

GUIDELINES FOR THE EXCHANGE PROCESS

SEMESTER DATES

These vary from year to year, but as a general rule, semester A begins on the 1st Tuesday in February (Monday is a holiday) and ends on the 3rd Saturday in June. Semester B begins on the 3rd Monday in August and ends on the 3rd Saturday in December. Officially, the semesters continue on into July and January, but these periods are for administration purposes. Your students will have finished their classes by the dates mentioned above. There is no set exam period and teachers decide when the students take their finals.

The Orientation Day takes place on the Wednesday before classes begin. The venue can vary and students are informed of this in the acceptance letter or by email.

If students think there is a possibility that they will want to extend their stay, it's far better to apply for both semesters in the first place. It is easier to cancel the second semester than extend the first.

WORK EXPERIENCE (PRÁCTICAS PROFESIONALES)

This can be arranged as part of the exchange. UdeG has arrangements with certain companies and the coordinator is Estefanía Rivera (estefaniar@cgci.udg.mx). She also deals with medical internships (she speaks good English), which can be arranged to start at any time during the year. 4-month medical rotations take place at the Hospital Civil, close to CUCS, the Medical Faculty. Internship students can combine academic courses with work experience but the courses will have to be taken during the normal semester dates.

COURSE LISTINGS

The general website is www.escolar.udg.mx . However, students have sometimes put down courses offered at regional centres, far away from Guadalajara. Therefore, it's best to check the courses listing on the website of the centre, and here is the list:

<http://www.cucea.udg.mx/?q=carreras>

<http://www.cucea.udg.mx/?q=posgrados>

http://www.cucsh1.udg.mx/programas_academicos

<http://www.cucs.udg.mx/>

<http://www.cuaad.udg.mx/>

<http://www.cucei.udg.mx/oferta-academica>

<http://www.cucba.udg.mx/>

<http://www.cutonala.udg.mx/>

(CUTONALÁ is still under construction and will not be ready until at least 2013B. Tonalá is a municipality of Guadalajara but it is a long way out from the centre of the city.)

On some websites you click on OFERTA ACADEMICA to see the programmes. Click on one of these and then click on PLAN DE ESTUDIOS to see the course listings. The full name and course code (clave) must be written on the FIE-1 application form. If there is no code (some courses are new and have not been assigned one), then ignore this.

CUCEA's website allows you to click on the course name to see its detailed description but this is not available on all. For further information, click on MAYORES INFORMES to contact the programme coordinator.

Please note that I do not deal with courses in the centres; students will have to contact the programme or exchange coordinator. On each website menu there is DIRECTORIO – this gives the contact details of the exchange coordinator in the Unidad de Intercambios of the university centre.

THE FIE-1 APPLICATION FORM

Please note: all the application documents can be now sent by email attachment in PDF format. We no longer need to receive the original papers.

ALL the information MUST BE FILLED IN. It should be done electronically at www.cgci.udg.mx/formatos/fie_1.pdf and then printed off – it is far easier for me to read it this way. The student's name must appear AS IT IS IN THE PASSPORT; surname/last name first, then forenames. DO NOT WRITE abbreviated names or variants of names; for example write 'Thomas', not 'Tom', 'Tommy', etc.

The address that is written on this form is the one I will put in the letter for the visa. I know some students have a term-time address, but it's their permanent address which should appear on the form.

'Calificación promedio' is not absolutely necessary but students must write down in which year they are presently studying – 'Añoquecursa'.

In the box marked 'Programa de Estudios' the students must write the programme they wish to take in UDEG, not the one they are following in their own university. If students take courses in various degree programmes, they should write the one in which most of their subjects appear.

In the courses section, students must mark the semester in which they wish to take the course at UDEG (A or B) and NOT the semester they are currently studying in at their home university - this information is of no interest to us at all.

I receive many applications that are NOT signed by the appropriate authorised persons. I must remind you that I have the right to reject such applications.

All applications MUST pass through the international/study abroad office of the home university and a letter of nomination ('carta de postulación') mentioning each student MUST accompany each application.

Students who wish to study for 2 semesters MUST WRITE DOWN COURSES FOR BOTH ON THE FIE-1 FORM. Courses can be changed at registration but it cannot be guaranteed that all courses will be opened. Students should always choose alternatives in case courses are not opened (especially those for CUCSH).

University centres vary in their attitude to changing courses; in CUCSH it's easy but other centres do not allow this.

There are only 10 boxes available on the form as 5 per semester is considered sufficient, but if students wish to take more courses than this, they should write them on a separate sheet.

There is no specific minimum of courses per semester, but at least 3 are recommended. Please note that one course can mean 2 or 3 classes per week, so if a student chooses 8 or 9 courses a semester, this will mean around 40 hours in class. UDEG students generally take 5-6 courses per semester, so this should be used as a guide.

Generally, all the courses listed are offered in both semesters. However, in CUCSH, some courses are only offered in one; however, there is no way of knowing this from the webpage. This glaring omission has been mentioned to the faculty so hopefully the problem will be resolved in the near future.

Students CANNOT simply put "to be decided later". We must know what courses a student wants to take in order to process the application.

COURSES IN ENGLISH

To date, only CUCEA offers courses in English (apart from, for example, Teaching English as a Foreign Language in CUCSH). The full list is as follows:

MN115 Planning and Evaluation of Investment Projects

MN132 Strategic Business Planning

MN121 Logistics of International Trade

MN104 Overseas Trade

MN109 Cultural Differences

MN118 Market Research

MN124 International Marketing

CJ150 Socio-Economic Analysis of Mexico

MN106 Global Competitiveness

However, the opening of a course is based on demand and teacher availability, so the only way is to apply for a course and wait for confirmation.

TAKING COURSES IN MORE THAN ONE FACULTY

Students can take courses in a maximum of TWO faculties, but no more, and they must take a minimum of TWO courses in each. Please bear in mind that all the faculties are located in different parts of the city and act independently of each other. One faculty will not take into account the courses to be taken in another, so course clashes could occur.

CUCBA is situated outside of the city and it is not recommended that students take courses in other faculties unless they are prepared to spend a lot of time on the bus. Also, for example, CUCEA and CUCEI are on opposite sides of the city, and travelling between them would be very time-consuming. Consult the map of Guadalajara on www.guiaroji.com.mx or on google map for the exact location of the faculties.

If the student is studying for two semesters, it's far better to take courses in one faculty per semester. However, we now require original application documents for BOTH FACULTIES.

STUDENT NUMBERS AND REGIONAL CENTRES

Generally, we can accept as many students as you wish to send us. However, one year two faculties in Guadalajara were completely full, so a way to be able to accept more students is if they apply to the regional faculties in the state of Jalisco. These are smaller and more specialised, but, apart from CUCOSTA in Puerto Vallarta, at present receive very few foreign students. Details of these and courses offered can be found at the following:

www.cualtos.udg.mx

www.cuci.udg.mx

www.cuc.udg.mx

www.cucsur.udg.mx

www.lagos.udg.mx

www.cunorte.udg.mx

www.cusur.udg.mx

www.cuvalles.udg.mx

With incoming students spread out amongst these faculties, we could increase the amount we could accept. Foreign students would be treated like local celebrities and will probably improve their Spanish quicker through more practice. Some are in reasonably-sized cities and Guadalajara is a matter of 2-3 hours on the bus. However, it is IMPOSSIBLE for students to take courses in one of these faculties and in Guadalajara (some are 5-6 hours on the bus).

LIST OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

This list appears on the FIE-1 application. Photos are no longer necessary as they are taken in the faculty. Students should stick a smaller photo on the form (without obscuring the email address please).

The medical insurance form is not vital for the acceptance of the student. It is more of a safeguard; private hospitals in Mexico are expensive. Public hospitals are cheap but crowded and waiting times are long. The cost of a visit to the doctor/dentist depends mainly on the area where the clinic is situated, but by European standards, not expensive unless it's to see a specialist.

CREDITS

Mexico is, of course, not part of the ECTS and there is no easy formula for conversion. The amount of credits per courses is based on the amount of hours of that courses and its level of difficulty. The amount varies considerably but the average is around 7 per course, which coincides pretty well with the 6 awarded in the ECTS.

GRADES TRANSCRIPTS

These arrive at my office around 2 months after the students have taken their exams.

BÄFOG FORM

Bafög scholarship forms should be sent WITH the application forms. Please try and avoid sending them later as this just causes confusion. Bafög has become more demanding and requires a copy when student is accepted, and then later registered, and then requires the original form. I'm happy to email the form twice but, due to budget constraints, the student will have to send the form him/herself to the office in Bremen.

I have to point out that the form can only be filled out and sent when the student is officially accepted. I cannot ask my boss to sign it if the confirmation of acceptance is still pending. Students should fill in all the information they can as it will save me time in having to look it up. They know in which year they are studying and I don't, so please ask them to do this.

DEADLINES

The deadlines mentioned are flexible but please try to send the applications before these dates. The sooner I receive them, the sooner the students will get their acceptance letters.

I have to reiterate that I DO NOT ACCEPT STUDENTS. I forward their documents to the relevant centre(s) and wait for confirmation before sending the acceptance letters. The whole process can take up to two months, so if your students want to apply for their visas with plenty of time, then it is recommended that the applications are sent as soon as possible. Applications can be sent as soon as the previous semester has begun. Please do not send them a year in advance as this will only confuse matters.

Students can take subjects in any department, but if they apply to several different ones, this could delay acceptance. It's best to choose subjects from as few departments as possible.

ACCEPTANCE LETTERS

Apart from cases of extreme urgency, letters are sent by certified mail to the university. Again, budget restraints prevent us from sending them individually to the students' home address (unless there is only one student involved). Certified mail takes 3-6 weeks to arrive in Europe and this should be taken into account.

I would ask that students DO NOT bombard me with emails about their letters; all I can say is that I send them as soon as I can.

Students should specify in which embassy/consulate they wish to apply for their visa. If they don't, they will be addressed to the embassy in their home country.

Some students ask me for an official acceptance without even having received their application forms; this, of course, is impossible. All I can say is that we always try to accept all applicants.

ACCOMMODATION

Students can check accommodation ads at www.informador.com.mx and www.mural.com.mx then 'aviso de ocasión'. However, accommodation will be unfurnished unless it states 'amueblado'. Students should be aware that very cheap places are that price for a good reason. Price depends very much on area but expect to pay \$2,200 - \$3,500 (\$ is the symbol for the Mexican Peso).

Contact me in the first place as I have a list of contacts, and also the faculties generally have a list, too. Students can book into a hostel upon arrival (they are cheap and plentiful) and then look for more permanent accommodation. I personally have three places available to rent, so contact me about these.

I must point out, however, that I am not an accommodation agency; I can help students but I do not have time to make all the arrangements for them, unless it simply involves a phone call.

BUDDY PROGRAMME

Only CUCEA has a buddy ('socio') programme in operation at this time, although it is hoped that all the faculties will have one operating soon. The student is picked up at the airport, stays with the socio for the 1st night, and is helped with general orientation and finding permanent accommodation.

REVISION OF DOCUMENTS

I would appreciate a revision of the FIE-1 form before sending as with around 130 incoming students in August, you can imagine the extra work it causes me if all do not fill in the required information.

Please ask your students to come to your office to speak to you in the first instance. Of course, I am open to specific questions, but I would like to try and avoid having to answer emails asking about information contained in this guide.

VISA

We advise that students obtain the study visa (required for a stay of OVER 180 days), but if the stay is for UP TO 180 days, they can simply fill in the general migration form, the FMM, at the airport. They must stipulate that the reason for their stay is to study and have at hand their acceptance letter (or copy). There is an office (la Unidad de Servicios Migratorios) of the university that provides free assistance with all visa matters and helps with the registration of the study visa, which must be done within 30 days of the student's arrival in the country. If a student for 2 semesters does not have the study visa when entering Mexico, it can be obtained through the office mentioned above after arrival.

Visa requirements can be found at:

http://www.cgci.udg.mx/visa_est.php

Some countries in Europe still appear on Mexico's blacklist. Please check which countries do appear on this list as the acceptance/visa process can be very protracted and complicated. The application of such a student should arrive at least 2 months before the deadline date.

Specific questions about visas should be directed to Luz Argote (argote@redudg.udg.mx) or Dafne Partida (dpartida@redudg.udg.mx) who are in charge of dealing with immigration/visa matters for UDEG students.

Unidad de Servicios Migratorios

Oficina del Abogado General

Universidad de Guadalajara

Tels. (0052) 33 31 34 22 22

Ext. 1558, 1557, 1567 y 1584

It is important that ALL students specify where they wish to obtain their visa – this is due to the fact that some students study in other countries and may have to go back to their country of origin to obtain the visa. Also German students have to go to the embassy in Berlin or the consulate in Frankfurt according to where they live and it's simply not possible for me to look up the address of every student.

I have suggested that there be a box to specify this information in the application form and hopefully it will be included for the next semester.

SPANISH CLASSES

These are NOT offered as part of the curriculum. A faculty might organise classes and students will have to enquire about them when they arrive. There are Spanish language courses offered in the Colegio de Español y Cultura Mexicana - <http://www.cecm.udg.mx/>, although this college has its own exchange agreements and students would have to pay (plus a registration fee of 125 US Dollars). Classes are held every weekday – this could present a problem for students who wish to combine these classes with those in the faculty as they could coincide.

In view of this, I organise classes with very experienced teachers during the semester (contact me for details). They are purely private and have to be paid for, but if taken in a group, they work out very cheap. Many exchange students have benefited from these classes in the past.