Instructors
- What were they like when compared to UCSB instructors?
  More or less the same, except they were less dependent on a syllabus, and did not give out their emails.

- Could you call them by their first names?
  It depended on the teacher. I had one teacher that the class called by her first name, and the other three were called “profesor”.

- Was the student/instructor relationship more formal than at UCSB?
  I found it to be the same. I was there for the second semester, so most of the students in my class had already studied with that professor for the first semester, so in some cases the professors could call students out by name and greet students as they walked in the door, and in some cases not.

- Were they available for help during office hours?
  No office hours in Mexico.

Courses
- Were the courses more difficult when compared to UCSB courses?
  Yes. Mexican students only study their subject (no GEs) so they are expected to be much more eloquent when speaking about it. Also, with no bookstore, less dependence on a syllabus, and no PowerPoint presentations for lecture notes, the logistics of the class were different.

- Was the grading system similar to UCSB?
  In Mexico they use a scale of 1-10, but the grades I received on the papers I got back seemed more or less what I would have received here.

- How did the course structure differ? Ex) did you have many assignments or just finals?
  It was pretty similar to what I’ve had here. I only sat one final exam, and the rest of my finals and midterms were papers.

- Did you have oral and/or written exams?
  Three of my four classes had oral presentations as part of the grading.

- Was the final exam schedule flexible or inflexible?
  I think it was flexible. There was an exam week, but I don’t know if the classes actually use it or just hold their exams on the last day of class.

- What kind of academic support, if any, did you receive?
  I had to go to the department offices to get my classes approved, but that’s it.

- Did you find you needed to be more independent and take more initiative abroad?
  Yes. In Mexico things were less automated (like using GOLD and GauchoSpace) and less obvious (like the bookstore and the reserved section of the library).
- **Was classroom participation expected?**
  Yes. Like my classes here, class participation was part of the grade.

- **How were the host university courses different than UCSB courses?**
  For lots of reasons I’ve already talked about.

- **Were classes usually on certain days/times and for how long?**
  Classes were two hours long, usually once or twice a week, from 8 in the morning until 10 at night, Monday - Friday.

- **What is the class culture like? How important was it to be punctual? Could you eat/drink in class?**
  Students were all very friendly with one another in classes. Punctuality meant that the class started sometimes within the first 30 minutes of its time slot (depending on the teacher) and students showing up anywhere from 10 minutes early to 1 hour late. I had one class where students brought different types of food to sell to other people in the class (tortas, peanuts, puddings, etc.)

**Language**

- **In which languages were the courses offered?**
  Spanish, except the American Literature class I took in the Letras Inglesas major which was in both English and Spanish.

- **What language did you take your courses in?**
  Spanish.

- **If you took your courses in a foreign language, please provide info about your overall experience, difficulty of courses, language acquisition, placement exams, etc.**
  Before starting at the university I had one month of Intensive Language Program which helped me put the finishing touches on my in-classroom Spanish skills. It was hard, and I didn’t understand everything in my classes, but I got the jist of it. I wrote several papers in Spanish that were probably not well-written but my professors were sympathetic. I came back from Mexico with a whole lot more confidence in understanding Spanish.

**Host University**

- **How large is the university? Student enrollment and approx campus size (smaller than UCSB)? Is it an urban campus with many tall buildings or just a few building?**
  UNAM is the largest university in Latin America, and to get around the whole campus requires taking several buses. My section of campus however felt a lot like the size of UCSB. It’s in the south of Mexico City and, because it is so large and removed from the city around it, it almost feels like you’re separate from the rest of the city. I took all my classes in one building that had its own library, auditorium, cafeteria, and coffee stands.

- **Do the local students live on campus, at home, or off campus?**
  UNAM has no dorms, and most students live with their parents all over the city.
- If not located in the city center,
  - How far or close is it to the city?
    It’s in the south of the city
  - What type of public transportation could you take – cost?
    You can get to UNAM by metro for 3 pesos, metrobus for 5 pesos, or by buses anywhere from 3-5 pesos, or a combination of any of these.
  - Could students take cabs -cost?
    There were lots of cabs that drove the perimeter of campus. Cabs at the most, for longer distances, cost 100 pesos.
  - How long would it take to get to the city center?
    Maybe an hour by bus or 40 minutes on the metro, depending.

- Are there student clubs on campus that UC students could join?
  UNAM has tons of organizations that I am assuming would be willing to have students join.

- Is there a bookstore on campus? Where did you get your books?
  There are bookstores on campus, but they did not have the books I needed. I found things at the library or online.

- Is there a computer lab on campus? Or, should students bring laptops?
  There were computers that students could use on campus, and also computers at the UC office on UNAM’s campus and at Casa California nearby. I had a laptop, but never brought it with me to school.

- What types of establishments are in the university’s neighborhood? (cafes, stores, etc)
  Tons of cafes, restaurants, copyshops, internet cafes, bookstores, street vendors, etc.

**Housing**

- What types of accommodations are available to UC students?
  UC students lived in apartments in nearby Coyoacán.

- How close are they to campus?
  UC students were close enough to walk to UNAM.

- How did you find your housing?
  I lived with American family friends.

- Where did you live and with whom?
  I lived in Delegación Miguel Hidalgo, which is in the western part of the city.

- If you lived off campus, was it difficult to find an apartment and roommate?

- Were the rooms nicer or not than I.V./UCSB dorms?
- Was it more expensive than living in I.V.? How much was a typical rent cost in US dollars?
  Most things in Mexico City were much cheaper than they are in IV.

- How/who did you pay for housing?

**Food**
- What was the food like?
  Delicious. Awesome.

- Where did you eat most of your meals? Cafeterias, restaurants, street vendors, etc?
  I ate most of my meals from food I bought at the grocery store. Other than that from cafes and pay-at-the-counter type restaurants, and fruit salads or smoothies from street vendors.

- How much was an average meal?
  Meals were usually at the most 50 pesos.

- What time of day did people eat lunch/dinner?
  I think about the same as here.

- Would it be difficult for vegetarians to find meals?
  No! I am a vegetarian. I could buy things at the grocery store, and find things on the street. The building I had classes in had a makeshift vegetarian restaurant that served food for 20 pesos, and near the university in Coyoacan was another 100% vegetarian place. Every torta stand had an egg sandwich. Every restaurant would make me cheese enchiladas and assure me that there was no lard in the tortillas.

**Travel/Safety**
- If not discussed above, describe the public transportation system around your host university/city?

- Did you feel safe in your host city? Are there tips you would offer future students?
  Yes. Mexico City is safe as long as you are being smart. As long as you are not travelling with anything valuable, not staying out ridiculously late at night in areas of the city you do not know, and have enough money on you in case a taxi driver overcharges you, you will be fine.

- Describe the public transportation in your host country?
  Mexico City’s public transportation is amazing. The metro is cheap and will take you anywhere and runs late at night, as do buses. After both of these close down there are lots and lots of taxis. Public transportation is easy to use, because the metro is pretty self-explanatory and buses post in their front-windows exactly where they are going.

- Was it difficult/easy to travel to neighboring countries?
- **What was the weather like?**
  It was cold for the first month, and then nice the rest of the time.

- **Describe your host city…which California/US city is it similar to (if any)?**
  Mexico City is unlike anything you will every experience ever. If I had to compare, I’d say parts of it are like Los Angeles or San Diego. UNAM reminded me a bit of the area of UCSB between the Arbor and the Engineering buildings.

- **What were some interesting/fun things that you did in the host city?**
  I saw lots of theatre. I went to museums, historic sites, and other famous and interesting parts of the city. I explored markets, and people watched.

- **How international was your host city in terms of tourism, cultural diversity, and international businesses?**
  Mexico City is a very international city.

**Culture**

- **Describe the cultural differences that you observed/encountered.**
  - **Time & punctuality**
    There was most definitely a stereotype of Mexicans being less punctual, but it wasn’t always true.
  
  - **Eye contact & staring**
    I was sometimes stared at, but I am tall and pale and wore a stuffed animal bird on my shoulder.
  
  - **Relationships**
    Much more public display of affection in Mexico City, for old, young, married, unmarried, heterosexual and homosexual couples.
  
  - **More formal dress in general, for women, for school, etc?**
    People like to dress up more for events, and the clothing is a bit more conspicuous (brighter, shinier, more unique in style) than it is here. At the university though, it was about the same.
  
  - **Alcohol consumption**
    Not sure, since I don’t drink.
  
  - **What culture shock did you go through?**
    In Mexico, I sort of decided that I didn’t like the term “culture shock” and was going to stop using it, since it kind of implies that just because a country does something different it means that it is not as good as the way we do it here, or at least that there is a resistance to embracing a different way of going about things, for example, the amount of public displays of affection.
  
  - **Other?**

**Banking**

- **Were credit cards widely accepted?**
  I doubt it. I paid for everything with cash.
- Did you open a local bank account? Was it easy?
  No.

- If you did not open a local bank account, was it easy to withdraw money from the ATM? Which banks were popular & had low ATM fees?
  I used a bank that allowed me to swipe instead of insert my Wells Fargo debit card.

- Were there ATMs on campus?
  No.