

Mexico

Demographics for Mexico

Population:	106,202,903 (July 2005 est.)
GDP (by PPP method):	US\$1.006 trillion
Currency (inc code):	Mexican Peso (MXN)
Language(s):	Spanish, various Mayan, Nahuatl, and other regional indigenous languages
Internet country code:	.mx

Kindergarten, primary education and secondary education

Students typically spend one year at kindergarten (four-five years of age) and six years in elementary (*primaria* or primary) school. Primary education is followed by a secondary (*secundaria*) school program lasting three years. Students usually complete primary by 12-13 years of age, and secondary education by 15 years of age.

Bachillerato, preparatoria or preparatory school implies three additional years after the completion of *secundaria* or secondary school. Preparatory school is the school period before students enter college or university at 18 or 19 years of age.

State governments and the federal government (Secretaría de Educación) regulate education in the Mexican states. They set the broad curricular policies. However, these policies allow for minor variations across local districts. District-level curricula are generally designed to provide a coherent educational experience for students completing all grade levels. The curricula also accommodate differences in learning styles, abilities, interests, and aptitudes. Thus, schools will offer a range of options and tracks. Students will select among them or be placed based on diagnostic counseling, academic performance, and consultation with parents and the student.

Private schools usually include modalities in their education curricula such as fine arts, academic trips, foreign languages in addition to English, and other holistic educational instruments and approaches that are not commonly seen in state-public schools

Higher education

Graduates of preparatory school may continue their education in a technical or vocational institution, offering two or three year post-secondary technical training leading to specific careers, such as computer-aided design, mechanics, etc. Technical or vocational schools offer a selection of terminal or vocational programs that vary in length.

A Bachelor's degree normally requires four or five years of university-level coursework depending on the particular degree (law, engineering, medicine, etc.) Undergraduate studies leading to a Bachelor's degree are generally divided into two phases: a set of general course requirements in a broad range of subjects and a concentrated (or major) program of study in one or more subjects, such as business, engineering, sociology, and education. Applications to a four-year university may require completion of an entrance examination, equivalent to the SAT in the USA, high school transcripts, essay, and letters of recommendation and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) also may be required for some applicants (in particular in some private schools).

Graduate education includes programs of study leading to a Master's or Doctor's degree. Master's degrees require at least one year of coursework beyond the Bachelor's degree. A Doctor's degree usually requires a minimum of three to four years beyond the Master's degree. Policies and standards for admission into graduate programs usually include an admission's test, equal or equivalent to the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or, for business and management, the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), application, high performance in undergraduate studies, and letters of recommendation. The TOEFL also may be required.

The accomplishment of university degrees in Mexico implies that students get a professional certification (*cédula profesional*) that needs to be registered at the Department of Education (*Secretaría de Educación*). The purpose of this *cedulais* equivalent to quality inspected and approved stamp from the federal government.

Most institutions in the Mexico operate using either a semester or quarter academic calendar. This system consists of two sessions called semesters or three periods called trimesters, each lasting about 16 weeks. The quarter system consists of three sessions called quarters, each lasting about 12-14 weeks. Both systems might have a session in the summer. In Mexico, an academic year is generally a period of time from August to June that usually equates to two semesters or three trimesters.

Management education

Management education in Mexico is provided by a wide range of organizations. Almost all management education that leads to a degree at any level, however, is provided by accredited universities or by an institution associated with such a university.

Business programs within universities are usually managed and delivered by an academic unit often referred to as a business school (it may go by many names, such as college of business, department or faculty of management). Only a small part of non-degree management education, such as training programs for corporate employees, short management programs focused on particular topics, and executive leadership development programs, is provided by colleges and universities. Other providers of non-degree management education include associations, consulting companies, and corporations. Corporations sometimes provide training to employees through business units called corporate universities, which are not generally eligible for accreditation.

Undergraduate education (leading to Bachelor's degrees) in business and management is provided by universities. Generally, the program involves two years of general studies and two years of specialized studies in business. Degree titles vary depending on institutional preferences, but do not necessarily signal curricular differences. The most commonly offered degree titles are Bachelor of Business Administration (*Licenciado en Administración de Empresas*. The word *Licenciado* implies the equivalent of a license to officially be enabled to exercise a profession). Most degree programs allow students to select a major emphasis within business, which usually requires between eight and sixteen specialized courses in the area of emphasis. However, these majors usually materialize as Bachelor degrees in Finance, Bachelor in Marketing,

Graduate business education includes Master's and Doctoral-level education. Master's level business education includes programs leading to a general business Master's degree (e.g. Master of Business Administration (MBA)) and programs leading to a specialized Master's degree (e.g. Master of Accountancy, Master of Finance, Master of Information Systems), which provide specialized training within a specific field. Substantial variation has developed within each type, especially general business Master's degrees.

MBAs might be earned through a variety of program types. Traditional 45 to 60 credit programs usually include study across 15 to 20 courses or four semesters or five trimesters spread approximately over two academic years. First-year core courses are usually followed by more specialized study in the second year. Full time programs might include an internship in a company or a study abroad period. Part-time MBA programs are designed for professionals who work during the day and attend classes in the evening. Courses are delivered throughout the year and internships are seldom part of the program. Executive MBA (EMBA) programs are designed for working executives with significant management experience, many of whom are company sponsored.

There are many different EMBA program structures, and it is common to meet on alternate weekends (Fridays and Saturdays) over two academic years. Other MBA program types include accelerated or integrated programs, which allow students to combine undergraduate and Master's level education, and online programs that allow students to work at their own pace. The diversity of MBA program options has blurred the definition of an MBA, but has provided students with a wide range of choices to meet their special needs and circumstances including double MBA degrees (first year at home university, second year at a partner institution; ending with the degrees of both universities in about the same amount of time).

Most business Doctoral programs in Mexico prepare candidates to conduct highly specialized scholarly research. A Bachelor's and a Master's degrees are generally required prior to joining the Doctorate. After completing preliminary courses and passing a battery of written examinations, Doctoral students advance into the candidacy stage. The Doctoral student then participates in advanced seminars, selects a subject for the dissertation, forms a dissertation committee, and initiates research. The student enters an independent research phase once the dissertation advisor accepts the research design and proposal. Independent research and writing the dissertation can take several years. Once acceptable to the advisor, the student must defend the dissertation before the committee and invited guests. In a typical defense, the student must establish Mastery of the subject, justify his or her research findings, and answer questions. A successful defense results in the award of the degree.

Faculty

Prior to the 1980s, most business faculty came directly from the business world or combined teaching with their professional activity. In the 1980s and 1990s, business schools began to recruit significant numbers of PhDs from related academic disciplines, such as economics, sociology, and psychology, as well as mathematics and sciences. Although hiring from these fields continues, a larger proportion of new full-time business faculty members are now hired out of Doctoral programs in business and management. New Doctorates are now usually hired with a full time position and start a tenure-track like position (as in the USA) at the rank of assistant professor and are normally considered for promotion to associate professor and full professor after meeting different criteria such as good teaching, research, company linkages, administrative service and fund raising. Not meeting the criteria does not necessarily imply leaving the school. It implies not getting a good performance evaluation and its corresponding impact on economic compensation

The relative emphasis on each of these responsibilities is determined by the mission of the school. Business faculties also include practicing managers and retired executives. Some are hired as part-time or adjunct faculty members and

teach one or two courses a semester, while others have been hired into full-time positions under the banner of clinical faculty, lecturer, or executive in residence.

Accreditation

Asociación Nacional de Facultades y Escuelas de Contabilidad y Administración (ANFECA) has been the traditional accreditation body in Mexico. A few business schools (no more than ten in Mexico, as at 2005) have AACSB International (USA) and EQUIS (Europe) accreditation. The Mexican Government has recently (three-five years) undertaken strong initiatives to assure the quality of education across all programs through CENEVAL examinations. These are mid program and end of program nation wide standardized evaluations in which students are examined and show the level of education their institution is providing:

- Estimated number of institutions with undergraduate business degree programs: 1,000.
- Estimated number of institutions with business Master's degree programs: 450.
- Estimated number of institutions with business Doctoral degree programs: 20.

Issues facing business schools

Business schools in the Mexico are faced with a diverse set of issues, including shrinking supplies of Doctoral faculty, shifting funding sources, intensifying competition (national and international), and increasing accountability pressures. Business schools in Mexico differ widely in mission and characteristics, such as size, resources, and reputation. They experience and deal with these issues in different ways.

Many Mexican business schools have been faced with funding cuts or freezes over the last three years. This issue has been exacerbated by rising undergraduate student populations and increasing faculty salaries. As a result, schools have sought to increase funding from alternative sources, such as tuition, gifts and grants, and non-degree programs.

Intensifying competition has challenged business schools on many levels. Increasing numbers of MBA providers and programs has increased competition for students. Competition has been especially intense among part-time programs in large urban markets, where for-profit business schools that rely heavily on part-time faculty have grown significantly through aggressive marketing.

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