that the COALAR application was unsuccessful. This negative decision and the retirement of Professor Larkin in December 2008 put the whole idea of the Centre of Excellence inside the “too hard basket” and the sub-committee suffered a swift death.

On 3 March 2011, I wrote to Vice-chancellor Glyn Davis seeking to re-convene the Latin American Strategy Group within the University of Melbourne. Vice-chancellor



Davis agreed with my proposal and asked Dr. Sue Elliot, Deputy-Vice-chancellor to meet me to discuss the initiative to form an “Australian Latin America Centre of Excellence at Melbourne”. Prior to this meeting A/P Rodrigo Marino and myself gauged the level of interest in Latin America to liaise and collaborate with a potential centre of excellence. I traveled to Mexico and the USA and A/P Rodrigo Marino established contacts with tertiary education establishments in Peru, Chile and Argentina. The response was overwhelmingly positive. In Mexico, CONACYT (equivalent to the ARC in Australia), CIDE, Tecnológico de Monterrey (Universitas 21’s member), UNAM (DVC Global Engagement -Martha Navarro) showed significant interest by sending Letters of support to the Vice-chancellor Glyn Davis. As well a number of private business people, such as Benjamin de la Cueva of ANZ Education, which represented the University of Melbourne in Mexico, Radek A. Divis of Austrade and Adrienne Bonwick of the ANZMEX Chamber of Commerce in Mexico. In Chile, the proposed centre received support from the University of Chile, la Universidad Técnica Federico Santa Maria. In Argentina from la Universidad Nacional de Cordoba. In Perú from la Universidad Cayetano Peredia.

The Latin American Universities saw the centre, as an appropriate vehicle to engage with Australia. This relationship was going to give the University of Melbourne and the State of Victoria an edge in the highly competitive education market. Particularly in building stronger relationships with Latin America, attracting more collaborative research projects, as well as academic exchanges. Both Telmo Languiller MP and Victor Perton, the then Victorian government representative for the Americas indicated strong support for the proposed centre. Victor Perton also offered to assist the proposed centre by helping to obtain funding from the corporate world in Australia. We had a meeting with the Centre for Latin American Studies at Berkeley University (CLAS) to explore its organisational structural and learn about how it attracts external funding. CLAS provided a letter of support for the proposed Melbourne University Centre and offered its assistance to set it up. In Australia we had the support of AILASA and other key and reputable academic people within the Australian and Latin American communities such as Professor Barry Carr (former AILASA’s President, visiting professor ANU and Berkeley University and member of COALAR’s Educational sub-committee), Professor David Cahill (former AILASA’s President and member of COALAR’s Educational sub-committee), Cesar Duran



(Australia-Mexico Chamber of Commerce and the representative of COMCE in Australia).

Dr Sue Elliot formed a working group whose initial task was to organize a Latin American Dialogue, event that took place at the University of Melbourne, on the 29-30 August 2012. The Dialogue was very successful thanks to the hard work of Sue Elliot and her team, Jacyl Shaw, Alfonso Martinez Exposito, Zoe Dauth, Rodrigo Merino and others, but the event was not enough to revive the idea of the Centre of Excellence, for a variety of reasons (financial constraints, consolidation of other Centres like the Confucius Institute, focusing on specific Latin American countries rather than to a region etc). The University of Melbourne has continued expanding its interest in Latin America in a number of fronts: through new academic appointments; a new regional research strategy, new agreements and MOU's etc. In March 2013 took place a Dialogue between the University of Melbourne-Brazil in Sao Paulo. This Dialogue was co-funded between the University of Melbourne and COALAR.

Melbourne University also supported specific initiatives to expand its research engagement via the Australian Synchrotron. This initiative will be discussed in detail in another Submission (Science and Technology).

Summary

Based on an analysis of the information synthesized in this report, we concluded that we have in Australia the interests of prestigious organizations to move the Australia/Mexico/Latin America agenda forward. Australia has enough research resources scattered across the country and institutions that focus on the relationship between Australia/Mexico/Latin America, but there is little coordination of these, and there exists an opportunity to bring these resources together with a greater focus on producing effective and consistent advice and/or policy on trade, investment and other issues like democracy and human rights issues. There is little conscious alignment between the research conducted at universities and Australian strategic priorities and no resources allocated to generate the body of knowledge to advance these. Given the current context where Australian Universities have to fight for scarce research resources, the bits and pieces existing in the system tend to protect their own generated knowledge and expertise rather than sharing it. In other words, while the



natural tendency between Latin American studies scholars is to collaborate, the structural conditions produce competition that can stifle collaborative research focusing on common topics. We need to break this vicious circle and implement strategies that encourage both collaboration and focus on contemporary issues relevant to the relationship of Australia/Mexico/Latin America right now and tomorrow.

An Australia-Mexico Institute Centre Proposal

The following proposal has been modelled on ideas and discussions coming from several taskforces, committees and groupings we have been involved in the last 8 years to establish a Australia-Mexico Institute Centre (AMLAI). The AMLAI will complement the existing organisations in Australia.

Proposal

The creation of an Australia-Mexico Institute with the following characteristics:

The AMLAI would be mostly *a virtual* Institute that will articulate all the research resources in Australia related to Latin America. It will, through a system of grants financial incentives and collaborative agreements, work with the ARC, DFAT, COALAR and Austrade, to reallocate resources to promote and fund research projects on topics that advance the political, economic, trade, educational social and cultural (including artistic) relationships between both countries and the region.

AMLAI would establish a close collaboration with AILASA and all the University and research organisations focussing on Latin America.

AMLAI would establish close working relationships with ALABAC and the individual Latin American chambers of Commerce in Australia.

AMLAI would liaise closely with the economic and cultural attaches of the Mexican and Latin American embassies in Australia.



AMLAI would liaise closely with the State Governments interested in further their relationships with Latin America to produce in collaboration relevant research outcomes.

AMLAI would be an independent centre, managed by a Consortium of Australian Universities, Research Centres and representatives of COALAR, DFAT, Austrade and relevant community organisation from Latin America.

AMLAI would have a small number of qualified staff only, conducting contemporary research aligned with Australia's priorities for the region, it will maintain an up-to-date database of funding sources and researchers engaging with Latin America and will organise bi-annual gatherings of researchers and Latin American communities in Australia and overseas.

Principles

- A Any initiative born from this project will be aimed at being mutually and equally beneficial to Australia, Mexico and Latin America.
- B The AMLAI will focus primarily in contemporary research aiming at strengthening the political, academic, economic, cultural and social relationships between all the countries involved.
- C Engage all parties in a positive and constructive dialogue: Be an inclusive forum (as such we will welcome the participation of other organisations and institutions and the creation of potential inter-university alliances).

The Institute would have the following specific objectives

1. Collaboration in academic teaching, research and policy making/analysis/evaluation of projects to produce high quality and internationally recognised research outcomes.
2. Serve as an "Observatory" that monitors important political, economic, educational, cultural, social developments in Mexico and Latin America, and provides media outlets with expert comment on these issues.
3. Promote mobility: academic, administrators, policy-makers, PhD and Post-



- doctoral students.
4. Promote the teaching and learning of the Spanish language in Australia and English in Latin America.
 5. Promote political, economic, cultural, and social awareness and understanding about Australia in Latin America and vice-versa.
 6. Liaise with other equivalent Centres of Excellence and research organisations overseas in order to work together on strategic projects that maximise the use of resources and research outcomes.
 7. Provide services for governments, private and community organisations aiming at strengthening the political, economic, academic and social relationships between Australia and Latin America.
 8. Build a media profile as a “first port of call for media talent in Australia about Latin America”.
 9. Create an agora of knowledge about projects carried out in Australia and Latin America aiming at strengthening the political, economic, academic and social relationships between Australia and Latin America.
 10. Build academic teaching, research and social projects generated by the human capital at Australian universities and their peers in Latin America to benefit disadvantage communities in both Australia and Latin America.
 11. Support initiatives aiming at improving, supporting and/or better understanding of human rights, democratic and environmental issues in Latin America and Australia.
 12. Access to funding opportunities via Latin America, for the design and implementation of economic and social development projects (European Community, WorldBank, CAF, BID)
 13. Build additional competitive advantages to offer educational services to Latin American organisations, mobility an educational services.
 14. Build additional competitive advantages to bid for ARC’s competitive research grants and for a future Centre of Excellence grant.

We propose that the Senate’s Committee consider the following recommendations:

- 1** Forming a joint Australia-Mexico/ Latin America Institute- AMLAI taking as models organisations like the Centre for Latin American Studies (CLAS) of




the University of California, at Berkeley.

- 2** Providing funding of \$500,000 a year, for a period of five years to establish the AMLAI.
- 3** Inviting other Universities and research organisations in Australia and Mexico to be part of this Institute.
- 4** Expanding the research portfolio of the Institute to include other Latin American countries members of the TPP's grouping (Peru and Chile) by July 2017.
- 5** Include other Latin American countries (Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil) as part of the Institute's core research responsibilities by July 2018.



Attachments

1 Letter of Support from the Director of the Pacific Studies Department, University of Guadalajara, Mexico



UNIVERSIDAD DE GUADALAJARA
CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO DE CIENCIAS SOCIALES Y HUMANIDADES
DIVISIÓN DE ESTUDIOS DE ESTADO Y SOCIEDAD / DEPARTAMENTO DE ESTUDIOS DEL PACÍFICO


Senator Alex Gallacher
Chair,
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee
Parliament House, Canberra, Australia

The Pacific Studies Department of the University of Guadalajara welcomes the Senate Inquiry into the Australia's relationship with Mexico. The Department under my leadership supports the creation of a Think Tank Centre Australia/Mexico as well as any other initiative that strengthens our research collaboration with Australia.

I am following very closely the outcome of the inquiry that your honorable Senate Committee is conducting and I am committed to support any initiative that widens our academic, research and student exchange and collaboration.

Warm Regards

Dagoberto Amparo, MA.
Director
Pacific Studies Department
University Center for Social Sciences and Humanities
University of Guadalajara



Cc. Dr. Victor Del Rio, President of ANZMEX Australia.

Av. José Parres Arias #150, Núcleo Universitario Los Belenes, Edificio A, Tercer Piso, Zapopan, Jalisco, México.
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2 Letter of Support from the Centro de Estudios Universitarios sobre la Cuenca del Pacífico, Universidad de Colima (APEC Mexican Consortium).



UNIVERSIDAD DE COLIMA
CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO DE ESTUDIOS E INVESTIGACIONES SOBRE LA CUENCA DEL PACÍFICO
CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS APEC

Senator Alex Gallacher
Chair,
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee
Parliament House, Canberra, Australia

Colima, Col., 1st October, 2015

The APEC Study Center Mexican Consortium (ASCMC) welcomes the Senate Inquiry into the Australia's relationship with Mexico. The Technical Secretariat under my responsibility supports the creation of a Think Tank Centre Australia/Mexico and any other initiative that strengthens our research collaboration with Australia.

I'll be following with high attention the outcomes of the enquiry that your honorable Senate Committee is conducting and I am sure the ASCMC will be very happy to support any initiative that widens our academic, research and student exchanges and collaboration, as the mission of the Consortium is looking for

With my respects,

Ernesto Rajgel Phd.
ASCMC Technical Secretary



UNIVERSIDAD
DE COLIMA
CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO
DE ESTUDIOS
E INVESTIGACIONES SOBRE
LA CUENCA DEL PACÍFICO

Cc. Dr. Victor Del Rio, President of ANZMEX Australia.



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