

## KES2009 Conference Venue

### The University of Chile

The **University of Chile** (*Universidad de Chile*) is the largest and oldest institution of higher education in Chile and one of the oldest in The American Continent. Founded in 1842 as the replacement and continuation of the former colonial university Real Universidad de San Felipe (1738). The university is often called *Casa de Bello* (House of Bello) in honour of its first Chancellor, Andrés Bello. Notable alumni of University of Chile include two Nobel Laureates (Pablo Neruda and Gabriela Mistral) and twenty one heads of state among many others.

### The Faculty of Physics and Mathematics

The Faculty of Physics and Mathematics is one of the founding faculties of Universidad de Chile; both opened their doors in 1842 under the government of President Manuel Bulnes. **Andrés Bello**, the University's first Chancellor, asked Spanish engineer Andrés Antonio Gorbea to head this Faculty as its first dean.



Teaching of engineering began in **1853**; the first specialties were Geographic Engineering, Bridges and Roads Engineering, and Architecture. The inaugural program comprehended three common-track years with studies in advanced algebra, spherical trigonometry, 3- dimensional geometry, advanced physics, general chemistry, differential and integral calculus, topography and geodesy, mechanics basics and astronomy concepts, among others.

With the passing of time, the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics expanded its field of study. The **Institute of Seismology** was founded in **1908** and in **1928** the **National Astronomical Observatory** was integrated into the Faculty. In \*1922 \*the Faculty moved into a **new, custom-made building** located on 80 Benavente Street – current Beauchef Street -. The official inauguration was held on April 8 of that same year, with the attendance of state ministers, ambassadors and Arturo Alessandri Palma, then President of the Nation. On the occasion, the Institute of Engineers presented the new school with a statue, which to this very day stands on the main lobby of the school building.



With the advent of **CORFO** (Corporation of Industrial Development) in 1939 and the creation of a series of big public companies during the '40s, the Faculty saw it fit to adapt its Engineering Schools to the new technology scenario that Chile was facing. During that period, from 1940 to 1959, the student body was dominantly masculine, with women accounting for only 1% of all undergraduates. **Justicia Espada Acuña Mena**, Chile's first female engineer and South America's first Civil Engineer, was one of the pioneers.

During the second half of the Twentieth Century, The Faculty continued to consolidate its leadership in the training of engineers and scientists, making a sound contribution to the development of the country in areas such as electrification, access to drinking water, building of milestone civil works and development of transport systems and telecommunications. In 1956, the Department of Electrotechnics and Telecommunications, belonging to the Institute of Electrical Testing, broadcasted the Faculty's **first televised transmission**, an effort that would later crystallize in Universidad de Chile TV station.

As an answer to new challenges, new careers were developed: **Civil Engineering in Mathematics and Computers** in the 60's and 80's, respectively. Civil Engineering in Materials was born in the early 90's and at the end of that same decade, Civil Engineering in Biotechnology.

Nowadays, the Faculty is a relevant consulting instance for various public and private organizations, companies and corporations, dealing in all engineering branches. It continues to innovate and create solutions and technological resources to face the challenges of this millenium.



The Faculty of Physical and Mathematical Sciences from the University of Chile (FCFM from its name in Spanish, Facultad de Ciencias Físicas y Matemáticas) imparts superior study tracks in 10 Engineering specialties, Geology, 4 bachelors in science and more than 30 graduate academic programs. The faculty's trademark is the study and development of basic sciences, engineering sciences and their technological application, a broad study field that renders it a unique institution with an original perspective.

### **Research**

The Faculty is a leading institution in science and technology, which emphasizes research and investigation as an integral part of the academic sphere. A strong, continued and relevant research activity is pivotal for our students on various levels: stature as Faculty graduates, the possibility to participate in important projects led by renowned researchers from landmark European and American Universities, international networking, options for postgraduate studies in multiple areas, just to name a few.