

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Paul Desruisseaux

UC Santa Barbara to Close Off-Campus Studies Center in Ventura

The University of California, Santa Barbara has announced plans to close its Ventura Center for Off-Campus Studies. The decision was made for financial reasons, as UCSB is faced with cutting \$45 million from its budget this year as a result of reductions in state support for the UC system.

"We are very proud of the major contributions UC Santa Barbara has made to education and the workforce in Ventura over the years by graduating several hundred students through this program," said UCSB Executive Vice Chancellor Gene Lucas. "But this is an extremely challenging time for the UC system and for UCSB. The decision to shut down this program is a decision we wish we did not have to make. None of the choices that confront us as we reduce our costs are good ones."

The program in Ventura currently enrolls 65 students, most of whom have taken classes at a community college before transferring to pursue a four-year degree through the UCSB center. Many of those enrolled in the program are working adults and parents. UCSB officials say they will be assisting those interested in completing their degree program.

Established in 1974, the Ventura Center is the oldest off-campus studies program in the UC system. While other UC campuses have operated such centers at one time or another, UCSB is the only campus still doing so. A similar UCSB off-campus program in Santa Maria was shut down earlier for financial reasons. No date has yet been set

for the final closing of the Ventura Center, although no new students are being accepted this year.

The center is located on Maple Street near the Pacific View Mall, a few blocks off the 101 Freeway. The center, with six classrooms, is housed in a leased facility, which UCSB will be vacating. In addition to classes for students in the degree program, the center has also housed UCSB Extension courses and served as a base for a range of UCSB academic and outreach activities.

"I regret the circumstances that have led to this decision: The state is underfunding UC, and the Ventura program has long depended on the UCSB campus to subsidize its operations. In the current budget climate that is no longer possible," said Michael T. Brown, acting dean of Extended Learning Services and a professor of Counseling, Clinical, and School Psychology in the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education at UCSB. "We will do all we can to see to it that the students now enrolled are offered a seamless route to completing their degree."

Since the Ventura Center opened 25 years ago, approximately 4,000 students have taken classes there.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.