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Case Study University of Granada

Abstract

This case study gives a short introduction to the University of Granada in terms of general figures and International students. It summarises the services at in the area of e-learning, quality and student mobility. Most of the information comes from the University website and from other internal documents and from the research carried out among the personnel of the university.

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1. Short outline of the University of Granada

The University of Granada (UGR) was founded in 1531, under the initiative of the Emperor Carlos V, by means of a Papal Bull from Pope Clemente VII. The influence of the University in the city's social and cultural environment is palpable and essential. The UGR also has University Campuses in the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla, located in North Africa, which have a special cultural importance by virtue of the coexistence of the different cultures making up their populations. In recent years, the University of Granada has faced the greatest growth in its history, placing it among the top Spanish universities.

1.1 Key Figures for 2004

Faculties and University Schools: 28

Departments: 110

Degree Courses: 78

Doctorate Programmes: 130

Master's Degrees: 35

Students: Over 80,000

- 57,051 Undergraduate students (6% are international students)
- 2,796 In PhD research (20% are international students and 40% graduates from universities).
- Over 2,000 postgraduate students (Master's and University Expert Courses).
- 17,500 students in Continuing Education, Special Fields of Study, Adult Education, Languages Centre

Academic Staff: 3,423 (74% with PhD)

Administrative and Service Staff: 1,729

1.2 Study Programmes

The University is currently revising all its study programmes, in line with the Bologna Process or European Convergence in Higher Education. These newly-devised syllabi will consist of two 'cycles': Graduate and Postgraduate. This level is, in turn, divided into Master's and PhD courses.

Degree Programmes: at present the UGR offers 54 higher degrees (a minimum of 4 years' study and equivalent to M.A and MSc, or the English BA and BSc), and 24 degrees at diploma level (3 years' study).

Postgraduate Programmes: the UGR is able to offer doctorate courses in almost all the degree and higher engineering courses. Also, it promotes continuous training for professionals from very different fields and the specialisation of those who have just graduated, as well as organising courses to complement students' current studies:

Doctorate (PhD) Programmes: over 130.

Master's Degrees: 35.

University Expert Courses: 41

Specific and Complementary Courses: 187

Other Courses: The Mediterranean Centre also offers 35 courses and 22 more are given during the Summer School held in the UGR's premises in Ceuta, Melilla and Sierra Nevada, a ski resort near Granada.¹

NB: All figures concerning courses refer to the academic year 2003/04

1.3 Academic Year

The academic year is divided into two semesters: Semester 1, running from the end of September until mid-February (including 1st-semester exams); and Semester 2, running from mid-February until the beginning of July (including 2nd-semester exams). There are holidays both at Christmas (around 14 days) and Easter (1 week).

2. International Programmes

One of the general principles in the Strategic Plan of the UGR is promoting and maintaining international relations as regards teaching, research and other areas of university extension and collaboration. In this sense, the UGR welcomes international students and academic staff as part of a conscious effort. The UGR has many agreements and actively collaborates with institutions from around the world, hosting students on all degree courses, both as regular and exchange students. As a summary, it participates in the following programmes:

2.1 Socrates/Erasmus Programme (E.U.)

The UGR has agreements for co-operation and the exchange of students and staff with more than 480 European higher education centres and receives over 1,700 foreign students through this Programme.

2.2 Bilateral Exchange Agreements

Student exchange programmes with Europe, the U.S.A, Canada, Japan, Latin America and North Africa. The exchange programmes are open to both graduate and postgraduate students for study on any of the courses offered by the UGR.

There are also specific double- or joint-degree programmes in the study areas of Economics and Business Studies (with institutions from Germany, France and the UK), Languages (Italian, Portuguese, English and Slavic Philologies, with institutions from Italy, Portugal, the UK, Russia, the Czech Republic and Germany), Documentation (Germany) and Political Science and Sociology (France and Italy). The UGR also organises a specific programme for Foreign Language Assistants.

2.3 Other International Programmes

Within the Coimbra Group:

- Coimbra Group Scholarships Programme for young professors and researchers from Latin American Universities.
- Coimbra Group Scholarships Programme for Mediterranean Universities.
- Hospitality Scheme. Mobility programme with universities from south-eastern Europe
- Split Winter School.
- Mobility at PhD level among Coimbra Group Universities. www.coimbra-group.be

Agreements with Spanish Embassies:

Through these agreements, the UGR finances the full undergraduate studies of students from Morocco, Poland, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic and Romania who have obtained the Spanish secondary-education certificate.

Networks in Latin-America:

The UGR offers places for undergraduates (waiver of tuition fees and credit recognition) through the agreements signed by the UGR with universities in Mexico associated with the ANUIES-CRUE Programme, as well as with Tordesillas Group universities in Brazil.

The UGR is a member of the AUIP (Latin-American University Postgraduate Association). Grants are offered each year for the mobility of postgraduate students.

www.auiip.org

AECI Programmes:

The UGR has signed an operative plan with the Spanish Agency for International Co-operation (AECI) and the Fundación Carolina supporting their annual programmes for undergraduate and postgraduate studies in our University. “Becas MAE-AECI”. www.becasmae.es, www.aeci.es, información@fundacioncarolina.es

Co-operative Doctorate Studies in Latin-America:

Through a series of specific agreements for PhD Programmes, the UGR offers grants and a waiver of tuition fees for those students accepted onto these programmes. There are currently 14 such programmes.

2.4 Number of outgoing and incoming students

Functionally all these programmes are coordinated through 6 different areas. Following we include the number of students for each area (all data refer to the academic year 2004/05).

1) Socrates/Erasmus and other European mobility area

Students incoming: 1,706

- Subjects studied:

CENTRE	Nº STUDENTS
<i>E.T.S. Arquitectura</i>	42
<i>E.T.S. Informatica</i>	43
<i>E.U. Arquitectura Tecnica</i>	43

<i>E.U. Cc. Sociales De Melilla</i>	4
<i>E.U. De Magisterio "La Inmaculada"</i>	4
<i>E.U. Trabajo Social</i>	1
<i>ETS.Caminos Canales Y Puertos</i>	27
<i>Fac. Ciencias Del Trabajo</i>	2
<i>Fac.Bellas Artes</i>	42
<i>Fac.Biblioteconomia Y Documen</i>	4
<i>Fac.Cc.Actv.Fisica Y Deporte</i>	57
<i>Fac.Cc.Economicas Y Empresar</i>	191
<i>Fac.Cc.Educacion</i>	85
<i>Fac.Cc.Politicas Y Sociologia</i>	119
<i>Fac.Ciencias</i>	156
<i>Fac.Law</i>	96
<i>Fac.Farmacia</i>	43
<i>Fac.Filosofia Y Letras</i>	419
<i>Fac.Medicina</i>	51
<i>Fac.Odontologia</i>	3
<i>Fac.Psicologia</i>	38
<i>Fac.Traduccion E Interpretacion</i>	220
<i>Instituto De Estudios De La Mujer</i>	3
<i>Instituto De Paz Y Conflictos</i>	1
<i>Others</i>	11

As to the European mobility students outgoing the total number is : 1,093

- 995 Erasmus and
- 98 Free exchange students

2) East and Central European countries area

Exchange students incoming: 28

Exchange students outgoing: 30

3) North America area

Exchange students incoming: 168

Exchange students outgoing: 34

4) Latino America area

Exchange students incoming: 16

Exchange students outgoing: 10

5) Magreb and arab countries

Exchange students incoming: 43

Exchange students outgoing: 21

6) Other countries (Japan, China, New Zealand, etc.)

Exchange students incoming: 20

Exchange students outgoing: 17

2.4 .1 Total numbers “exchange students incoming”: 1,981

- Age: no statistics/ gender: men: 44 % women: 56 %
- Erasmus: 1,706 – 86.1 % / non-Erasmus: 275 – 13.88 %
- Subjects studied: see the table above.

2.4.2 Total numbers “exchange students outgoing: 1,205

2.4 Age: no statistics/ gender: no statistics

2.5 Erasmus: 995 – 82.5 %/ non-Erasmus: 215 – 17.42 %

2.6 Subjects studied: no data

NB: All data come from a report by the International Office,

3. How the university organizes its services

There are three groups of incoming exchange students at the University of Granada: Erasmus students, free exchange students and visitors. Visitors pay the university taxes as any local students do and get a student card identical to theirs. Erasmus and free exchange students do not pay taxes at the host university; they receive an Erasmus or Free exchange card, and a PIN number that allow them to ask for some services.

3.1 eLearning

Any visiting students can apply for registering in any of the virtual subjects that are offered by the UGR with the same restrictions of the local students. There are no statistics of students attending these subjects at the UGR.

As to databases with information about career grades and courses; most of the faculties are including this information on the websites, the virtual subjects can also be consulted on the website of the Virtual Learning Subject (CEVUG) <http://cevug.ugr.es/>.

3.2 Database, resources, libraries, PCs /Internet

The Erasmus or Free exchange card is a prerequisite to ask for a library card. The library card entitles them to use the library premises, search databases and catalogues, use PCs in the library and borrow laptops in the library, as well as any other resources available for loan.

The Erasmus or Free student card also entitles them to use computer facilities in their faculty as well as any other labs accessible for local students.

The PIN number will serve the students to ask for an email account on the website of the Computing Service Centre. And once they have an e-mail account they will be able to have access to wireless network that is extended in all buildings of the university. The user name and the password of their e-mail also permit VPN access when they are off-campus.

However, it seems that most of the students do not ask for email and continue using other external accounts (hotmail, yahoo, etc.). There is no free Internet access outside the university, but in Granada there are plenty of Cyber cafés at a very cheap price.

The Erasmus card expires and after that students can not use the UGR facilities, however there is no clear answer as regards e-mail accounts, as nobody seems to be sure about its expiration date.

Students from the UGR visiting other universities keep their student card throughout the semester or the year and are entitled to use the UGR services as if they were at their local university providing they can make a VPN connection.

3.3 Interoperability

The University of Granada is a partner of Eduroam. Being part of this project allows users visiting another institution connected to Eduroam to log on to the WLAN using the same credentials (username and password) the user would use if he were at his home institution. Depending on local policies at the visited institutions, Eduroam participants may also have additional resources at their disposal.²

3.4 Quality in eLearning

To deal with this issue we have to refer to the “Virtual Learning Centre” of the university. It started in 2001 as a successful attempt to centralise the managing of eLearning at the University of Granada. To summarise, this Centre takes responsibility for the generation of undergraduate and post-graduate virtual courses, the methodological and technical training for content authors and on-line tutors and the provision of guides for content authors, on-line tutors, evaluation, LMS use, etc. From the start, quality assurance has been a key issue in the strategic plan of this Centre having developed a process of assessment and evaluation of the courses previously and subsequently to their implementation. All courses have to undergo an overall evaluation by the students, but the data are not relevant in any case for incoming students because there is no distinction among them and the local students.

4. University policy / actions to support incoming and outgoing exchange students

Students on the EU’s Erasmus and Free Mover programmes must be officially registered at the home university and have a Learning Agreement signed by their home co-ordinator.

In general, all exchange programmes are open to undergraduate and postgraduate students and apply to all courses offered by the UGR. However, certain exchanges are restricted to either undergraduates or postgraduates and some courses have a limited number of places available. Before the end of November each year, Faculties and Schools can propose modifications to the number of exchange places. All exchange students should register at the International Office in order to receive a student ID and card.

At the UGR all Erasmus exchange agreements are concluded at faculty or school level. The International Office receives all the signed agreements and co-ordinates relations with the National Erasmus Agency.

In order to organise the Erasmus programme, the University has a co-ordinator in each faculty or school, who is responsible for all internal matters directly related to the programme, as well as being the contact person for other universities and educational institutions who might wish to initiate co-operation with Granada.

Students need to go to the central International Relations Office to register with the university and be issued with a student identity card which, they will need in order to use the university facilities (libraries, sports facilities, computers, etc.) and to sign up for the Spanish language course.

4.1 Language support

Students visiting the UGR under the Socrates/Erasmus programme have the right to attend one of the free Spanish-language courses organized by the university each year, providing they meet the requirements established each year.

4.2 ICT support

The Central International office and the respective Faculty International office give support for visiting students through their web pages, but most of the information is requested and offered personally in the offices or by the co-ordinator in each faculty. Communication between the students and the International office is not based on ICT.

The International office is introducing a database system that, in the future, could be of help to consult data and make communication and coordination among the faculty International offices easier. Incoming students can complete an online application and send it to the International office before arriving at Granada, but this has no effect until the students actually comes to the office and register at the university.

¹ Most of the information on this document comes from the Student Guide at
< <http://www.ugr.es/~ofirint/erasmus/guiaestudiante.doc> >

² This information comes from the eduroam website <http://www.eduroam.org/europe.php>