

## North American Studies Centers: An Overview

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Area studies in the United States were created during the Cold War. In 1957, the Soviet Union announced the launch of Sputnik 1, the world's first artificial satellite. This focused international attention to the emergence of sophisticated technologies and international security threats, and the U.S. government responded by investing more in science and foreign languages. The National Defense Education Act (NDEA) was signed into law by President Eisenhower in 1958. Title VI of the NDEA, entitled "Language Development," would provide federal funding to build foreign language and area studies programs at U.S. universities. Title VI was composed of two parts: Part A, entitled "Centers and Research and Studies" which authorized three programs: Centers, Fellowships, and Research and Studies and Part B, "Language Institutes." Initial funding began in academic year 1959–60 when US\$3.5 million was appropriated with US\$500 000 going to Centers and Fellowships, and the remaining US\$2.5 million allocated to Research and Studies. In 1972, Title VI began providing grants to assist postsecondary institutions in internationalizing their curricula.

Title VI supports ten programs: National Resource Centers (NRCs); Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowships (FLAS); International Research and Studies (IRS), the Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language Program (UISFL); the Business and International Education Program (BIE); Centers for International Business Education (CIBES); Language Resource Centers (IRCS); American Overseas Research Centers (AORCS); the Institute for International Public Policy (IIPP); and the Technological Innovation and Cooperation for Foreign Information

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Access Program (TICFIA). Under Title VI, National Resource Center (NRC) grants support instruction in fields that provide full understanding of areas, regions or countries; research and training in international studies; work in the language aspects of professional and other fields of study; and instruction and research on issues in world affairs. In the past four years, NRCs have received about US\$28 million in funding every year for centers dealing with every region of the world, except North America. About 295 grants have been awarded to universities to support NRCs that focus on the following regions/areas: Asia an Pacific (88 grants), Europe/Russia (66 grants), Latin America (48 grants), Middle East (36 grants), Africa (26 grants), Canada (9 grants), and centers with an international focus (22 grants).

While not prominent or supported by the U.S. government, Centers for North American Studies exist, and we have decided to define them in terms of meeting one of three criteria: they study (a) all three countries of North America; (b) two of the three; or, (c) one of the countries but not the one where it is housed. Thus, while there has been an emerging interest in North America as a region, this interest is not backed by federal funding from the Department of Education.

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American University's Center for North American Studies (CNAS) conducted a series of surveys of university-based and non-university-based centers and programs that focus on North America. The surveys identified centers with a trilateral focus (U.S., Canada and Mexico), a bilateral focus (U.S.-Mexico or U.S.-Canada), a single-country focus on Mexico or Canada, and an "Americas and/or Western Hemisphere" focus. An overview of these centers is provided below. This overview has several purposes. First, it attempts to be as comprehensive as possible and serve as a preliminary mapping of the institutions and programs that focus on one or more aspects and issues pertinent to North America. Second, the overview also invites comments and contributions from *Norteamérica's* readers with the goal of making it as accurate and complete as possible. The last, but not least important, purpose of this summary is to serve as a stepping-stone for the identification of what has been done in the study of North America –what programs and courses have been developed– and how the study of the region should evolve in the future.

Many public policy centers have also done important work on North America. These include: the Brookings Institution, Institute for International Economics, Council of Foreign Relations, Pacific Council on

International Policy, Canadian Council of Chief Executives, Conference Board of Canada, C.D. Howe Institute, Public Policy Forum, and the Mexican Council on Foreign Relations.

The Canadian Embassy has used their funds to sponsor the study of Canada in the United States and Mexico, and that explains the larger number of those Centers.

## NORTH AMERICA STUDIES CENTERS

The survey revealed that the United States has only six centers/programs with a North America focus. These centers are:

- Center for North American Studies, American University
- North American Studies Program, Colorado College
- North American Studies Program, High Point University (North Carolina)
- North American Studies Program, Roosevelt University (Illinois)
- Center for North American Studies, Texas A&M University, Department of Agricultural Economics
- North American Center for Transborder Studies and “Building North America” Project, Arizona State University

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Within the U.S., the centers and programs that focus on North America had declined somewhat in the last decade. Established in 1997, Duke University’s Center for North American Studies became the Center for Canadian Studies on July 1, 2003. In addition, Dartmouth College and California State University no longer offer an Institute on Canada and the United States and the Canadian Studies Certificate Program, respectively. Among the remaining U.S.-based centers and programs, Texas A&M University’s CNAS specializes in agricultural studies only. Colorado College, High Point University and Roosevelt University all have an interdisciplinary focus that either leads to a major or a minor. In 2005, Arizona State University opened a new North American Center for Transborder Studies –a trinational research alliance. Arizona State University also houses the “Building North America” Project, which was set up in 2000 and originally hosted by the Americas Society-Council of the Americas. The project constitutes a website with links to North America Resources

such as case studies and syllabi. Thus, among the 4168 accredited U.S. colleges and universities, only AU's CNAS offers an interdisciplinary undergraduate minor, a graduate certificate, and research and a public policy program in North American Studies.

Among the centers and programs that focus on North American studies in Canada, both Carleton and McGill have an interdisciplinary focus, but Carleton organizes conferences and seminars and does not offer courses. From the centers and programs in Mexico, El Colegio de México's center and the National Autonomous University of Mexico's Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte (CISAN) are research oriented only. CISAN began in 1988 with the establishment of a research program focusing on the United States. With the signing of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the center included Canada in its research activities as well. CISAN's current focus is on a multi- and inter-disciplinary study of the U.S. and Canada and the relations of both of these countries with Mexico. The University of Atemajac's Center has limited activities. The remaining are programs that lead either to a certificate (Tec. de Monterrey) or to a master's degree (Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa). El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, in collaboration or individually, has initiated in 2007 seminars and professional development programs focusing on North America.

Among the university-based centers and programs in Canada, Mexico and the U.S., the overwhelming majority (63 overall) have a Canada or Canada-U.S. focus. Equally represented are the centers that have a North American studies focus (14) and a Mexico or U.S.-Mexico emphasis (11). The abundance of Canadian Studies Centers can be partly attributed to the funding that the Canadian government provides (out of the 60 programs, 27 were sponsored by the Canadian embassy).

The non-university based centers and programs include the North American Institute (NAMI) in Santa Fe and the North American Forum on Integration (FINA) in Montreal. The National Policy Association (NPA) sponsored for several years, biannual meetings of a "North American Committee" and published several volumes of a journal, *North American Outlook*. NPA closed in 2003. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) sponsors an "Americas Program" with a focus on Canada, Mexico, and, occasionally, on North America, as does the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars.

Among the centers and programs that focus on North American studies in Canada, both Carleton and McGill have an interdisciplinary focus. From the centers and programs in Mexico, El Colegio de México's center and the National Autonomous University of Mexico's Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte (CISAN) are research-oriented only.

## UNIVERSITY-BASED CENTERS AND PROGRAMS Centers of North America, Mexico and Canada

| Table 1<br>UNIVERSITY-BASED CENTERS AND PROGRAMS |                           |                           |                           |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | North American<br>Studies | Mexico and<br>U.S.-Mexico | Canada and<br>U.S.-Canada |
| Canada   | 2                         | 0                         | —                         |
| Mexico   | 6                         | 1                         | 3                         |
| U.S.   | 6                         | 10                        | 60                        |
| Total  | 14                        | 11                        | 63                        |

### I. NORTH AMERICA STUDIES

#### A. Canada

- Carleton University Centre on North American Politics and Society  
<http://www.carleton.ca/nac/>  
 Focuses on the political, social and cultural processes in the North American region. *Has no economics or trade component.*
- McGill University, North American Studies Program-Montreal, Quebec, Canada  
<http://www.mcgill.ca/nast/>

The program offers a Minor and a Major Concentration in North American Studies and has a study abroad program with or without an internship. *Mexico is not included in the North America curriculum and the target group of the program are undergraduate students.*

Among the university-based centers and programs in Canada, Mexico, and the U.S., the overwhelming majority (63 overall) have a Canada or Canada-U.S. focus. Equally represented are the centers that have a North American studies focus (14) and a Mexico or U.S.-Mexico emphasis (11).

## B. Mexico

- El Colegio de México, Centro de Estudios Internacionales: proyectos de investigación sobre las relaciones México-Estados Unidos-Canadá (PIERAN)  
[http://www.colmex.mx/centros/cei/pieran\\_index.htm](http://www.colmex.mx/centros/cei/pieran_index.htm)
- Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM or Tec de Monterrey) provides a certificate  
<http://www.tec.ubc.ca/certificates/index.html>  
[http://www.itesm.mx/vi/oficinas\\_inter/vancouverprogramas.htm#1](http://www.itesm.mx/vi/oficinas_inter/vancouverprogramas.htm#1)
- Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa (UAS); maestría en Estudios de Estados Unidos y Canadá  
<http://interpol.uasnet.mx/meeuc/plantadocente.html>
- Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte (CISAN), Mexico City, Mexico  
<http://www.cisan.unam.mx/>
- University of the Atemajac's Valley (UNIVA), North American Studies Center
- El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, "United States, Mexico and Canada: An International and Regional Dimension 2007-2008" professional development program and the 2007 Seminar on Security and Development in the relationship between Mexico, U.S. and Canada.

El Colegio de México's center and CISAN are research-oriented, while the University of the Atemajac Valley's center has limited activities. The remaining are programs that lead either to a certificate or to a master's degree.

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## C. UNITED STATES

- Center for North American Studies, American University
- North American Studies Program, Colorado College
- North American Studies Program, High Point University (North Carolina)
- North American Studies Program, Roosevelt University (Illinois)
- Center for North American Studies, Texas A&M University, Department of Agricultural Economics
- North American Center for Transborder Studies and “Building North America” Project, Arizona State University

## II. MEXICO AND U.S.-MEXICO

### A. CANADA

N/A

### B. MEXICO

- El Colegio de San Luis: Programa México-Estados Unidos

## C. UNITED STATES

- Georgetown University, Center for Latin American Studies: Mexico Project
- Laney College (California), Mexican/Latin American Studies
- Merritt College (California), Mexican/Latin American Studies
- New Mexico State University, U.S.-Mexico Conflict Resolution Center
- Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Southwest Borderlands Cultural Studies and Research Center
- University of California, Institute for Mexico and the United States (UCMEXUS)
- University of California-San Diego, Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies

- University of Pennsylvania, Population Studies Center and Universidad de Guadalajara, Depto. de Investigaciones sobre Movimientos Sociales: Mexican Migration Project
- University of San Diego, TransBorder Institute
- University of Texas at Dallas, Center for U.S.-Mexico Studies

### III. CANADA AND U.S.-CANADA

#### A. MEXICO

- Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM), Canadian Studies Program
- Universidad Autónoma de Guadalajara, Centro de Estudios Canadienses
- University of Colima, Mexico, Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, Estudios sobre Estados Unidos y Canadá

#### B. UNITED STATES (note:\* sponsored by the Canadian Embassy: 27 out of 60)

- Ball State University (Indiana), Committee on Canadian Studies
- Bemidji State University (Minnesota), Canadian Studies Program
- Boise State University (Idaho), Canadian Studies Minor Program\*
- Bowling Green State University (Ohio), Canadian Studies Centre\*
- Bridgewater State College (Massachusetts), Canadian Studies Program\*
- Brigham Young University (Utah), David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies, Canadian Studies Program
- Buffalo State College, Canadian Studies
- Case Western Reserve University (Ohio), School of Law: Canada/United States Law Institute\*
- Clarkson University (NY), Center for Canadian-U.S. Business Studies
- Duke University, Center for Canadian Studies (formerly known as the Center for North American Studies)
- Eastern Connecticut State University, Canadian Studies Program\*
- Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, Canadian Studies Program\*
- Five College Consortium (Amherst, Hampshire, Mt. Holyoke, Smith, UMass-Amherst), Canadian Studies Program



- Franklin College of Indiana, Canadian Studies Centre and Canadian Studies Program\*
- George Washington University, Canadian Studies Program\*
- Harvard University, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Canada Seminar
- Indiana University Northwest, Canadian Studies
- Johns Hopkins University, The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Center of Canadian Studies\*
- Kansas State University, Canadian Studies Program\*
- Lehigh University (Pennsylvania), Canadian Studies Institute
- Mansfield University (Pennsylvania), Canadian Studies Centre, Pennsylvania Canadian Studies Consortium
- Michigan State University, Center for Canadian-U.S. Law\*
- Michigan State University, Canadian Studies Centre\*
- Plattsburgh State University of New York, Center for the Study of Canadá\*
- Plymouth State College (New Hampshire), Canadian Studies Center
- Portland State University, Canadian Studies Program\*
- Princeton University, Canadian Studies
- Seattle University, Canadian Studies Program\*
- Shoreline Community College (Washington), Canadian Studies
- St. Lawrence University (NY), Canadian Studies Program
- State University of New York at Buffalo, Canada-United States Legal Studies Centre
- State University of New York at Buffalo, Canada-United States Trade Center (CUSTAC)
- State University of New York at Buffalo, Canadian-American Studies Committee\*
- State University of New York at Plattsburgh, Center for the Study of Canada
- State University of New York College at Brockport, Interdisciplinary Minor in Canadian Studies
- Texas A&M University, Mays Business School: Canadian Studies Program
- University of Akron (Ohio), Canadian Studies Program
- University of Alaska Anchorage, Canadian Studies Program\*
- University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Canadian Studies Project
- University of California at Berkeley, Canadian Studies Program\*

- University of Central Florida, Canadian Studies Outreach
- University of Central Florida, Florida-Canada Linkage Institute
- University of Kentucky, Kentucky-Canadian Studies Association, Canadian Studies Online Program
- University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Canadian Studies Committee
- University of Maine, Canadian-American Center\*
- University of Missouri, Canadian Studies Program\*
- University of New Hampshire, Canadian Studies Program
- University of Oregon, Canadian Studies
- University of Southern Mississippi, Department of Forensic Science: Canadian Studies
- University of Vermont, Canadian Studies Program\*
- University of Washington, The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies, Canadian Studies Center\*
- University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Center for Canadian-American Policy Studies\*
- Vanderbilt University, Canadian Studies Program\*
- Washington State University, Canadian Studies Program
- Wayne State University, Canadian Studies Program
- Western Kentucky University, Canadian Studies Certificate Program\*
- Western Michigan University, Canadian Studies Program\*
- Western Oregon University, Canadian Studies
- Western Washington University, Center for Canadian-American Studies\*
- Yale University, Center for International and Area Studies, Committee on Canadian Studies

**NON-UNIVERSITY-BASED CENTERS AND PROGRAMS**  
 Centers on North America, Mexico, and Canada

| Table 2<br>NON-UNIVERSITY-BASED CENTERS AND PROGRAMS |                           |                           |                           |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | North American<br>Studies | Mexico and<br>U.S.-Mexico | Canada and<br>U.S.-Canada |
| Canada   | 1                         | 0                         | 0                         |
| Mexico   | 0                         | 0                         | 0                         |
| U.S.   | 1                         | 3                         | 2                         |
| Total  | 2                         | 3                         | 2                         |

## I. NORTH AMERICAN STUDIES

### A. CANADA

- North American Forum on Integration (FINA)

### B. MEXICO

N/A

### C. UNITED STATES

- North American Institute (NAMI)-Santa Fe, New Mexico; Edmonton, Alberta, Canada; Mexico City, Mexico

## II. MEXICO AND U.S.-MEXICO

### A. CANADA

N/A

### B. MEXICO

N/A

### C. UNITED STATES

- Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Americas Program, Mexico Project
- The Florida-Mexico Institute (FMI)
- Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Mexico Institute

## III. CANADA AND U.S.-CANADA

### A. CANADA

N/A

## **B. MEXICO**

N/A

## **C. UNITED STATES**

- Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Americas Program, Canada Project
- Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars: Canada Institute