

THE *Current*

February 14, 2011

George Foulsham

Investigation Determines Cause of Bren Hall Ceiling Collapse at UCSB

An engineering investigation into the October collapse of an exterior lobby ceiling at UC Santa Barbara's Bren Hall has concluded that ceiling suspension anchors were not sufficiently embedded in the concrete structure, and suspension wires were not uniformly tensioned.

According to Jack Wolever, director of Design & Construction Services at UCSB, the flaws caused an unequal load in the ceiling, which led to progressive failure of the suspension system. All of the ceilings constructed in this manner have been removed and new plaster ceilings will be installed this summer.

Bren Hall was closed for two days in October after the 4,000-pound section of the ceiling collapsed in a lobby area outside the exterior elevator. The section of the ceiling that collapsed was estimated to be 20 feet x 25 feet. It collapsed on a Saturday afternoon, and there were no injuries. UCSB officials subsequently ordered the removal of all similar suspended ceilings at Bren Hall.

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.