The purpose of this research is to analyze the interconnections between Mexico’s failed neoliberal state policies, its corrupt military, and the present drug war that plagues the nation. Mexico’s economic transition into a new neoliberal state was supposed to stimulate the economy; however its economic policies backfired, causing an increase in poverty, an upsurge in violence, and instability in its government institutions. By analyzing several recent film documentaries, together with scholarly research, we can see the direct causation of the fall of the neoliberal state and the rise of the drug cartels. My research analyzes the documentaries Cartel Land by Matthew Heineman, Narco Cultura by Shaul Schwarz, Drug Lord: The Legend of Shorty by Angus Macqueen and Guillermo Galdos and El Chapo: CEO of Crime by Mariana Van Zeller. These documentaries show how the Mexican military has become corrupt, causing the rise and growth of new Mexican cartels that are highly trained in military tactics, generating more casualties to the already high death toll in this drug war with no end in sight. The weakened military state of the government has opened an opportunity for new paramilitary groups who continuously enter into conflict to defend and protect themselves from the Narco State.

Study conducted with assistance from USU Assistant Professor of Spanish, Dr. Crescencio López-González.

Many ask, “What can we do to stop this corruption and violence?” The truth is, it is not up to us as U.S. residents to stop this war. We may be able to help slow the inflow of drugs into the United States, by hindering the addictions held by U.S. citizens, thusly stopping the demand for narcotics. However, the true answer lies in the Mexican State itself. They must find people who have true patriotism for Mexico and who will not let it fall and stay in the hands of Narcos. People in these positions need to be able to stand up against corruption within the State and withstand death threats from cartels. Then, the state should pay them sufficiently to do their jobs correctly without malfeasance and only then can Mexico try to get out of this narco-state. Once honest officials are in power, they can start working on having reliable law enforcement in Mexico to suppress the cartels.