The Complutense University of Madrid (UCM) is the largest university in Spain and one of the most prestigious in Europe. Its teaching and research centers are mainly on the Moncloa Campus, in the “Ciudad Universitaria”, and on the Somosaguas Campus, 8 Km. from central Madrid. There are also some other buildings in the centre of Madrid. The UCM is strategically located in Spain’s capital city, and is easy to reach from anywhere in the Community of Madrid by metro, bus and commuter train and cycle lane. In addition with links between the two campuses.
The origin of The Complutense University dates back to the late 13th century, when Sancho IV of Castile granted the Archbishop of Toledo, Gonzalo García Gudiel, a licence to create the General School of Study in Alcalá (Estudio de Escuelas Generales de Alcalá) in the city of Alcalá de Henares in the spring of 1293.

The main building of the Cisnerian University (Universidad Cisneriana) was the San Ildefonso Hall of Residence. In January 1510, Cisneros approved its Constitution which laid out the rules governing the institution and set the rights and duties of every member of the community.

Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, Cardinal and Archbishop of Toledo, Regent of Castile and alumnus of the General School, established the Complutensis Universitas (the Latin name of Complutense University), through a Papal Bull granted by Pope Alexander VI on 13 April, 1499. Cisneros provided the new university with a vast area of rustic and urban land as a show of his support for the university.

Along with the San Ildefonso Hall of Residence, several small residences were also founded by Cisneros. Special mention must be made of the San Pedro and San Pablo residences, which belonged to the Franciscan Order, of which Cisneros was a member. The College of the Mother of God (Colegio de la Madre de Dios), subsequently known as the College of the Theologians (Colegio de los Teólogos), in which studies of theology and medicine were taught; Santa Catalina Ode (Arts & Physics); College of San Balbina (also known as the Collego for Logicians in which the first courses of Art were taught) and The Colleges of San Eugenio and San Isidoro, which merged into the College of San Ambrosio in the seventeenth century and was known as for Grammarians (de los gramáticos) for Latin and Greek language studies. During the second quarter of the sixteenth century, about thirty new schools related to religious orders, military, royal and private institutions were founded.

In the academic year 1509-1510, the Complutense already operated with five major schools: Arts and Philosophy, Theology, Canon Law, Philology and Medicine. The university was influenced by Renaissance thought and the ideals of humanism against the old conception of the medieval universities. In order to reconcile theology with the principles of the classical period in accordance with the guidelines of the reform movement embodied by the Franciscan Order, the Cisnerian University intended to recover spiritual values lost during the Middle Ages. In addition, the university focused on training lawyers and theologians, who served the Monarchy, to manage the increasingly complex structure of the administration.

The prestige of the studies and teachers at the Complutense became the model on which new universities in Latin America would be established. The golden era of the university lasted until the seventeenth century, when its decline began as a result of the effects of the Counter-Reformation. Up until then, the university had been the core of humanistic thought for the Spanish Monarchy.

Enlightenment Reforms unsuccessfully attempted to overcome the decline of the university at this time.
Until well into the 18th century, higher education was based on the scholastic method of exposition and debate. In order to overcome this unsustainable situation, the reform for study programmes was proposed in 1770, during the Reign of Charles III and faced strong resistance from the universities. During the Enlightenment period and according to the centralization policy supported by the Bourbon Monarchy, some new centres were established in which research and specialized education began to share the same space. These included the Cabinet of Natural History (Gabiente de Historia Natural) in 1771, The Royal Botanical Garden (Real Jardín Botánico) in 1755 and Royal Observatory of Madrid (Real Observatorio de Madrid) in 1790.

The outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789, as well as the subsequent political and social instability which led to the War of Independence and the Age of Absolutism, spelled the end of the reforming principles of the Enlightenment.

**Distinguished People**

**Nobel Laureates:**

- **Professors:**
  

  Santiago Ramón y Cajal. Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine (1906) Professor of Histology, Histochemistry and Pathological Anatomy since 1892 Doctor of Medicine Degree (1877).

  José Echegaray. Nobel Prize in Literature (1904) Professor of Physical and Mathematical Sciences until 1915.

- **Students:**


  Camilo José Cela. Nobel Prize in Literature (1989) Studies in Medicine, Law and Spanish Literature


**Faculties**

The Faculties and Schools are higher education institutions responsible for the organization of studies and the academic, administrative and management processes. These institutions provide courses leading to official degrees awarded in Spain, as well as unofficial postgraduate diplomas and certificates.

- Fine Arts
- Biological Science
- Chemical Science
- Commerce and Tourism
- Computer Science and Engineering
- Dentistry
- Economics and Business Administration
- Education – Teaching and Learning Centre
- Geography and History
- Geological Science
- Language Studies
- Law
- Library Science
- Mathematical Science
- Media & Communication Science
- Medicine
- Nursery, Physiotherapy and Podiatry
- Optics and Optometry
- Pharmacy
- Philosophy
- Physical Science
- Political and Social Science
- Psychology
- Social Work
- Statistical Studies
- Veterinary Medicine

**Publications and Collaborations.**

The university, through its Publications Service, publishes books and 77 scientific journals in different
areas of knowledge workers. Until the summer of 2013
the university had its own editorial, which had a
catalog of about 500 monographs dedicated to various
topics. Among the authors who have published their
work in the Editorial are: Amartya Sen, July Arostegui,
Francisco Bustelo, George Lakoff and Eduardo
Galeano.

About collaborations, at the international level the
Complutense University have cooperation agreements
with some of the most prestigious universities in the
world as the University of Oxford, the University Paris
1 panthéon-sorbonne, the University of Rome "La
Sapienza" and Harvard University. Finally, the
university with the Science Park of Madrid collaborates
with others public research institutions such as the
CSIC, theCiemat and the Instituto de Salud Carlos III,
as well as with private companies.

**The Complutense University of Madrid today**

The University of Madrid has played a major role in the
political development of Spain since its founding. Its
graduates have been members, at either
Congressional or Ministerial level, in all of the
governments of Spain since the Enlightenment, and
their positions in the Second Spanish Republic and the
post-Franco transition to democracy were particularly
notable. The former first Deputy Prime Minister, María
Teresa Fernández de la Vega, and the
former President, José María Aznar, are both
graduates of the university. The Complutense
University has also played host to some of the most
significant figures of the intellectual world, with a long
tradition of visiting professors amongst which feature
some of the greats of world academia (most
notably, Albert Einstein). A significant part of the
European intelligentsia flocked to its halls during the
1930s, when democratic Spain provided a refuge from
the rising terrors of fascism. The contemporary
Complutense University has also counted
numerous Nobel Laureates not only among its
graduates, but also its faculty members over the years.

Currently, the Complutense University is the largest
university in Spain. During the 2004–2005 academic
year the University recorded an enrollment of 91,598
students and employed a staff of 9,500, of which over
6000 are directly involved in teaching duties; the
University operates on government subsidies, grants
and enrollment funds, with a current annual budget of
over 500,000,000 euros. The University currently
offers nearly 80 possible majors, 230 individual
degrees, and 221 doctorate programs. The University
has over 30 libraries, with over 2 million works in print,
a particularly rich archive of over 90,000 historical
documents, and one of the most extensive film
collections in Europe.

Due to its long history in the capital, the Complutense
University enjoys great support from Madrid-based
institutions, at a local, national and international level.
The School of Medicine operates the Hospital Clínico
Universitario de San Carlos, Hospital Gregorio
Marañón, and the most famous one, Hospital October
12th, as well as a number of other specialized clinics
located on-campus, some of which are operated jointly
with the Ministry of Health or perform specific research
for the Ministry. The School of Medicine is not the only
one with government involvement; indeed, despite
past conflicts, the Complutense University shares a
close bond with the Spanish government, as both the
presidential residence of La Moncloa and the Spanish
Constitutional Court are located directly on-campus
(with the political center of the city at walking distance).

The School of Communications, meanwhile, enjoys
equally good relations with the press (large part of its
professors being former reporters, editors, or directors
of major Spanish and international newspapers).
Moreover, the School is known particularly for its role
as one of the premiere pre-screening locales in Spain-
all major Spanish film productions are screened first
before an audience of Complutense students, with the
main actors or production figures of the films attending
a post-screening press conference. Most recently,
Blanca Portillo, Carmen Maura, Lola Dueñas and
Yohana Cobo pre-screened Pedro
Almodóvar's Volver; past pre-screening visitors have
included director Santiago Segura, actor Alejo Sauras,
and writer E. Annie Proulx.
Each year, the Madrid Círculo de Bellas Artes extends special invitations to the Complutense students during its series of annual conferences featuring prominent philosophers, sociologists, and psychologists. Likewise, all of the faculties have been able to benefit greatly by lectures given by some of the most illustrious figures in recent history, of all fields, from singer-songwriter and Catalan activist Joan Manuel Serrat to historian Ernst Gombrich, from writer Umberto Eco to communist politician Santiago Carrillo. Alejandro Amenábar wrote his first film, Tesis, while still attending the Complutense University. All the on-campus scenes in the film were shot in the School of Communications, which Amenábar himself had attended, and the building itself serves as major device in the plot.

The Complutense Abroad

Besides an extensive series of accords permitting student/professor exchanges and study abroad opportunity with prestigious universities throughout the world, the Complutense University of Madrid currently operates four full-time institutions outside of Spain

- The Real Colegio Complutense at Harvard University (Cambridge, Massachusetts): The RCC was founded as a joint cooperative institution to foster intellectual and scientific interaction between Harvard University and Complutense, with the support of HM King Juan Carlos I, HM Queen Sofia of Spain and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It follows the tradition of the Royal Spanish College, founded in 1364 to host Spanish Visiting Scholars at the University of Bologna. The RCC accord is the only one of its sort ever to have been approved by Harvard. The institution is directed jointly by the President of Harvard and the Rector of Complutense University, with an academic council formed by 5 Harvard professors and 5 Complutense professors. It permits a select number of Complutense professors to conduct their research at Harvard as Visiting Scholars. RCC Fellows enjoy the same privileges as Harvard's non-tenured Faculty. Each year the institution hosts the RCC Fellows Lectures, a conference cycle during which the Visiting Scholars deliver lectures revealing the results of their investigations to an audience of Harvard professors and students. Finally, it also permits a small number of students to attend doctoral school at the University as Research Associates, under scholarships hosted by the Spanish Royal Family.

- Collège des Hautes Études Européennes Miguel Servet (Paris, France): founded upon the initiative of the Club Européen des Recteurs, the Collège des Hautes Études Européennes Miguel Servet is a Franco-Iberian center of learning and research located within the La Sorbonne. Besides specialized degrees, it offers programs focused on jurisprudence and economy within the European Union, a double-major program in Franco-Iberian law, and the Diplôme de Formation Européenne, which is operates under the auspices of the European Union and UNESCO. It was awarded a status of 'centre d'excellence', and in 1995 it opened chapters in Italy, Portugal, and South America.

- Cátedra Complutense en la Universidad de Karlova (Prague, Czech Republic): Full campus in operation, offering bachelor and doctoral degrees in partnership with Charles University (Univerzita Karlova v Praze) in Prague.

- Cátedra Dubcek (Bratislava, Slovakia): Full campus in operation, offering bachelor and doctoral degrees in partnership with Comenius University in Bratislava.

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