

UCSC may add 6,000 students

Faculty committee suggests targeting 21,000 enrollment

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SANTA CRUZ — A campus committee envisions UC Santa Cruz adding 6,000 students by 2020, bringing enrollment to 21,000.

The faculty panel's recommendation will be reviewed by another campus committee that will consider constraints such as land use, water and housing. That committee will seek public comment before recommending a growth target to undergo the environmental review process. The first comment session will be 6-9 p.m. April 21 at the UCSC Inn and Conference Center; a second will be June 9.

The future of the campus, founded on 2,000 acres in 1965, is a topic of intense interest for city leaders and neighborhood residents, who are themselves working on a long-range plan for the city.

Those following UCSC expansion plans said they hope campus officials would address community concerns even though the city has no authority over university development.

Campus officials called the figure of 21,000 students "a working number" based on faculty aspirations, a desire to add graduate programs and the need to accommodate California high school seniors who qualify for UC admission.

'Why shouldn't students who live on campus pay the same user's fees as people who live downtown?'

SCOTT KENNEDY, SANTA CRUZ MAYOR

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"We're trying to look at the academic future of the campus," said earth sciences professor Gary Griggs, who came to UCSC in 1968.

He is chairman of the "strategic futures committee," which considered four enrollment scenarios: no change from the existing 15,000 students, and increases to 17,500, 21,000 or 25,000.

Faculty in all divisions, from humanities and arts to science and engineering, would like to expand. They also would like to boost the number of graduate students from about 9 percent of total enrollment to 15 percent.

If the 21,000 became the growth target, the campus goal would be to add 2,000 graduate students and 4,000 undergrads.

Among the new graduate programs contemplated are schools for education and business. Other ideas include an institute on coastal and marine policy and expanding the media and digital arts program.

It could take five to 10 years to create a new professional school, and five to eight years for a new building to be built.

Griggs said the number of college freshmen is expected to grow, and Santa Cruz, the smallest of the UC campuses, must take its fair share of students.

The proposed growth rate, 2.7 percent per year, would amount to 400 students per year, a manageable number, according to Griggs, and represents a slower pace than the 7-8 percent jumps of the past three years.

Two new colleges with housing were built for 826 students, and three apartment complexes with 630-plus beds are slated to open on campus in fall.

Administrator Tom Vani, who is chairman of the long-range

Steady growth since '95

	Undergrad	Grad	Total
1988	8,659	737	9,396
1989	8,883	901	9,784
1990	9,089	963	10,052
1991	9,161	975	10,136
1992	9,264	991	10,255
1993	9,222	951	10,173
1994	9,099	1,018	10,117
1995	8,876	1,047	9,923
1996	9,159	1,056	10,215
1997	9,570	1,068	10,638
1998	9,932	1,049	10,981
1999	10,242	1,060	11,302
2000	11,047	1,077	12,124
2001	12,002	1,145	13,147
2002	12,845	1,277	14,122
2003	13,629	1,355	14,984

Source: UCSC Web site

development plan committee, pointed out enrollment has jumped and dipped in the past and could do the same in the future.

"The state could turn around and say you'll have flat enrollment," he said. "If the economy picks up, more people might want to get jobs (rather than enroll in college)."

Tamara Belknap, a graduate-student representative on the long-range planning committee, is confident the growth would be handled with care.

"We are not running the risk of turning into UCLA," she said. "This is a special place and everyone who is working toward a plan for the future of the campus recognizes that."

However, some city residents remain skeptical.

Recent enrollment spurts resulted in more students living off campus, driving up the price of housing and increasing neighborhood traffic.

Longtime Westside resident Lynn Robinson said she has noticed that when the university expands off campus, as at Long Marine Lab, certain mitigations for traffic at city intersections are outside its jurisdiction.

"That's when it becomes a problem for the surrounding community," she said. "It's not negative if it's mitigated well."

Mayor Scott Kennedy said he'd like to see the university shoulder the same burden as city residents to provide services. He suggested the city admissions tax apply to productions at Shakespeare Santa Cruz or the city utility tax apply to dorm room phones.

"Why shouldn't students who live on campus pay the same user's fees as people who live downtown?" he said. "The university has taken over commercial property, like the Holiday Inn, and bought residential property like Laureate Court. Increasingly, we are a single city, virtually indistinguishable."

Councilwoman Emily Reilly heads a committee looking at the community impact of campus growth. The panel, which meets Thursday from noon to 2 p.m. in City Hall, is developing a way to describe the "carrying capacity" of the city for water, traffic and housing to campus officials.

People can listen in and comment at the end, Reilly said.

Campus officials shared their plans Thursday with the city's Planning Commission, the day before announcing the growth target. Scott Daly, a planning commissioner, viewed that outreach with optimism.

"I think the communication has improved significantly over the past few years," he said. "We need to continue on that path."

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'We're trying to look at the academic future of the campus. This is about 400 new students a year. We know that's a growth rate we can manage.'

GARY GRIGGS, FACULTY MEMBER

'I think that 21,000 students is a fairly reasonable projection for where UCSC will be in 2020. We have an obligation to take a fair percentage of the students that are offered places in the UC system that we are not meeting now.'

TAMARA BELKNAP, THIRD-YEAR GRADUATE STUDENT IN HISTORY

'The number of 21,000 is exactly what I expected. My concern is it will creep up to 25,000 by default.'

LYNN ROBINSON, WESTSIDE RESIDENT

'It's an academic futures number, not based on environmental considerations. We'll probably work backward from that.'

EMILY REILLY, CITY COUNCILWOMAN

'With that type of anticipated growth, we need to look at traffic, water, the infrastructure impacts on the community.'

DR. SCOTT DALY, LOCALLY OWNED BUSINESS ASSOCIATION