

About the Center

The Mission Foods Texas-Mexico Center at Southern Methodist University (SMU) is dedicated to strengthening relations between Texas and Mexico through impactful research, high-level dialogue, and cross-border collaboration. Founded in 2016 with the support of GRUMA-Mission Foods, the Center focuses on key areas of the bilateral relationship, including trade and investment, energy, migration, border issues, education, and human capital development. As a leading academic and policy hub, it brings together experts, policymakers, business leaders, and students to generate actionable ideas and policy recommendations that address the challenges and opportunities shaping the U.S.-Mexico relationship.

Focus Areas

The Center conducts policy-relevant, action-oriented research on the relationship between Texas and Mexico, focusing on these five key areas:

- Border Issues
- Energy
- Human Capital and Education
- Migration
- Trade & Investment



Research since 2016

- Over 20 major funded research projects
- Topics include: NAFTA/USMCA, migration flows, Texas-Mexico trade, border security, education, and energy

Events & Public Programs

The Center hosts numerous events each year to educate, foster dialogue, strengthen relationships, and build bridges between Texas and Mexico. Most events fall under the following signature programs:

- **Annual Integration Symposiums (2017-2025)** : The premier binational conference bringing together leaders from government, business, and academia.
- **Policy Webinars & Lectures** : Dynamic discussions featuring policymakers, scholars, and journalists addressing urgent U.S.- Mexico issues.
- **Collaborative Programs**: Events co-hosted with partner institutions to expand reach and impact.

Total Events since 2016:

- 85 confirmed (up to 97 including collaborative programs)
- 11 Annual & Special Symposiums
- 26 Webinars & Guest Lectures
- 48 Other Programs (including conferences, delegation visits, and cultural events)

Our Team

James Hollifield – Interim Director

James F. Hollifield is the Ora Nixon Arnold Professor of International Political Economy at Southern Methodist University, Acting Director of the Mission Foods Texas-Mexico Center, and the Director of the Tower Center. A leading scholar in migration and international political economy, he is the author of several works, including *Immigrants, Markets and States*, *Understanding Global Migration*, and *Controlling Immigration*. He has also served as an advisor to governments and international organizations on migration, development, and economic policy.



Luisa del Rosal – Chief of Staff

Luisa del Rosal is the Chief of staff for the Mission Foods Texas-Mexico Center and the Tower Center at SMU, where she oversees strategy, programming, and development. She previously led global partnership strategy at the SMU Cox School of Business and held roles in community relations and international business development, bringing extensive experience in leadership, fundraising, and public engagement.



Courtney Weeks – Assistant Director

Courtney Weeks is an academic leader and cross-cultural program manager with extensive experience in U.S.-Mexico relations, education, and global engagement. She has held leadership roles in both Mexico and the U.S. and holds degrees in Spanish Education as well as Global Affairs and Management.



Astrid Galvan-Segura – Event and Marketing Manager

Astrid Galvan-Segura has extensive experience in logistics, trade, marketing, and international affairs, with a background in distribution and event management. She has worked with organizations in both the U.S. and Mexico, specializing in project management, customer relations, and process optimization.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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