



Exploration Meeting

Wichita State Location in Chihuahua

February 18, 2020

Meeting facilitated by Seth Bate & Hugo Pérez Trejo



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Executive Summary, Themes & Next Steps

In February 2020, representatives of the government and business community of Chihuahua met with faculty, staff members, and administrators of Wichita State University to explore the potential of opening a Wichita State University location in Chihuahua, Mexico. The meeting also constituted the first meeting of Wichita State's presidential task force on New Academic and Institutional Partnerships.

Participants identified barriers that could prohibit or slow progress on this idea. Some of those potential barriers relate to logistics, regulation, curriculum, investment, and infrastructure. These barriers could generally be addressed by using existing knowledge, extrapolating from previous experiences, and resourcing the project appropriately. Other barriers identified are about culture, timing, and the political landscape. Overcoming these barriers will require a willingness to experiment and learn from missteps; a focus on relationships and trust; and a clear sense of purpose that can be articulated to both allies and skeptics.

The February meeting did not happen in a vacuum. Previous discussions took place with various combinations of participants, including a trip by Wichita State representatives to Chihuahua and Queretaro, Mexico late in 2019.

Some broad themes were quickly apparent in this meeting:

There is excitement about the potential of a Wichita State site in Chihuahua, and there is a clear sense of compatibility and mutual appreciation developing between representatives on both sides: "We believe in this project." "It feels like home." "Building bridges, not walls."

It will be important to learn from the successes and challenges encountered in other projects and models and to recognize the differences between UNAQ and the Arkansas State campus in Mexico when communicating about this project.

Staying in touch with industry needs will be critical.

Engaging and communicating with the Wichita State University community, particularly faculty, will be necessary throughout the process.

The remainder of this report consists of notes taken during the meeting by facilitators or by participants working in small groups. In places they have been lightly edited for clarity or context; most of the content, however, is taken directly from meeting flipcharts.

Areas of agreement

- 0) Complementary "feel" between Chihuahua and Wichita
- 1) We like each other
- 2) There is energy
- 3) More real conversation on risk, mitigation & "off ramps" is needed
- 4) Industry must continue to be consulted
- 5) Wichita State needs to consider faculty concerns.
- 6) Monitoring / Managing political climate is important
- 7) This is not philanthropic. We must have a reasonable chance to see ROI—for organizations involved and graduates.
- 8) We require a business plan that helps answer what is possible in Chihuahua and in Kansas



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Next steps in exploring this opportunity

- Couple months needed to work on it before returning to the conversation
- Requires teams from both sides to work on it
- Ask the industry
- Establish legal framework
- Exchange and analyze the information
- All this will lead to setting the timeframe
- Sharing is important
- It is big opportunity to do something like this
- Many stakeholders will want to know how to contribute on this
- We believe in this project
- Create something different
- Significant investment deserves good analysis



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Detailed Notes

Context

Motivation from Chihuahua's government and business community to open a location of Wichita State University in Chihuahua, Mexico.

- Consultants affirm focus on aerospace
 - ✓ Talent in industry → wealth, new employment
- What is next in industry?
 - ✓ Will Boeing shift its approach?
- Economies are stronger together
- International competition: China, Russia?

Wichita State Visit Insights

- Great intercultural opportunities: political, science, history, art...
- Arkansas State has been forthcoming: we can learn a lot from their successes, challenges
- Must focus on industry needs
- Similarities between cities—manufacturing, which is becoming a digital industry
- Similar “people climate”/ like the people/focus on good of community
- It feels like home
- Wichita State could meet stated needs
 - ✓ Materials
 - ✓ Graduate level
 - ✓ General ed
 - ✓ International Business (also opportunity for Kansas-based students)
 - ✓ Business analytics, supply chain.
 - ✓ Interdisciplinary business & engineering
- WSU Tech model of 2-year technical training

Program in Puebla Insight

Wichita State has a longstanding partnership in Puebla, Mexico

- 50 year history
- Weddings!
- Library that benefits community

Questions to help understand the opportunity

- Carnegie Mellon Engineering presence – is that a concern?
- Security around change controls?

What is exciting? What might be possible?

Participants discussed potential benefits for Chihuahua's population, city, business community, etc. Participants also discussed potential benefits for Kansas population and Wichita State students, Wichita State University, and the city of Wichita.

- Textron Potential UPS Project
- Business tourism in Chihuahua
- Bridge between cities + economic systems



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- A new way to work: Serve industry and work together—expand our competitive advantage
- Create bicultural learning experience
- Education that goes farther & deeper
- Increase quality of life: “building bridges, not walls”
- Opportunity for families with children: make education available to more people *e.g.* technical degrees for women.
- Focus on supply chain.

What would we still need to know more about?

- Meta-regions → Amplify this idea + extended
- We already have a new aviation node & and proven partnership
- Chihuahua partners with same companies Wichita works with
- Industry reports that quality in Chihuahua matches Wichita
- Transfer technology, knowledge
- Strategic alignment with industry need
- Private sector, government, education around the table
- Applied learning, experiential learning: “leaders with a global mindset”
- Natural maturation step for a University
- Exchange programs = recruitment opportunity
- Composites, digital transformation, AI, etc.
 - ✓ How do we create new “ripples” in our economy that do not yet exist?
- Practical, honest, straightforward perspective of Chihuahua delegation-persistence, acknowledging challenges.

Engineering—WSU to Chihuahua considerations?

Bolded items were affirmed by more than one work group.

- Utilized Chronology to teach in both places; not affecting quality.
- Needs of industry: focus on aerospace
 - ✓ Inventory of what we have? What other side has?
- Wider scope of expertise /experience
- Filling gaps + moving to the next level in engineering together
- Creating more master level programs
- Filling in gaps in basic ed (i.e. Math, science, English, etc.)
- Tying inventory to industry
- Moving technicians into other fields
- Digital transformation
- Should be blend—some engineering courses
- Begin with electives
- Understand if terminology is current
- Feasibility studies
- What does future look like—supply chain



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- Blend and develop systems—how do we engage companies to know what jobs could be—develop future talent.
- Bachelors + Masters help with development
- **Is the commitment from companies there?**
- In engineering there are concentrations—WSU and WSU Tech each offers something unique – we should “share”—joint effort.
- Integration of tech with engineering.
- Scaffold applied learning (PBL) across the curriculum?
- CPL? And other methods for validating learning outcomes
- Competency-based?
- How do we absorb/utilize training models for industry?

Curriculum considerations?

Bolded items were affirmed by more than one work group.

- Manage flexibility of curriculum
 - ✓ Prep coursework
 - ✓ Project-based education
- **Relevancy to industry & local area**
- Additive manufacturing Entry to graduate education
- Materials 

- **Learning outcomes / skill sets – how are we mapping to outcomes?**
- Opportunity for business courses to be implemented
- Cross cultural implementation—thrive on professional journals.
- **What do students already know? Math? Remedial?**
- Where do we start with what is being looked for this curriculum plan?
- What are graduates’ final skills?
- **What does market demand? More technical?**
- **What is co-curricular experience?**
- What are extra curricular opportunities?
- Internships – Shadowing
- **Approval process-accreditation (in both countries)**
- Compliance with assessments—what they are learning?
- Integration of technical certification + degrees to Engineers degrees. Opportunity to pilot a new model and just invest the time learning.
- Soft skills/employability
- Be agile + nimble
- Language
- Who will teach? Co/teaching?
- General faculty expectations
- Degree recognized in both countries
- Focus group of local students (from Mexico)
 - ✓ Needs
 - ✓ Skills
 - ✓ Preparation



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Culture

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- Integrating the different types of students
- **Language—curriculum bilingual**
- Values/principles
- **Language expectations**
- Philanthropy
- Student body are we targeting
- Socioeconomic disparity
- What is access to education?
- What is price point? Scholarship?
- Want to available to all students
- What are roles—such as our female students
- Family, customs—understand population
- Is an education understood? Wanted?
- Do we need soccer field?
- Are students coming from outside city?
- **Safety concerns—travel alerts—legal?**
- First generation student dynamics
- Bicultural, dual cultural appreciation
- **Industry, tech, academic, government cultural integration**
- Point of difference—selling point
- Campus culture—Campus experience
- Transportation to campus
- Services
- Parents involved in the process
- Maximum campus experiences with small campus
- Social responsibility
- Opportunities for changing demographic
 - ✓ An experience otherwise not available
- Student experience
- Partnership with other local institutions?
 - ✓ Services
 - ✓ Opportunities
 - ✓ Resources

Business/Financial considerations?

- Staffing – salaries? Who is the employer? (Potentially a foundation?)
- Size of investment
- Who + how to recruit students?
- Who are the investors?
- How will we sustain it?
- Housing? Or hotel?
- Tuition (up to 20% more expensive)



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- FFE
- Building(s)
- Mission driven
- Administration (faculty governance, staff control)
- Tuition reimbursement—from companies
- Scholarships
- Company pay for graduate program/undergraduate?
- Facilities—size and programming and innovation
- Partnerships for labs
- Student loans
- Pipeline of internship/jobs
- Professional development or continuing education
- Short term programs
- Need a development office—fundraising
- Alumni engagement—cultural change
- WSU has legacy program—discount residency
- Marketing/branding plan—strategic plan
- Legal cost of startup
- Accommodations for traveling faculty
- Balancing private and public
- Robust budget model with diverse set of income streams
 - ✓ Tuition, government, industry
 - ✓ Private investment
- Faculty models
- Scale ability model for growth
- Adaptable
- Tied to workforce needs

What else?

- More understanding of workforce and industry needs *i.e.* Design Engineering.
- Integrating tech skills into education continuum
- Communication plan/strategy
- Why are we doing this?—need elevator talking point(s) considering varied audiences, economic & workforce stakeholders in both regions.
- How applied learning will be leveraged
- Recruitment of students
- Strategic alliance in both cities
- Scope of wider partnerships of academic & corp.
- Social/economic study on fees/tuition
- Role of online learning—hybrid learning for broader reach
- Governor who supports Chihuahua project is finishing term in two years
- Students' needs—experience, transportation?
- Accommodations for students



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- Locations of campus is important
- Residential campus
- Faculty collaboration
- Entrance requirements
- HLC/specialty accreditation
- DOE
- Legal considerations
- Financial aid
- Role of government
- Industry relevance
- Need to recruit—using government official
- Industry council should be created (industry need? APL)
- Risk management needs considered—Need plan B
- Programs cannot be too rigid
- Innovative, future, excited—build buzz
- What programs follow engineering?
- Integrating soft skills
- Research
- Recruiting of faculty
- Entrepreneur opportunities

Barriers

What might get in the way?

- US State Department restrictions travel/IP ITAR
- Faculty/staff; timing; something has to be put on the back burner
- Leader to manage the project.
- Always the possibility of another recession, which often hurts the manufacturing field.
- Accreditation and compliance
- KBOR; Legislature
- Discrimination issues; how do we deal with diversity?
- Topeka/State \$
- Fear—too hard, too difficult
- Money: do we have enough students in Mexico? If we charge too much or too little it will be a problem; Can Mexico government or state in Mexico give funds? Will industry give enough money to help?
- Poor project management
- Socio-Economic study for tuition fees
- Safety concerns
- Political issues in Chihuahua
- No risk managements



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Barriers: People opposed?

- Anti USMCA politicians in both countries; politicians who oppose US-Mexico cooperation
- Faculty; students
- State of Kansas Legislature (clearly just meeting today has used State of Kansas money for our 1/2 day pay, and does the Board of Regents want to fund this thinking?)
- Staff
- KBOR
- Transparency
- Government (Regulations)
- Local Universities (might take it as competition)
- Some Alumni
- Faculty. How does this intersect with desire for shared governance and transparency?
- Educational institutions in Chihuahua
- Government policies; Other institutions of higher education in Chihuahua; Other Wichita State departments/colleges

Barriers: Investment/Cost

- Low economic capabilities of target families (to pay tuition)
- Where will be the funding for start-up cost come from?
- Sustainable access to infrastructure/equipment funding
- Mexican government support.
- High initial investment if a creative business model is not developed.
- Buildings
- Who is going to fund the infrastructure?
- Need adequate funding to build innovative state-of-the-art facility; startup costs!
- How many students will attend?
- We will need a promotion group for budget purposes visits to government, industry, private sector.
- The cost of the investment; will be there enough investors? Will other universities oppose a WSU campus in Chihuahua?
- Oversight of investment
- Viability tuition cost competition
- Getting communities and companies to stand behind co-op between Chihuahua and Wichita
- Budget model?
- Competition
- ROI for graduates

Barriers: Timing

- USA Presidential elections
- Politician issues
- Business cycle globalization
- Prioritization of university initiatives
- WSU is under major changes + some people don't like change or are already exhausted



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- Government Change
- Leadership tenure. Make sure the project doesn't die because of change in leaders
- Geo political situation
- Chihuahua governor will finish term in two years
- Legal time frame
- Timeline?

What other programs / offerings could Wichita State provide (when the time is right)?

- Grow opera exchange



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