

UCSC will start engineering school

UCSC - Growth
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SANTA CRUZ — UC Santa Cruz will announce today it is starting a school of engineering in the fall of 1997.

The university will receive \$2 million over four years from the UC system to start the school, the Sentinel has learned. Full details of the plan for the new school will be released today.

Once established, the school should provide a talent pool of graduates for Silicon Valley and Santa Cruz County technology companies.

Although the UC Board of Regents has

not yet formally approved the spending, UC President Richard C. Atkinson confirmed the funding in a letter last week to new UCSC Chancellor M.R.C. Greenwood.

Establishing an engineering school would cast the university as a major player in Silicon Valley and allow it to tap into the economic boom that continues around the technology industry. This boom also has been felt in Santa Cruz County, which has attracted a number of innovative high-tech firms lured by the area's natural beauty.

Industry leaders have long said a university school featuring computer and

electrical engineering would attract even more firms to the area.

The Sentinel also learned that UCSC hopes the UC money will persuade wealthy high-tech companies to provide additional funding for the new school.

Approximately 1,500, or 60 percent of the top 2,500 of the nation's top electronics firms are near Silicon Valley, according to the American Electronics Association.

While an engineering school has been talked about at the university for several years, Greenwood put such a school at the top of her priority list upon her arrival last summer.

Greenwood was in Fresno on Monday and unavailable for comment.

In August, Greenwood pledged the university would soon have a "distinctive and focused school of engineering at Santa Cruz." Greenwood made her remarks to a crowd of software developers gathered at the university for the annual SCO Forum.

UCSC now has programs in computer engineering and computer sciences. Last summer, the computer engineering department had 77 graduate students, while computer science had 58.

An engineering school would almost certainly include a number of other pro-

grams as well. For instance, the College of Engineering at UC Berkeley includes undergraduate and graduate programs in electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, civil engineering and materials science and mineral engineering, among seven departments. It also includes programs in manufacturing engineering and bioengineering, as well as applied science and technology.

In addition, San Jose State University has a College of Engineering, with programs in electrical, computer, aerospace,

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civil, industrial, mechanical, chemical and materials engineering. San Jose State also offers graduate programs and its electrical engineering grad program has more than 300 students.

San Jose State estimates about 10 percent of the state's engineering graduates come from that school. The state university sys-

tem, in contrast to the UC system, primarily emphasizes undergraduate education, although San Jose State offers graduate degrees in a number of fields.

While not alone in the field, a UCSC school could help meet a shortage of engineers that has helped spur escalating salaries for qualified people. The National Science Foundation estimates there

will be a shortage of 276,000 engineers by 2011.

An engineering school for UCSC was first proposed in 1991, when a faculty committee made a formal recommendation.

For UCSC, founded in 1965 as a liberal arts campus patterned after Oxford University in England, the new school of engineering would be its first professional school.