Timeline Covering 200 Years of Migration Between Mexico and the United States
As early as 1797, New England traders had ventured illegally into California waters in search of sea otter. These pelts brought such high prices that it seemed worth the risk of capture and arrest by Spanish officials to enter forbidden waters.

1810: *Grito de Dolores*, Miguel Hidalgo declares Mexico's independence from Spain and abolishes slavery.

1819: Adams-Onís Treaty established U.S.-Mexico boundary between Spain and the U.S.

1821: Mexico's war for independence ends.

1821: Mexico allows F. Austin to settle in Texas and foreign merchants into California.

1823: United States creates the Monroe Doctrine to protect the Americas from Europe.
1800s

1823: Mexico opens Texas to American immigrants, leading to a flood of new English-speaking settlers in the territory. Later, Americans will be led by Sam Houston to revolt against Mexico and President Antonio López de Santa Anna.

1823: U.S. purchase of Florida from Spain through the Transatlantic Treaty, which sets the Western Border. Negotiations for the Transatlantic treaty started with President James Monroe; his stance on America's relations with Europe and the Spanish Colonies greatly influenced his creation of the Monroe Doctrine.

1829: President Vicente Guerrero signed the decree that abolishes slavery. This decree will be one of the main causes for Texas independence from Mexico. Underground Railroad (UGRR) in the U.S. was moving enslaved people to freedom. Most went to northern U.S. and Canada. But a few thousand made a shorter journey into northern Mexico.
1800s

1835: Texas, declares its independence from Mexico due to Mexico's new Constitution in which government is centralized and slavery becomes illegal in all Mexican territories.

May 1846: US President James Polk declares war on Mexico. Within two years the U.S. doubles its territory and halves that of Mexico.

1847: U.S. forces under General Winfield Scott take Mexico City. Peace negotiations with Mexico begin.

February 2, 1948: Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed. Mexico ceded 55% of its national territory to the United States and received a compensation of $15,000,000 dollars. This territory is now the states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Colorado, and Utah.
Around 100,000 Mexicans lived in the territory ceded to the U.S. (4% of the total population of Mexico). Most decided to remain in their home land. These are considered the first Mexican-Americans.

The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo promised Mexicans remaining in former Mexican territories (cont.) civil rights and land ownership. In most cases, these were not honored. Some Mexicans rebelled when they were stripped of their rights. These rebels were called “bandidos”.

1848: Gold is discovered in California.


1853: Gadsden Purchase Treaty, last adjustment to the US-American border in the 19th century. It includes parts of southern New Mexico and Arizona. Mostly purchased due to transcontinental railroad interests (see 1862).
1862: Pacific Railroad Act which provides government funding to create railroads across the west.

1861-1865: American Civil War.

California population: 560,247
Texas population: 818,579.

1883: Chinese Exclusion Act implemented in the U.S. lead railroad companies to search for alternative sources of cheap labor. Mexicans are increasingly recruited.

1890: Mexican-Americans work for the railroads. Copper mining continues to lure people to Arizona, driving more Mexican-Americans from their land.
1900: Total U.S. population 76,303,387. California population: 1,485,053 Texas population: 3,048,710.

1900: History of Mexican-Americans in the Midwest begins when they migrate from Mexico and the Southwest to work on the fields in the region, and on the railroads. Densest concentration occurs in Chicago.

1900-1924: Mexican Revolution.

1914-1918: First World War. With U.S. soldiers fighting, there was an increased need for laborers.

1914: President Wilson orders U.S. troops to invade Mexico to prevent a... large arms convoy from reaching Mexican General Victoriano Huerta’s army.

Quota Immigration Acts of 1921 and 1924 exempted Mexican migrants mostly because southwestern business insisted that Mexican labor was vital to their survival. “Nativists” and other anti-immigrant groups demanded that these exemptions be terminated.
1924: Peak of Mexican immigration to the U.S.

1927: League of United Latin American Citizens is founded and becomes the basis for the Chicano movement for the rest of the 20th century.

1929-1939: Mexican Repatriation Act: as many as one million people of Mexican descent were forced

... or pressured to leave the U.S. “Repatriation” term is inaccurate, since approximately 60% of those driven out were U.S. citizens.

1939-1945: World War II.

1942: One million rural workers have moved to the military and factory jobs in major U.S. cities.

1942: Mexico enters World War II as a U.S. ally.

1942: Bracero Program allows Mexicans to work temporarily in the U.S., mostly as farm workers.

1945: Soldiers return from war. There is less demand for Mexican workers.

1962: United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, led by Cesar Chavez is initiated as an independent organization in Delano, California.


1965: César Chávez and Delano Grape Boycott; 1968: Chavez's fast to protest farm workers conditions.


1960s-1970s: Chicano movement...

... and Farm workers movements that included the struggle for rights of illegal immigrants: César Chávez and Berto Corona in California, Guadalupe Sánchez in Arizona, and Antonio Orendain in Texas.

1970s: Mexican economy grows an average annual rate of 6.7%, its highest rate in history.
1980: The classification of “Hispanic” shows up for the first time on the U.S. census.

1994: NAFTA begins and the peso collapses. The border sees massive increase in its population.

1994: Under president Clinton’s direction the Border Patrol is bolstered. Operation Gatekeeper is introduced; ...

1996: U.S. Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigration Responsibility Act authorizes the construction of a triple fence border between San Diego, California and Tijuana, Mexico, as well as other migration–related initiatives.

1997: President Clinton promises. Mexican President...

1998: U.S. and Mexico devise, for the first time, a joint strategy for combating drug trafficking.

1999: out of the 2,113, 295 Americans living abroad in the Americas there are 1,036,300 living in Mexico.
2000: Mexican Census reports that migrants from United States comprise by far the largest proportion (69 percent) of the country’s total foreign-born population[...]

Between 1990 and 2000, the population of U.S. citizens (age 55 and above) living in Mexico increased by 17 percent.

In 2000, total U.S. pop. is 281,421,906. 8.5 million of the people living in the U.S. are ...

2001: G. Bush states that U.S.-Mex relations will be a priority during his administration. 5 days later, 9/11 made the war on terrorism his greatest priority.

2006: G. Bush sends the National Guard to the border.

2006: Arizona SB 1070: Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act makes it a state misdemeanor crime for a foreign person to be in Arizona without carrying required immigration documents. It allows “lawful stop, detention or arrest”, to determine a person's immigration status if there is suspicion that the person is an illegal alien.

2010: Madison Isthmus features on its cover “Got Immigrants? Undocumented workers are integral to the survival of state’s dairy farms”. 
SOURCES:


