

A NETWORK OF TERTIARY EDUCATION LIBRARIES AND RESOURCE CENTRES (USBI) IN MEXICO

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Veracruz University has campuses in five regions and 14 towns in the State of Veracruz. It serves over 60 000 students in 119 vocational and non-formal education programmes. It has 6 238 teachers and its physical establishment consists of 322 buildings, making a total over 354 thousand square metres of educational buildings. The area of institutional real estate has risen from 4.5 million square metres of land to over 5.1 million, an increase of 13.3% across the five regions of the State.

Aware of its role as a public institution faced with the challenge of the knowledge society, Veracruz University formulated an Alternative University Paradigm as the central pillar of its 2001-2005 work programme: becoming an agency for the social distribution of knowledge. This project reflects international trends in the modernisation of higher education and the recommendations of international organisations. At the 1998 Paris Conference, UNESCO concluded that the skills required by the knowledge worker are: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live together in order to become part of the Knowledge Society. OECD for its part defines the characteristics of the profile of the knowledge worker as follows: team work, achieving goals, leadership, ability to learn, problem solving, technological literacy and oral and written communication.

The National Education Programme 2001-2006 is built around three core themes: coverage, quality and management. The Alternative University Paradigm proposed by our institution offers a new Flexible Integrated Education Model centred on student learning and underpinned by the new information and communication technologies (ICT) as tools to support the activities of teachers and pupils.

To support the modernisation of the University's educational systems, new buildings must meet the needs of new academic programmes, which include private study, group learning, tutorials and access to multiple information sources. The Flexible Integrated Education Model is now reflected in infrastructures that facilitate activities such as basic computing, foreign language learning, reading skills, writing and reasoning and development skills in a system of life-long self-learning common to all the various careers offered by the University.

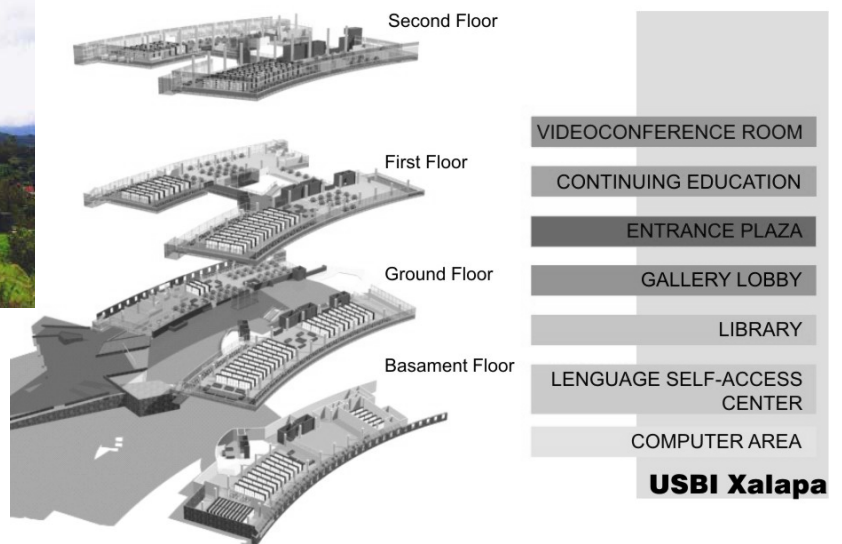


The principal of the model is to guide the pupil in self-learning and discovery, and avoid the traditional teacher/classroom system, where information is merely transmitted. After analysing and proposing various alternatives to cover these new needs, a type of building was designed to

respond to the modernisation of vocational education through the use of advanced technology, such as global communication via the Internet, digital video and audio systems, as well as consultation of traditional libraries. The result is “Library and Information Services Units”, which are large multi-purpose educational spaces with flexible furnishings, large storage capacity and space for computer, video and audio equipment, complemented by self-learning activities including private study facilities for studying foreign languages.



Exterior View USBI Xalapa



The Library and Information Services Units connect pupils to all the information media through the use of technology, supported by teacher guidance. The Library and Information Services Unit projects are in step with the current pace of transfer of knowledge and are conducive to students’ life-long self-learning.



Entrance Hall

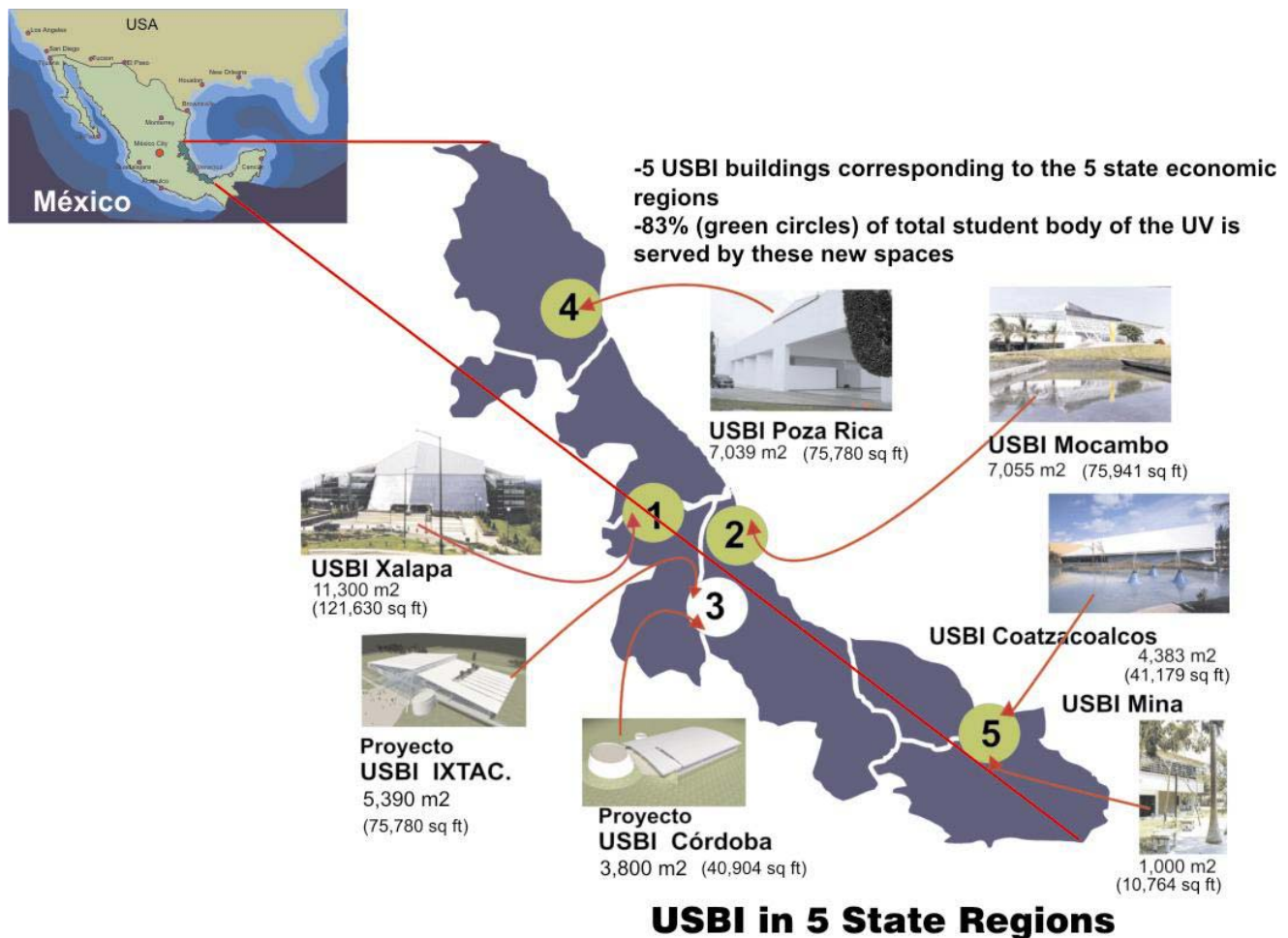


Exterior View USBI Veracruz



USBI Veracruz

Until now, Veracruz University has built and equipped five of these buildings, which serve 83% of the total student enrolment. Construction has begun on two new Library and Information Services Units in the Orizaba–Cordoba region. Building programmes undertaken by Veracruz University also seek to develop and improve green areas, creating bodies of water and planting species typical of each region, thus promoting a culture of ecology and making the environment surrounding the buildings more amenable.



This is designed to deliver the optimum conditions for a high quality vocational education for our students. And where better than in a PUBLIC UNIVERSITY system.