



Taking

Hannah Zeiler

The oldest universities on the American continent are in Mexico.

The oldest continuously operating American university is the Colegio de San Nicolás Hidalgo located in Morelia, Michoacan, originally founded in nearby Pátzcuaro in 1540 for the study of theology and religion. This institution is known today as the "Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo."

The main difference between the Mexican university system and that of the U.S. or Canada is that all universities are divided in faculties, which offer different degrees related to the faculty, for example, the Engineering Faculty offers degrees as Industrial Engineering, Mechanic Engineering, Computer's Engineering, etc. The syllabus is linked to the degree that one is studying, and these degrees may last from four to six years, according to the specialty that the student chooses. During the last phase of study, students are required to do social service and write a thesis on responsibilities to society.

In Mexico, the government finances public universities and private institutions finance the private universities. Public schools are also autonomous, which means that the government does not interfere with their administration, and allows them to create their own syllabus, to establish enrollment conditions and to choose the chancellor of the institution.

Many higher-level institutions in Mexico have exchange programs with schools all over the world. These universities have great facilities and services to offer international students, and Mexican students are always eager to share their ideas and their beliefs with students from other countries.

Here is a selection of respected universities that offer Spanish language programs for international students (more choices may be found at www.mexonline.com/unvrsty.htm):

Colima

Known as the "City of Palms," the sub-tropical city of Colima is the state capital of the state of Colima and was founded in 1527 as Villa San Sebastián de Colima. This quaint city boasts beautiful colonial architecture and monuments. It is situated on the western side of Mexico on the Pacific coast below the peaks of two volcanoes, Volcán del Fuego (active) and El Nevado (dormant).

Universidad Autonoma de Colima Academic Spanish Program for Foreigners (EAPE)

Established in 1970, Universidad de Colima is recognized by the presidency of Mexico as an institution with great quality programs, making it one of the ten university members of CUMex (Consortium of Mexican universities).

Universidad de Colima's international policy is to be committed to the preparation of its professors and students in order to work, contribute, and coexist successfully in a society of knowledge as well as in multicultural environments.

Universidad de Colima offers a Spanish for Academic Purposes (EAPE) course, which enables students to enroll in three different proficiency levels of Spanish: beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. All three levels include a study of conversational Spanish grammar, writing, and culture. The intermediate and advanced courses also include the study of literature. Each level is limited to a maximum of 20 students, which ensures good teacher/student relationships. The EAPE program has been especially designed for non-native Spanish speakers who need to learn the language or increase their Spanish language skills for academic or personal reasons.



Mexico to a Higher Level

looks at the university option for studying Spanish in Mexico

Cuernavaca

Cuernavaca is the capital and largest city of the state of Morelos deep in the heart of Mexico. Known as the “City of Eternal Spring” because of its enviable, pleasant year-round weather, Cuernavaca is in one of the most beautiful and culturally rich regions in Mexico. Filled with lush parks and gardens, historical buildings, and cultural attractions, Cuernavaca is an ideal destination for learning Spanish while being immersed in the flavorful culture.

Universidad Internacional Spanish Language School

The Spanish Language School at Universidad Internacional is located in a gorgeous residential part of Cuernavaca. Their goal is to provide students with a complete linguistic/cultural immersion resulting in significant improvement of Spanish language competency at every level. The faculty and staff at Universidad Internacional are committed to maintaining the highest academic standards to provide students with the best higher education has to offer: interesting and relevant programs of study, innovative classes, professional guidance, the latest technology, and most of all, a broad understanding of the world.

The Intensive Spanish Program is world recognized for its success in enhancing student Spanish language skills no matter what level of previous Spanish. It exposes the student to both language and culture through the integration of life experiences in the linguistic process. The program provides students with a comprehensive yet manageable coverage of the Spanish language and culture while integrating language into student lives. Be it business jargon, an educational need, a cultural or social matter, the program makes Spanish a part of you and can move you from any point to fluency. From daily situations to specialized fields, their goal is to maximize your usage of Spanish in a multi-cultural environment.



Puebla

The city of Puebla — also known as the “City of Angeles” or the “Heroic City of Zaragoza” — is the capital of the state of Puebla and is conveniently located between Veracruz and Mexico City. Puebla is one of the most European looking of the Spanish colonial cities and in 1999, UNESCO added the historic center of Puebla to its World Heritage List.

Universidad de las Américas Puebla Centro Internacional

Universidad de las Américas is located in San Andrés-Cholula, Puebla, just 15 minutes from the famed colonial city Puebla. Cholula is one of the oldest cities in the so-called cultural area of Mesoamerica, the home to over 200 churches, chapels, and cathedrals and is well known for its cuisine. Puebla offers a traditional Colonial ambience as well as a modern array of restaurants, nightclubs, and services.

The Spanish Immersion Program is administered by the International Center of Language and Culture, a department dedicated to receiving students from other countries. Their programs seek to develop a student’s linguistic knowledge and increase cultural comprehension as they lay the foundation in the classroom and related activities. All programs include guided local trips, visits to other major cities, cultural activities and workshops, and daily interaction with their staff of student counselors, all of which have the experience to provide an excellent educational experience for visitors.