



UNIVERSIDADE DE PASSO FUNDO UNIVERSITY OF PASSO FUNDO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE

The University of Passo Fundo (UPF) stands as a pillar of community-driven education in southern Brazil. Established in 1968, it was born out of a necessity to bridge the gap in higher education opportunities in the north region of Rio Grande do Sul (RS). As a Community Higher Education Institution (CHEI), UPF operates as a non-profit, non-religious entity, blending elements of both public and private education to serve the regional population. The CHEIs prioritize serving the educational needs of the local community.

UPF participates in the [Consortium of the Community Universities](#) in RS, the largest higher education system operating in the state and covering all its regions.

Characteristics of UPF as a Community University

- *Regional Commitment:* UPF is deeply integrated into the social, economic, and cultural fabric of Passo Fundo and surrounding areas, impacting over 150 towns in Rio Grande do Sul.
- *Educational Excellence:* The university offers 53 undergraduate programs, more than 150 specialization courses, 15 master's degrees, and 9 doctorate programs, distributed across 6 academic units.
- *Mission-Driven Approach:* UPF's mission is to create and disseminate knowledge that enhances the quality of life for the community while fostering critical, ethical, and humanist perspectives.



- *Research & Innovation:* The university is home to UPF Parque, the first technological park in the state, which drives scientific research and technological advancements.
- *Social Impact:* Through its teaching, research, and extension programs, UPF actively contributes to regional development, ensuring that education remains a transformative force.
- *Foundation-Based Governance:* As a community university, UPF operates under the *Fundação Universidade de Passo Fundo*, ensuring autonomy and financial sustainability. The financial model (non-profit), allows UPF to reinvest resources into academic programs, research, and infrastructure to benefit the community.
- *National Policies:* UPF aligns its Institutional Development Plan (PDI) with regional and national educational policies.
- *Academic support:* It offers strong student services that provide academic support, scholarships, and financial aid to ensure accessibility and inclusion.

Connecting UPF's Sustainability & Humanitarian Efforts

UPF demonstrates a strong commitment to global sustainability and human rights, aligning its initiatives with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its membership in the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI).

- *Green Office UPF & SDGs:* As the first Green Office in South America, UPF fosters environmental awareness, climate action, and sustainability interventions. This initiative aligns with SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), promoting eco-friendly practices and community engagement.



- *Migrant & Refugee Counter & Sergio Vieira de Mello Chair*: UPF is part of the Sergio Vieira de Mello Chair, an initiative by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) that promotes human rights and refugee protection. The Project also provides legal assistance, language courses, and social integration programs for migrants and refugees. Through an internal partnership with the Languages and Social Practices Project, the Portuguese courses for immigrants and refugees aim to support their social integration and enhance employment opportunities. The program serves as a valuable resource for newcomers, helping them adapt to Brazilian society while promoting linguistic and cultural inclusion. These efforts align, mainly, with SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), ensuring that vulnerable populations receive support and protection.
- *UNAI Membership & Global Responsibility*: UPF's membership in UNAI reinforces its dedication to academic excellence, social impact, and sustainable development. Through UNAI, UPF integrates SDG-focused research, education, and outreach, ensuring that its academic community contributes to global progress.

Internationalization at UPF

UPF has a structured internationalization process designed to foster global academic collaboration and enhance student mobility, with a focus on enriching Education for Global Citizenship. It has a comprehensive policy for this, described in the Internationalization Strategic Plan (2023-2027).

Strategies

- *Institutional Commitment*: UPF integrates internationalization into its Institutional Development Plan (PDI 2022-2026), ensuring that global



engagement is a core principle across teaching, research, and extension.

- **International Office (Assessoria Internacional - AI):** This office promotes and supports internationalization efforts, helping students and faculty engage in global academic experiences.

Initiatives

- *Internationalization at Home Program:* aims to provide global learning experiences by internationalizing the curriculum, allowing students to engage with global perspectives without the need to travel abroad.
- *Global Partnerships:* UPF has agreements with over 81 institutions across 20 countries, facilitating academic exchanges, joint research projects, and international events.
- *Student & Faculty Mobility:* The university encourages study abroad programs, professor exchanges, and collaborative research, allowing participants to gain international academic exposure.
- *International Students:* UPF welcomes students from various countries, offering support services and integration welcoming programs to enhance their experience.
- *Research Collaboration:* Partnerships with national and international institutions ensure knowledge exchange, joint publications, and technology transfer.

UPF's internationalization efforts aim to expand academic horizons, foster cross-cultural learning, and position the university as a global knowledge hub.

UPF's Current Rankings (2024/2025)



The University of Passo Fundo holds a strong position in both Brazilian and international rankings, reflecting its academic excellence, research impact, and regional influence.

- Brazilian Ranking: UPF is ranked 56th in Brazil among 198 universities.
- Latin American Ranking: It holds the 132nd position out of 1,756 universities in Latin America.
- Global Ranking: UPF is placed 2274th worldwide among 14,131 institutions.
- QS World University Rankings (Latin America & Caribbean): UPF is ranked 201-250, maintaining its position among the top 250 universities in the region.
- Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings: UPF is listed in the 1501+ category globally.
- Subject-Specific Strengths: UPF ranks in the top 50% across 57 research topics, with notable positions in:
 - Horticulture (#511 globally)
 - Philosophy (#634 globally)
 - Dentistry (#675 globally)
- UPF holds a strong position in the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings among Brazilian institutions. In the 2024 rankings, UPF is ranked 380th globally and 11th in Brazil. This consistent ranking in UI GreenMetric reinforces its leadership in sustainability and environmental responsibility within Brazil.

The institution's presence in international rankings highlights its commitment to academic quality, research innovation, and global engagement.

UPF's holistic approach to local and global challenges integrates knowledge, research, sustainability, human rights, and academic impact. This exemplifies a comprehensive approach to social responsibility. UPF's



initiatives empower communities, protect vulnerable populations, and drive sustainable development, reinforcing its role as a reference in higher education and global engagement.

UPF's community university model is a testament to the power of education in shaping regional progress. It continues to evolve, adapting to the needs of its students and the broader society.

In conclusion, UPF stands as a cornerstone of education, research, and social transformation in the northern region of Rio Grande do Sul, embodying the Community Higher Education Institution (CHEI) model. As a non-profit, non-religious university, UPF ensures that knowledge drives regional progress. Its impact extends beyond academics; through innovative research, sustainability initiatives, and human rights projects, UPF fosters economic development, social inclusion, and cultural enrichment. Its research and extension projects showcase a commitment to global humanitarian efforts, while participation in international networks and rankings highlights its commitment to sustainability, innovation and academic excellence. By bridging regional challenges with global perspectives, UPF remains a vital institution shaping the future of higher education and social impact in Rio Grande do Sul.

International Relations Office

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