

Knowing the Popular University of Chontalpa (UPCH)

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I. UPCH Geographic location

The Universidad Popular de la Chontalpa is located on the Cárdenas-Huimanguillo highway, km. 2, Paso y Playa.

It is located in the municipality of Cárdenas in the state of Tabasco; it is found between the geographic coordinates 17° 59' latitude north and 91° 32' longitude west.

The municipality borders the Gulf of Mexico and the municipalities of Paraíso and Comalcalco to the north, the state of Chiapas and the municipality of Huimanguillo to the south, Comalcalco, Cunduacán and Chiapas to the east, and finally with Huimanguillo and the state of Veracruz to the west.

The municipality of Cárdenas covers 815 square miles and its average elevation is 39.4 feet above sea level. In 2010 the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) recorded a population of 248,507 in Cárdenas municipality. In the 2015 census the INEGI recorded 258,554.

The city of Cárdenas is the seat of the municipality and is considered the second most important city in Tabasco and the fifth most important in southeast Mexico.

Representatives of state and federal government bodies and the main public buildings of the municipality are found in the city. The main economic activity is the service industry. Cárdenas is 31 miles away from Villahermosa, the state capital.

II. Background of the university

The Honorable City Council of Cárdenas created this university on the 28th of August in 1995; in 1988 the 56th Legislature of the Honorable Congress of the state of Tabasco created the Universidad Popular de la Chontalpa by decree 112. This decree was published in supplement B

number 5861 of the Official Gazette of the state of Tabasco on the 7 of November 1998.

The justification for the creation of the University resulted from the following actions (among others):

First – The city council of Cárdenas approached the Government of the State of Tabasco with the purpose of requesting the authorization for the creation of an institution of higher education that would comply with the current national and state regulations.

Second – The City Council of Cárdenas explained to the state government that sustaining a quality higher education institution and at the same time attending to the various and demanding municipal tasks represented a financial impossibility for the municipality.

Third – In its meeting on the 3rd of June 1998, the State Commission for the Planning of Higher Education (COEPES), recognized that the graduation of students from high school in Cárdenas municipality and its surrounding areas, justifies the existence of a higher education institution that responds to the demand for professionals in the use of productive vocations and contribution of social needs in the Chontalpa region.

Fourth – Pursuant to the above, on July 28, 1988, the State and Federal governments held the convention for the creation, operation, consolidation and financial support of the state university in the Chontalpa region, based in the city of Cárdenas, Tabasco, as a decentralized public organization of the state government, for the teaching of higher education.

III. University nature

The first article of the Creation Decree states that this institution of higher education is a public organization of the state government whose nature is its own legal personality and its own assets, with the Secretary of Education as its head.

IV. University objectives

The third article of the Creation Decree indicates that (Decree 112, p-3) 'The University', will have as its objectives:

1. To produce associated, undergraduate and postgraduate professionals with ample humanist and nationalist education, as well as a high social commitment; suitable for the application and generation of knowledge that coincides with the solution of problems in an innovative way in scientific advances.
2. To develop studies or projects in the areas of their competence, that will translate into concrete contributions that improve and increase the efficiency of the production of goods and services and to the improvement of the community's quality of life.
3. To develop programs that benefit the community.
4. To promote research and culture, and
5. To forge links with the public, private and social sectors, in order to contribute to the social development of the community.

V. Mission

To produce proactive, triumphant, competent, entrepreneurial, and competitive professionals for the development of the region, the state, and the country.

VI. Vision

Research, in order to generate entrepreneurial and competitive graduates for the market, permanently promoting the culture.

VII. University influence scope

Based on the Decree of Creation, the university as an educational institution must respond to the demand of professionals so they are able

to take advantage of productive calls and social needs in the Chontalpa region. (112 Decree, p. 1). This region is formed of 7 municipalities: Cárdenas, Comalcalco, Cunduacán, Huimanguillo, Jalpa de Méndez, Nacajuca and Paraíso. According to National Institute of Statistics and Geography, (INEGI) 2015, this university has a potential offer to cover the educational demands of its 1,107,494 inhabitants from the region.

Table 1 Inhabitants per municipality

Municipality key	Municipality	Inhabitants (2015)
002	Cardenas	258 554
005	Comalcalco	201 654
006	Cunduacán	138 504
008	Huimanguillo	188 792
010	Jalpa de Méndez	87 249
013	Nacajuca	138 366
014	Paraíso	94 375

Source: INEGI 2015

Based on the school year records 2015-2016, the enrollment of the students at high-school level was 46,811 students; this represented the effective demand of the university.

Table no. 2 shows the enrollment in high-school level per municipality during the school year 2015-2016.

Municipality	Enrollment
Cardenas	12 076
Comalcalco	9 368
Cunduacán	5 522
Huimanguillo	8 459
Jalpa de Méndez	3 952
Nacajuca	3 356
Paraíso	4 078

Source: Statistical notebooks. Ministry of Education (SEP). Beginning of school year 2015-2016. Tabasco.

VIII. UPCH Educational offer

The following study programs are offered by Universidad Popular de la Chontalpa:

- 14 Bachelor's degrees
- 2 Specialties
- 7 Master's degrees
- 1 Doctorate degree

Number	Bachelor degrees in engineering	Bachelor degrees in humanities and health science	Masters	Doctorate	Specialty
1	Information Technology	Law	Sustainable Chemistry	Education	Geology
2	Geology	Alternative Tourism	Administration focused on Commercialization		Tropical Sheep
3	Agronomy	Trade and International Finances	Education focused on Teaching		
4	Civil	Political Science and Public Administration	Strategies for Sustainable Regional Development		
5	Oil Chemical	Psychology	Political Management		
6	Electrical and Mechanical	Pharmaceutical-Biological Chemist	Occupational Psychology		
7	Zootechnics	Marketing	Ecotourism		

IX. Enrollment

During the school year, August 2015 – January 2016, the university registered a total enrollment of 5,626 undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Study mode and students registered in each mode

Study Level	Mode	Registered Students
Undergraduate	Weekly	3,676
Undergraduate	Weekends	1,514
Postgraduate	weekends	114
CADI	Weekly	320
	Total	5,626

Table 3 shows school year 2015-2016 enrollments. Source: Scholar Services Direction, UPCH, 2016.

X. Quality Study Programs

In Mexico the Inter Institutional Committee for the Education (CIEES) is an organism which is dedicated to assure the quality of higher education. They are integrated by nine committees (seven academic programs and two with institutional functions) aimed at determining the quality of the study programs and their functions.

It is important to point out that level 1 indicates the total quality of the educational programs. Currently the university has 8 study programs evaluated by CIEES; this represents a 57.14% of the evaluated careers for their good educational quality.

Table 4 shows the level of evaluation of the degrees evaluated by CIEES

Degrees	Level of evaluation
International Trade and Finances	1
Political Science and Public Administration	1
Psychology	1
Marketing	1
Ecotourism	1

XI. Academic staff

Universidad Popular de la Chontalpa is composed by 484 academics who teach in the 14 degree programs the university offers.

- 37 academics are Full Time Professors (Profesores de Tiempo Completo (PTC),
- 447 academics are subject teachers,
- Out of the 37 Full Time Professors, 28 belong to the Researchers State System (Sistema Estatal de Investigadores, SEI) and 7 professors belong to the Researchers National System (Sistema Nacional de Investigadores, SNI).

XII. Academic bodies

The university holds 7 academic bodies as shown in box no. 5. These bodies aim at researching in the different lines of application of knowledge.

	Academic Body	General line of application of knowledge
1	Human development and productive innovation	Human development and productive innovation for the social wellbeing
2	Organizational psychology and administration	Human development and productive innovation for the social wellbeing
3	Governance, education and tourism	Political, educational and touristic transformation for the human development
4	Psychology and education	Quality of life and improvement of higher education
5	Integral utilization of the agri-food sector and biotic resources	Development of biotic products
6	Engineering, environment and sustainable development	Environment, natural resources and sustainable development
7	Green Chemistry and sustainable development	Chemistry, health and environment

Table 5-UPCH Academic bodies

XIII. Research

Eleven researchers are working on the following projects:

	Research project
1	Sustainable use of pineapple (<i>ananas comosus L. Merrill</i>) crop in Mexico.
2	Community master plan to prevent crime and its assessment in Cañales.
3	Assessment on modifying agents of wettability zwitterionic in high temperature conditions and representative salinity of carbonated naturally fractured deposits.
4	Obtention and characterization of nanocelulose from agroindustrial waste and vegetables species from the Chontalpa region, Tabasco.
5	Validation of sugar cane varieties in pattern cycle in field in the Chontalpa region, Tabasco.
6	Study of the efficacy of botanical extracts on eggs and larvae of gastrointestinal nematodes in small ruminants.
7	Development and evaluation of alternative therapies: potential antioxidant from manilkara zapota fruit as nutraceutical precursor.
8	Design and installation of a 250 kwp photovoltaic system to generate solar energy in Universidad Popular de la Chontalpa.

XIV. Periodicals

- *Signos Magazine*. Arts and literature. Quarterly issued.
- *Investigación y Posgrado*. Quarterly.

XV. Infrastructure

The following infrastructure supports the teaching and research activities in campus:

Unit	Infrastructure
1	Library holds a collection of 37,364 copies and offers a virtual library service
1	Virtual simulation lab equipped with 42 Mac computers
1	Gesell camera for psychology practices
1	Oral hearing courtroom for practices
1	Computer lab
1	Multidisciplinary lab for Civil and Electrical and Mechanical engineering students
1	Laboratory for Chemistry and Pharmacy Biology students
1	Animal breeding center
1	Bird watching tower
1	Business development center
1	Sports center
1	Gymnasium
7	Buildings equipped with classrooms for teaching
1	Building equipped with classrooms for teaching postgraduate and language courses
1	a rectory building that holds administrative areas

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