History of Charles University - Key Dates

**Brief overview of the history of Charles University:**

1347 A privilege granted by Pope Clement VI opens the way for the establishment of a Studium generale in Prague
1348 By the **Charter of 7 April**, the King of Bohemia and of the Romans Charles IV founds a university with four faculties (liberal arts, medicine, law, and theology)
1366 Charles IV founds a college for twelve masters (Collegium Caroli)
1372 The Faculty of Law establishes a separate university for jurists (which remains in existence until 1418/19)
1383 The Collegium Caroli acquires a building (the Carolinum) in the Old Town, which has served as the seat of the University ever since its reconstruction in 1383/86
1383 The College of Arts acquires a building (the Carolinum) in the Old Town, which has served as the seat of the University ever since its reconstruction in 1383/86
1409 On 18 January, King Wenceslas (Václav) IV issues the Kutná Hora Decree, by which the Czech university “nation” is given priority status (the departure of the other university “nations” leads to the establishment of a university in Leipzig)
1417 The University claims allegiance to the Utraquists (Hussites) and is punished by the Pope, who imposes a ban on its activities
1419 The Hussite wars curb the activities of the University (until the beginning of the 17th century, only one faculty – liberal arts – remains open)
1456 The Jesuit Order arrives in Prague and founds an academy in the Clementinum where philosophy and theology are taught (promoted to university status in 1616)
1556 Start of University reforms: fixed rules of study are introduced, celibacy of professors is abolished, the bursar is put in charge of the administration and management of the University
1569 The University takes an active part in the resistance against the Catholic monarch
1622 Following the defeat of the Protestant Czech Estates, the University is handed over to the Jesuits
1625 Answering a call from a Jesuit general, Rodrigo Arriaga arrives in Prague. He later goes on to become the most significant representative of Spanish scholasticism and Dean of the Prague Theological Faculty
1638 The faculties of medicine and of law residing in the Carolinum are placed under direct supervision by the state
1654 By the Decree of Union, Ferdinand III joins the Carolinum and Clementinum into one university (Universitas Carolo-Ferdinandea) with four faculties
1718 The architect F. M. Kaňka completes the reconstruction of the Carolinum in the Baroque style
1773 Jesuit Order abolished
1781 The start of University reforms: 1781- non-Catholics allowed to study; 1783 - the University is taken over by the state and divested of its own government; 1784 - University jurisdiction abolished; the rules of study establish German as the language of instruction
1837 Jan Evangelista Purkyně informs a scientific assembly in the Carolinum about his research into cells
1848 The University demands academic freedoms and the placement of the Czech language on an equal footing with instruction in German
1849/1850 The Act on the Organization of Universities gives greater powers to the academic senate and professorial staff; the study code introduces examina rigorosa and final state examinations (for the JUDr., MUDr., PhD., and ThDr. titles)
1879 The outstanding physicist Ernst Mach, who worked in Prague for 28 years, becomes Rector of the Charles-Ferdinand University at a difficult time, amid negotiations about its division into German and Czech parts
1882 A decree issued by Emperor Franz Joseph I on 28 February divides the Charles-Ferdinand University into two independent institutions with Czech and German as their respective languages of instruction
1882 Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk is appointed extraordinary professor of philosophy by the Faculty of Arts of the Czech Charles-Ferdinand University
1911 Albert Einstein becomes professor of theoretical physics at the German Charles-Ferdinand University (until 1912)
1917 Bedřich Hrozný (later a professor at the Charles University Faculty of Arts) publishes his magnum opus The Language of the Hittites, thus laying the groundwork for Hittite Studies
1920 By an act of law stipulating the relations between the two Prague universities, the Czech counterpart is given the name “Charles University”; a Faculty of Science is established
1939 After the Nazi occupation of Bohemia and Moravia, the German University (Deutsche Karlsuniversität Prag) is incorporated into the Reich; following student demonstrations on 17 November, Charles University is closed together with other Czech higher education institutions
1945 The activities of Charles University are restored – branches of the Faculty of Medicine open in Plzeň (from 1958 the Charles University Faculty of Medicine) and in Hradec Králové (from 1959 the Charles University Faculty of Medicine); the German University is abolished
1946 Opening of the Faculty of Education (in 1959-1964 not a part of Charles University)
1947 Gerty Theresa Cori (born Radnitz) and Carl Cori, graduates of the Faculty of Medicine of the German University in Prague, receive the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for their discovery of the process of the catalytic conversion of glycogen
1948 Student demonstration against the totalitarian regime (followed by mass expulsions of non-communist teachers and students from the University)
1950 The Higher Education Act abolishes academic autonomy and subjects the activities of higher education institutions to Communist Party control; the Theological Faculty is separated from Charles University (from 1950 to 1990 the seat of the independent faculty is in Litoměřice)
1952 Establishment of the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics
1953 The Faculty of Medicine is divided into three separate faculties - General Medicine, Hygiene (Public Health), and Paediatrics (from 1990 under new names – the First, Second and Third Faculty of Medicine)
1959 The Institute of Physical Education and Sport is transferred under the control of the University (from 1966 “Faculty of Physical Education and Sport”)
1959 Jaroslav Heyrovský, professor at the Charles University Faculty of Science, is awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for the discovery and development of polarographic methods of analysis
1960 Institute of Adult Education and Journalism established (from 1965 “Faculty of Adult Education and Journalism”; from 1990 “Faculty of Social Sciences”)
1968 Jan Patočka appointed professor of philosophy at the Faculty of Arts
1968 The University takes part in the events of the Prague Spring; after 1969 there is a new wave of repressions of teachers and students who refuse to conform
1969 Establishment of Faculty of Pharmacy in Hradec Králové
1989  Student demonstrations to commemorate the events of 17 November 1939 bring about the fall of the regime

1990  The Higher Education Act restores universities’ autonomy and freedom of research and instruction

1991  Three theological faculties (Catholic, Protestant and Hussite) are incorporated into Charles University

2000  Establishment of the Faculty of Humanities

2000  Charles University comprises 17 faculties (3 located outside Prague):

  Catholic Theological Faculty
  Protestant Theological Faculty
  Hussite Theological Faculty
  Faculty of Law
  First Faculty of Medicine
  Second Faculty of Medicine
  Third Faculty of Medicine
  Faculty of Medicine in Plzeň
  Faculty of Medicine in Hradec Králové
  Faculty of Pharmacy in Hradec Králové
  Faculty of Arts
  Faculty of Science
  Faculty of Mathematics and Physics
  Faculty of Education
  Faculty of Social Sciences
  Faculty of Physical Education and Sport
  Faculty of Humanities