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The University of Houston Law Center (UHLC) and Mexico’s National Hydrocarbons Commission (CNH) recently launched a partnership that offers internships to law students while providing training and education in international energy law to Mexican energy officials.

The agreement between the Law Center and CNH will be administered by the school’s Center for U.S. and Mexican Law. CNH is a national oil and gas agency responsible for development of upstream oil and gas in Mexico.

“CNH faces immense challenges in converting Mexican oil and gas development from a closed monopoly to an efficient, competitive system that is responsive to market pressures,” said UHLC Professor Emeritus Stephen Zamora, director of the Center for U.S. and Mexican Law.

“This mutual cooperation agreement will help CNH confront these pressures by channeling the expertise of Houston’s energy professionals to the benefit of CNH’s professional staff. As an academic institution, we believe we can help deliver much-needed expertise to CNH in a cost-effective way that will coincide with its mission.”

CNH public officials will participate in UHLC sponsored events and programs, including advanced training courses in energy law organized by the Center for U.S. and Mexican Law in Mexico City in conjunction with the Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México, or ITAM University. CNH also will be able to participate in research and education programs at the UH campus, taking advantage of Houston’s significance as a world energy capital.

The Center for U.S. and Mexican Law also places UH law students as legal interns with CNH’s legal department. Their legal research projects involve oil and gas bidding rounds and the development of best practices, standards and safety regulations for hydraulic fracturing. This pilot program served to open the door to the recently concluded mutual cooperation agreement.

The University of Houston Law Center has similar agreements with Pemex, Mexico’s national oil company, and with the Mexican Foreign Ministry. These agreements, developed more than 25
years ago, have helped more than 50 lawyers from Pemex and the Foreign Ministry enhance their skills by obtaining Master of Laws degrees from the University of Houston.

In a related development, Zamora announced that Ricardo Colmener, an expert in Latin American energy law, and Dr. Josefina Cortés, a leading energy law academic in Mexico, will serve as Affiliate Scholars at the Center for U.S. and Mexican Law. Colmener has served as associate general counsel for a major oilfield services company, and will serve as Affiliate Scholar for International Energy Programs for the Center for U.S. and Mexican Law. Dr. Cortés is professor of law at ITAM in Mexico City, and a leader of ITAM’s Center for Energy and Natural Resources. Her teaching and research focus on administrative law, energy law, and economic regulation and public service.

For more information about the Center for U.S. and Mexican Law, contact Executive Director Stephen Zamora at szamora@uh.edu, Assistant Director Ignacio Pinto-Leon at ipintol2@central.uh.edu, or Brisa Gossett at bgossett@central.uh.edu.

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About the University of Houston
The University of Houston is a Carnegie-designated Tier One public research university recognized by The Princeton Review as one of the nation's best colleges for undergraduate education. UH serves the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. Located in the nation's fourth-largest city, UH serves more than 40,900 students in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region in the country.

About the University of Houston Law Center
The University of Houston Law Center is the leading law school in the nation's fourth-largest city. Founded in 1947, it is a top-tier institution awarding Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) and Master of Laws (LL.M.) degrees. The Law Center is fully accredited by the American Bar Association and is a member of the Association of American Law Schools.