

Associated Students of the University of California, Merced
Resolution #13
Support of the University of California, Merced's 2020 Project

Introduced By:

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Background:

The history of UC Merced dates back to 1988, when the UC Regents first authorized planning for at least one additional campus based on projections of long-range enrollment demand. From an initial review of more than 80 sites in the San Joaquin Valley, 20 were initially advanced for additional study.

Eight sites were then further evaluated and visited by a senior level task force, leading to the identification of three sites which were selected for detailed analysis and for inclusion in a full environmental report. Following this careful process, the Board of Regents selected a site in eastern Merced County adjacent to Lake Yosemite Park as the location for the 10th campus of the University of California in May 1995.

The Merced County location was selected based upon a number of factors, including the following: The land was to be donated by the Virginia Smith Trust, a charitable trust that provides college scholarships to Merced-area high school students, adequate water was available for university needs, the county government had initiated a planning process to assure compatible development of adjacent land and good transportation access and because Merced is centrally located with easy access from communities in the San Joaquin Valley, including the Valley's largest city, Fresno.

By 1997, UC Merced had established a regional office at Merced College, and the UC Fresno Center also served as a focal point for the new UC Merced campus.

In 1998, the university joined with the Merced County Board of Supervisors, the Virginia and Cyril Smith trusts, the City of Merced, and the Merced Irrigation District to initiate a collaborative planning process for the university community. The planning process produced a concept for a campus and community that could grow together in harmony with the landscape.

That same year, Carol Tomlinson-Keasey was appointed Senior Associate to UC President Atkinson to lead planning and development of the UC Merced campus. In 1999, Tomlinson-Keasey was appointed as founding chancellor of UC Merced, and the Tri-College Center on the campus of Merced College began to present UC Extension courses offered by the UC Riverside, Davis and Berkeley campuses.

As the planning process for the campus and its academic programs continued into 2001, much progress was made, including the establishment of a new UC Merced Center in Bakersfield. UC Merced now has four locations spanning the San Joaquin Valley and Southern Sierra Nevada region.

Careful analysis of the environmental factors of the site contributed to a decision to move the campus and community closer to existing urban areas and away from more environmentally sensitive lands. The concepts developed jointly by the community and the university formed the basis for the preparation of the campus Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) and the county draft University Community Plan.

The Board of Regents approved the UC Merced LRDP and certified the associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR) in January 2002. Merced County approved the University Community Plan in December 2004 and certified the associated EIR. This action was a key milestone for the eventual development of the university community.

Faculty members began to arrive in 2003 with graduate students in tow and began setting up research laboratories and programs at UC Merced's ancillary research facility on the former Castle Air Force Base, biding their time until buildings were ready on campus. The first graduate courses began in fall 2004.

The campus celebrated its official grand opening and the arrival of the first class of undergraduate students on Sept. 5, 2005. The first semester saw most activities on campus taking place in the Valley Terrace housing complex and the Leo & Dottie Kolligian Library, as other campus buildings were not yet ready for use. The Classroom and Office Building and the Science and Engineering Building opened for use in January 2006.

The UC Merced project has enjoyed strong bipartisan support throughout its history. Conceived under Gov. George Deukmejian in 1988, the campus was sited under Gov. Pete Wilson in 1995. Groundbreaking took place in 2002 under Gov. Gray Davis, and the campus opened in 2005 under Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. To date, the state has invested more than \$500 million in construction and development of the 2,000-acre site. The university is expected to accommodate as many as 25,000 students when the campus grows to full capacity in about three decades.

Carol Tomlinson-Keasey left the university in 2006, subsequently retiring from the University of California. In her place, Sung-Mo “Steve” Kang, UC Santa Cruz School of engineering dean, was appointed chancellor in March 2007. Kang was formally inaugurated in September 2007 and led the campus until June 30, 2011. As chancellor, Kang oversaw increases in student enrollment and also the physical expansion of the campus. Kang returned to the faculty to focus on his research.

The UC Board of Regents appointed Georgia College & State University President Dorothy Leland to serve as the campus' third chancellor. She assumed the duties July 1, 2011.

Tomlinson-Keasey's death from a longtime illness in September 2009 saddened the university community, but the legacy she's left behind at UC Merced will speak of her commitment to both the UC system and Central Valley forevermore.

Next in the phase for UC Merced is the 2020 Project, which will develop the second phase of the growing UC Merced campus as a mixed use, master-planned development. Once complete, the 2020 Project will have developed collaborative, sustainable academic, research, housing and support facilities to accommodate 10,000 students.

Purpose: The purpose of this resolution is to provide support for our university, to our chancellor, and to show the UC Regents that the Associated Students of the University of California, Merced approve of our Chancellor's vision of our expanding university.

1. **Whereas:** This project will create 10,800 new construction jobs in the San Joaquin Valley and 12,600 total new construction jobs; and,
2. **Whereas:** This project will generate \$1.9 billion in direct and indirect economic impacts throughout the San Joaquin Valley and \$2.4 billion in total; and,
3. **Whereas:** This project will support enrollment growth to approximately 10,000 students and,
4. **Whereas:** This project will provide mixed use facilities that allow for scholarly activities for students, faculty, and staff; and,
5. **Whereas:** The original intent of the University of California, Merced's mission was to accommodate student demand and,
6. **Whereas:** The University of California, Merced is at capacity for academic space, has a high housing demand, and an overburdened infrastructure; and,
7. **Whereas:** The University of California, Merced experienced a 14% increase in undergraduate applications for the fall of 2015 – the highest rate in the entire UC system; and,
8. **Whereas:** The University of California, Merced recently completed a Strategic Academic Focusing Initiative; and,
9. **Whereas:** This is an innovative approach to a complex problem in which the university will form a public-private partnership known as a Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Maintain (DBFOM) model that will efficiently use tax payer dollars; and,
10. **Whereas:** The 2009 Long Range Development Program (LRDP) fostered a 355 acre footprint and the 2013 LRDP Amendment will be on a 219 acre footprint; and,
11. **Whereas:** The University of California, Merced will nearly double the building space to approximately 2 million square feet (approximately 163 acres); and,
12. **Whereas:** The University of California, Merced will increase its population from approximately 6,200 today to approximately 10,000 in 2020; and therefore,

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Be it Resolved: That the Associated Students of the University of California, Merced support the efforts set forth by Chancellor Dorothy Leland to expand the campus through the 2020 project.

Be it Finally Resolved: The External Vice President shall present this resolution to the UC Board of Regents and shall use this resolution to support the 2020 project in any appropriate discussions.

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Date Introduced: 4/1/15

Submitted Senate Committee(s):

Date Settled: 4/8/15

- Budget and Finance
- Student Advocacy
- Student Activities
- Academic Affairs
- Other _____

Veto Expires: _____

Comments/Recommendations:

Senate Action:

Approved

Not Approved

Senate Chair Authorization:


Zachary Mondo, Internal Vice President

Date: 4/11/15

President Action:

Approved

Not Approved

President's Signature:


Ivan Flores, President

Date: 4/15/15