

'Period of plenty' over at UCSC—admissions decline

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"The period of plenty is over," said N. Manfred Shaffer, Admissions Officer at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

"For the first time since UCSC opened almost a decade ago, in the fall of 1965, the campus seems to be following the national trend in applications for enrollment. For the fall of 1974, that trend is down," Shaffer commented.

Marking a "signs of the times" development in UCSC's brief history, the campus has extended the application filing period beyond its 30-day deadline, which has traditionally fallen on December 1, and is continuing to accept applications for fall 1974 admissions in all but a few disciplines on both the graduate and undergraduate levels.

As of mid-January, UCSC has received some 2,400 undergraduate applications for the 2,000 new freshman, sophomore, and junior openings projected for the next academic year. The Graduate Division has received over 300 applications for the 170 new openings for next year.

"Our filing period will remain open until we have received at least 3,000 undergraduate applications to allow for standard attrition," said Shaffer.

Attrition covers such instances as those in which students offered admission by a campus fail to register. Many prospective students, particularly those at the freshman level, make application to a number of colleges and universities. Accepted by several, the student chooses one and declines the others. The campuses not chosen by the student then fill the "no-show"

opening from its pool of "over-admits," which at UCSC has averaged 25 percent of the total number of students accepted each fall.

With a current total enrollment of approximately 5,100 students -- 4,800 in UCSC's eight liberal arts colleges and 300 working toward graduate degrees in 11 programs -- UCSC expects to increase its student population to 5,750 students next fall.

"We expect to fill all available fall openings," said Shaffer, "but, with fewer applications coming in, we will have a narrower choice of students and will not re-direct any qualified applicants to other UC campuses as we have had to do in the past when applications exceeded openings by as many as 3.5 to 1.

Factors cited by Shaffer as partial explanation for the decrease in applications include:

- the end of the draft.
- the increased costs of a four-year higher education (UCSC's approximation of expenses for a resident undergraduate have risen from \$1,710 per year in 1965-66 to \$2,700 per year in 1973-74).
- more high school graduates deferring entrance to college a year or so in favor of work or travel, and more college students interrupting the traditional four-year sequence of study for the same reason.
- the negative employment picture in a number of degree-requiring job categories.
- belief by many applicants that they will be re-directed to another U.C. campus.
- the new thrust toward interest in career-oriented courses, which are available at the much less expensive and

more local community colleges.

-UCSC's pass-no credit, plus evaluation, grading system, which many students regard as prejudicial to their chances for acceptance at graduate schools.

In regard to the latter point, Dr. Shaffer acknowledges that the pass-no credit, plus evaluation, system has created administrative problems. Some graduate admissions committees find it faster and easier to make decisions when faced by a student transcript on which all courses and grades (A through F) are listed.

However, as UCSC's academic reputation and the caliber of its faculty and students become more widely known, these committees are more willing to take the time to read and consider the information contained in the packet of course evaluations written by a UCSC student's professors," notes Shaffer. "UCSC applicants have been accepted by top graduate and professional schools throughout the country," he said, "and the percentage is increasing every year."

As far as financial aid is concerned, UCSC has had little trouble arranging support for the needy student on the undergraduate level. It is the graduate student who is hardest hit, since funds for Fellowships, Research Assistantships, and the like are heavily dependent upon federal sources, which have been dramatically reduced in recent years.

Students interested in applying for admission to UCSC for next fall (1974) as freshmen, sophomores, juniors or graduates can obtain an admissions packet by writing Admissions Office, UCSC, Santa Cruz, California 95064.