

**Mujeres directivas en universidades. Los retos  
institucionales ante la interseccionalidad del género, las  
profesiones y las particularidades regionales**

*Women Directors in Universities. Institutional challenges in the face of the  
intersectionality of gender, the professions and regional particularities*

*Gestoras de mulheres nas universidades. Desafios institucionais em face da  
interseccionalidade de gênero, das profissões e das particularidades  
regionais*

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## Resumen

El objetivo de este trabajo es determinar la presencia de mujeres en los diferentes espacios directivos de la Universidad de Guadalajara (UDG), para lo cual se han tomado en cuenta tres variables: género, disciplinas científicas y región. En concreto, el estudio se enfoca en el número de mujeres que, según la Coordinación General de Recursos Humanos de la UDG, ocupan puestos directivos en los centros universitarios temáticos y regionales de esta casa de estudios. Los resultados sugieren que existen diversos factores, además de los propiamente institucionales, que propician la presencia de mujeres en la dirección institucional, principalmente los relacionados con los contextos socioculturales en donde se ubican los centros universitarios de la UDG. Por este motivo, se sugiere concretar más estudios no solo para determinar la influencia de las mujeres en puestos de dirección, sino también para promover políticas que fortalezcan liderazgos femeninos y la formación de redes profesionales.

**Palabras clave:** género, interseccionalidad, mujeres directivas, profesiones, región.

## Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine the presence of women managers in different areas of the University of Guadalajara (UDG), for which have been taken into account three variables: gender, scientific disciplines and region. Specifically, the study focuses on the number of women who, according to the General Coordination of Human Resources of the UDG, occupy managerial positions in the thematic and regional university centers of this university. The results suggest that there are several factors besides institutional properly, favoring the presence of women in institutional management, primarily those related to socio-cultural contexts where UDG university centers are located. For this reason, it is suggested that more studies be carried out not only to determine the influence of women in management positions, but also to promote policies that strengthen women's leadership and the formation of professional networks.

**Keywords:** gender, intersectionality, women managers, professions region.

## Resumo

O objetivo deste trabalho é determinar a presença de mulheres nos diferentes espaços de gestão da Universidade de Guadalajara (UDG), para as quais três variáveis foram levadas em consideração: gênero, disciplinas científicas e região. Especificamente, o estudo enfoca o número de mulheres que, segundo a Coordenação Geral de Recursos Humanos da UDG, ocupam cargos gerenciais nos núcleos temáticos e regionais universitários dessa casa de estudos. Os resultados sugerem que existem vários fatores, além dos institucionais, que favorecem a presença das mulheres na direção institucional, principalmente aquelas relacionadas aos contextos socioculturais nos quais os centros universitários da UDG estão localizados. Por esta razão, sugere-se que mais estudos sejam realizados não apenas para determinar a influência das mulheres nos cargos de gestão, mas também para promover políticas que fortaleçam a liderança das mulheres e a formação de redes profissionais.

**Palavras-chave:** gênero, interseccionalidade, mulheres gestoras, profissões, região.

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## Introduction

Born in 1994, the university network that integrates the University of Guadalajara (UDG) is composed of fifteen university centers - six located in the metropolitan area of Guadalajara<sup>1</sup> and nine in the interior of the state of Jalisco<sup>2</sup>—, a Virtual University System (SUV) and a System of Higher Secondary Education (SEMS). The Regional University Centers (CUR) are distinguished by a multidisciplinary offer with offices located in the interior of the state, while the Thematic University Centers (CUT) are located in the metropolitan area of Guadalajara and group the teaching programs in a disciplinary manner.

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<sup>1</sup> Centro Universitario de Ciencias Económico Administrativas (CUCEA), Centro Universitario de Ciencias de la Salud (CUCS), Centro Universitario de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades (CUCSH), Centro Universitario de Ciencias Biológicas y Agropecuarias (CUCBA), Centro Universitario de Arte, Arquitectura y Diseño (CUAAD) y Centro Universitario de Ciencias Exactas e Ingenierías (CUCEI).

<sup>2</sup> CUNORTE (Colotlán), CUVALLES (Ameca), CULAGOS (Lagos de Moreno), CUALTOS (Tepatitlán), CUCIÉNEGA (Ocotlán), CUSUR (Zapotlán el Grande), CUCSUR (Autlán de Navarro), CUCOSTA (Puerto Vallarta) y CUTONALÁ (Tonalá).

In total, this house of studies houses 280 297 students enrolled, of which 44.21% are in the upper level (62.34% in some CUT and 37.65% in some CUR) (UDG, 2017).

On the other hand, and regarding the academic staff, of the total of 19 092 teachers that the UDG had in 2016, 27.7% worked as full-time teachers, of which 42% were women, a figure that decreased to 38% in 2018. All these people, of course, study and work in an environment whose dynamics are usually determined both by the scientific disciplines and their different ethos as well as by the cultural, demographic, social, political and economic characteristics of the region where they are inserted.

For this reason, the objective of this article is to offer a first approach and discussion about how these regional and professional particularities may or may not influence the inclusion of women in managerial and administrative positions of the UDG. To do this, an analysis was carried out that was based on the number of women who fulfill directive functions of superior, medium and academic command. The data was collected in July 2017 through an application submitted to the General Coordination of Human Resources of the institution.

The analysis of the results was based on four categories (intersectionality, gender, professional disciplines and region) that seek to address the issue of female exclusion in different managerial positions. The intersectionality, according to Cubillos (2015), "is positioned as a useful conceptual and analytical tool for research, which allows us to understand and attend to the particular ways in which gender is interwoven with other axes of exclusion in different contexts, levels and scopes" (p.122), for which it seeks to "account for the cross-over or imbricated perception of power relations" (Viveros, 2016, p.2). According to this perspective, this approach focuses on analyzing the categories of race, gender, sexuality and social class; however, in the present inquiry intersectionality is retaken as an epistemological and methodological position that allows visualizing the different axes that go through and shape the institutional spaces, and how they serve or not to include more women in academic and administrative management spaces.

Based on this idea, when we inquire about the reasons that support the scarce presence of women in management positions, it can be inferred that, regardless of the organizational characteristics of the UDG, there are factors related to the way in which they have been configured historically the ethos of the different professions, which is also supported by a strong historical distinction between the urban center and the regions located in the interior of the state.

However, the different professions can be understood as a specialized type of work that enjoys social recognition and is characterized by prolonged training at a higher level (Arango, 2006), and in the case of higher education institutions, they regulate the production of knowledge about them and establish the mechanisms for their access and for their exercise through the granting of credentials, an essential element to differentiate a profession from a trade (Gómez and Tenti, 1989).

Both the professional disciplines and the elements that characterize the different regions - beyond the simple capital / interior distinction of the state - are addressed in this project with a focus on gender (male and female), which historically has been determined by the social and cultural. This means that in the present document said word can be understood as an organizing category of the social through which it is possible to analyze power relations not only between men and women, but also between the masculine and the feminine of the professions, salaried jobs, the positions of an organization, etc. (Scott, 2008).

In the words of various feminists (Butler, 2002, Fernández, 2014, Scott, 2008), gender can not be approached in isolation or decontextualized, hence the proposal to problematize the presence of women in university management positions starting from the geographic location of the CU, as well as the professional educational offer present in each of them and the sexual difference in both men and women who work there.

For this reason, the following is the normative description of the aforementioned institution and its positions, as well as the numerals corresponding to the presence of women in the different management and academic levels of the UDG.

## **Management and academic levels of university centers**

This section presents a description of the presence of women in the different academic and managerial levels of the CU that make up the university network of the UDG. In order to frame the data, some characteristics and descriptions of the positions analyzed from the organic law of this house of studies are briefly explained.

### **The university centers**

In accordance with article 23, section I, of the organic law (1994) of the UDG, the CU are the entities responsible "for the administration and development of higher-level academic programs, as well as for educational programs of a terminal professional relative to the area of knowledge of its competence".

The rectories of each of these CUs are designated by the rector general from a list of three proposed by the Center Councils. In the same way, the rector general appoints the academic and administrative secretaries according to the proposal of the rector of the center; the foregoing in accordance with the provisions of the organic law of the UDG in its articles 53, 124 and 127, respectively. The rectories of the center and the secretariats have a duration of three years, and in the case of the rectors of the CU may be re-elected for one occasion immediately, while after an intermediate period, may be reelected indefinitely (art. 53).

Table 1 shows the number of women who occupy these management spaces in the network, as well as the percentage they represent.

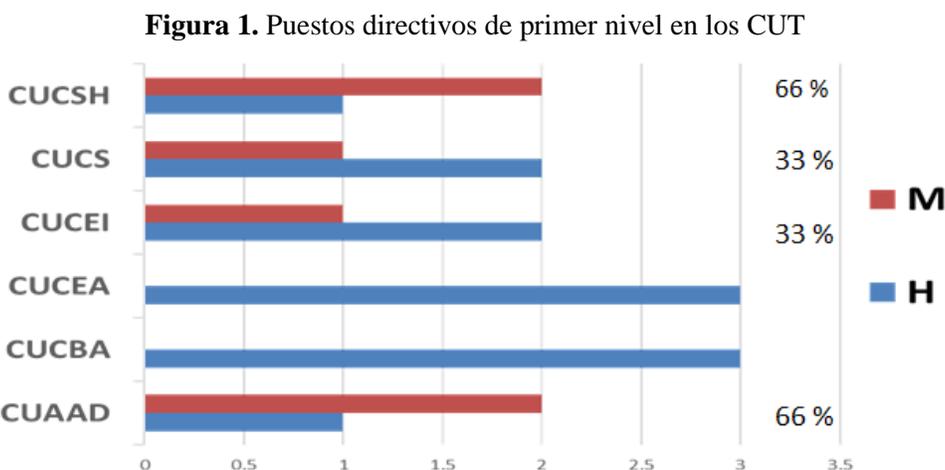
**Tabla 1.** Porcentaje de mujeres en espacios directivos en los centros universitarios de la red universitaria

	Rectorías		Secretarías académicas		Secretarías administrativas	
	Hombres	Mujeres	Hombres	Mujeres	Hombres	Mujeres
<b>TOTAL</b>	12	4	12	4	10	6
<b>Porcentaje</b>		33 %		25 %		37.5 %

Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir de la información obtenida de la Coordinación General de Recursos Humanos

Both the rectories and the academic and administrative secretariats are considered superior managers of the first level of management of each of the CU due to the leadership and the influence of said positions in the decision making process.

In Figure 1, on the other hand, the numbers and percentages of women and men who occupy the rectories, the academic and administrative secretaries in the thematic university centers are presented. (CUT).



Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir de la información obtenida de la Coordinación General de Recursos Humanos

Figure 1 shows that in the CUCEA (University Center of Economic and Administrative Sciences) and in the CUCBA (University Center of Biological and Agricultural Sciences) there are no women in the management level, while in the CUAAD (University Center of Art) , Architecture and Design) and in the CUCSH (University Center of Social Sciences and Humanities) there is a greater feminine presence, which can be used to generate the following question: this inequality in the results regarding the presence or absence of women in the management positions of the mentioned CUs does it have any link with the nature of the main disciplines that are dictated in them? The answer is not entirely clear from these numbers. On the other hand, and regarding the Regional University Centers (CUR), it can be indicated that the management level is occupied only by 22.2% of women. In this case, and given that these are multidisciplinary university centers, the discipline is not a clear element to analyze. However, it can be noted that of nine rectories, only two are occupied by women: the Ciénega University Center and the University Center of the South Coast, located in the municipalities of Ocotlán and Autlán de Navarro, respectively.

### **Academic direction of university centers**

After the first level of management, the academic management positions of each CU are in charge of the divisions and departments. In accordance with article 62 of the organic law of the UDG, the division director is the authority "responsible for the performance of the academic and administrative work of the same, under the terms of the Institutional Development Plan and the Center's development programs. University student, and representative of the same academic unit. " The position of director of division is designated by the Rectory of the Center from the proposal of a short list presented by the Council of the respective center. This position can be held for three years with the option of re-election (Article 63).

Likewise, and on department heads, according to article 66 of the organic law, they are responsible for the performance of academic work in their respective units. These positions have a period of three years, with the option to be reelected (Article 67), and are appointed by the division director of the three candidates proposed by the Divisional Council. Table 2 shows the number of women and men in charge of academic management in the CU.

**Tabla 2.** Presencia de mujeres en puestos de dirección académica de los centros universitarios de la red universitaria

	Direcciones de división		Jefaturas de departamento	
	Hombres	Mujeres	Hombres	Mujeres
<b>CUT</b>	12	8	68	22
<b>CUR</b>	19	6	43	25
<b>Total</b>	45		158	
<b>Porcentaje de mujeres</b>	31.10 %		29.70 %	

Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir de la información obtenida de la Coordinación General de Recursos Humanos

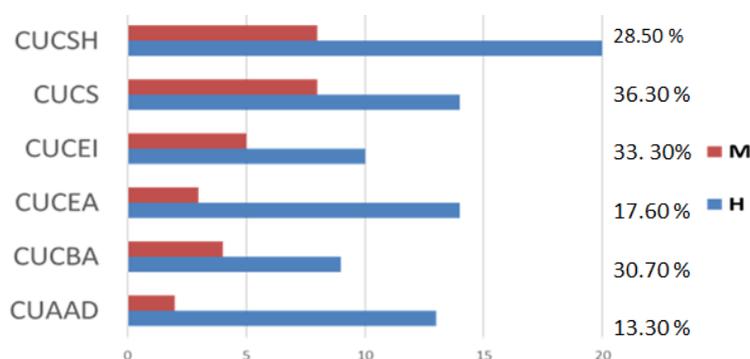
As can be seen in Table 2, the presence of women is approximately one third in the divisional academic management spaces, although when these data are examined taking into account the location of the CUs, it can be seen that in the metropolitan area of Guadalajara, the percentage of women in the divisions is higher (66%), while in the regions this percentage decreases to 24%. But when these figures are analyzed taking into account the heads of departments, the percentages are reversed, since 36.7% are located in the CUR and 25% in the CUR. These findings coincide with those published in other studies on the presence of women in positions of authority, where it is explained that the lower the female presence (Tolentino, 2013, Zabłudovsky, 2007a, 2007b, 2014, 2015).

In this regard, it is questionable whether the form of appointment influences the possibility of greater female inclusion at this level of management, or whether the possibilities of a full-time job (such as those required by these positions) are more accessible to women than men. They are located in medium-sized cities and have solid family support networks.

Now, in terms of the disciplines, figure 2 shows the presence of women in the division management and department heads of the CUT, specifically in the University Center of Health Sciences (CUCS) and the University Center of Exact Sciences and Engineering

(CUCEI). Likewise, it is noteworthy that the University Center for Art, Architecture and Design (CUAAD) has the lowest percentage at the academic management level, despite the fact that in the first level of management it had the majority of positions occupied by women. This could mean that the presence of women in the highest positions may not be decisive to promote the inclusion of women in the institutional organization chart.

**Figura 2.** Porcentaje de mujeres en puestos directivos en los CUT



Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir de la información obtenida de la Coordinación General de Recursos Humanos

### Area and career coordinators

Finally, the level of management related to activities and administrative and operational areas (area and career coordination) is presented, whose designation is determined by the rector of each center. Area coordinations depend directly on the Academic and Administrative Secretariats, such as the Coordination of School Control, as well as on Personnel, Finance, Academic Services, Research and Graduate Studies, among others. In this regard, it is worth noting that each CU has a different number of area coordinations.

According to the organic law of the UDG, "the Career Coordinations, for the undergraduate level, and the Graduate Coordinations will be the authorized instances to design, administer and evaluate the actions of planning, operation and follow-up of the curricular plans and programs. in charge "(Article 68). Instead, the coordinators are appointed by the division director or the rector of the center, as indicated in the statutes of each entity of the network (Article 69).

The career coordinators are instances that directly serve the students, and their number depends on the teaching programs taught in each CU, although it may happen that the same coordination takes over two educational programs.

Table 3 shows that the presence of women and men is more balanced, which could be justified because they are positions that require greater dedication in administrative activities and user care. In addition, in the CUR the female participation in the coordinations is approximately 50%. This data is relevant, because as it happens at the academic management level, it is not essential that there is a female representative in the rectory to encourage access for other workers.

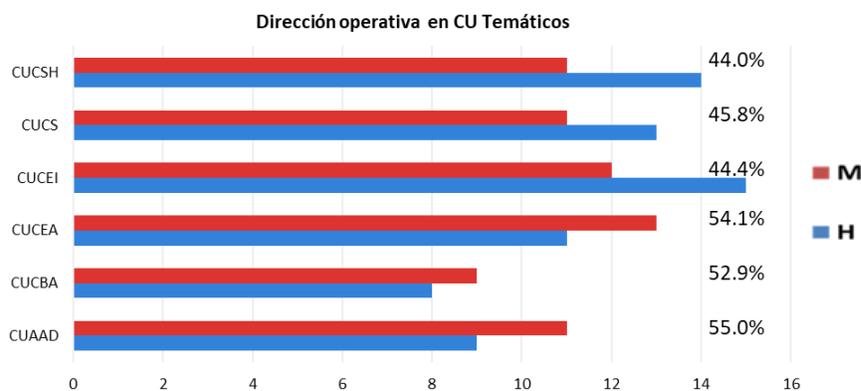
**Tabla 3.** Coordinadores de áreas y de carreras de los CU

	Coordinadores de área		Coordinador de carrera	
	Hombres	Mujeres	Hombres	Mujeres
<b>CUT</b>	30	33	40	34
<b>CUR</b>	50	43	52	59
<b>Total</b>	156		185	
<b>Porcentaje de mujeres</b>	48.71 %		50.27 %	

Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir de la información obtenida de la Coordinación General de Recursos Humanos

On the other hand, in Figure 3 it can be seen that in the CUT the female participation in all cases is closer to 50%, which contrasts with the managerial levels examined in the tables and previous figures. In fact, in the coordination of the University Center for Economic and Administrative Sciences (CUCEA) and the University Center for Biological and Agricultural Sciences (CUCBA), the participation of women exceeds that of men.

**Figura 3.** Porcentaje de mujeres en las coordinaciones de área o de carrera de los CUT



Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir de la información obtenida de la Coordinación General de Recursos Humanos

## Conclusions

As already indicated, in this article it was proposed to analyze the presence of women in management positions within the UDG from three categories: gender, scientific disciplines and region, this from the institutional organization and the regulations implemented for that purpose (that is, election or designation of each of the posts). Well, in normative terms, the designations to occupy managerial positions of the levels analyzed in this document are one-person, which may or may not favor the participation of women in management positions. Specifically, the UDG has a participation of women in all management levels ranging between 25% and 50%. In this sense, it can be indicated that the disciplinary factor does not seem to be defining nor the presence of women in the rectory of the center.

On the other hand, in the case of area coordinations and educational programs -where the attention to the other, the administration of resources and organizational functions, etc., are activities thought to be compatible with the properly feminine-, the gender variable it does occupy a place that can be relevant in the construction of the desirable profile for those positions.

Likewise, and taking into account the regional variable, it could be said that this has the greatest impact on the composition of the directive structures defined within the socio-cultural characteristics of the region where these CUs are inserted. In effect, what has been

collected in the academic management positions and in the coordinations allows us to think that the local characteristics related to the distances of transfers and the presence of family networks serve as support for women to have access to a managerial job, since the demands on time and dedication can be covered thanks to the presence of these conditions and networks.

Even so, female collaboration in leadership positions continues to be an institutional challenge at the highest levels, for which it is necessary, first of all, to prepare diagnoses that allow not only knowing where women are located in the university organization, but also analyze the conditions and institutional policies that could promote a better balance.

In addition, this female presence should be examined from theoretical and conceptual frameworks that allow women to insert themselves into a work dynamic that fosters their access to positions of leadership and institutional direction. This approach seeks to lay the foundations for a long-standing study that accounts for how women live in work spaces shaped by male logic.

In this sense, intersectionality as a methodological tool allows us to address different categories that intervene in inclusion-exclusion processes in work spaces, as well as their permanence in them, which is not always determined exclusively by individual abilities or by academic credentials or the merits themselves.

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