

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE *Current*

September 25, 2025

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Welcome home, Gauchos

Overheard outside the Thunderdome on the first Monday of fall quarter:

“Was that fire, or was that fire?”

“That was fire!”

It was rave reviews all around from UC Santa Barbara students at the campus’s inaugural Gaucho Welcome rally, which kicked off the new academic year with booming music, spirited cheerleaders and chants of “UC! SB!”

Geared toward freshman and transfer students, who nearly filled the campus arena, the rally served as a warm welcome for another new Gaucho: Chancellor Dennis Assanis, who joined UCSB earlier this month.

Image



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The Gaucha Cheer team led the crowd in chants of "UC! SB!"

Image



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UC Santa Barbara hosted its first ever spirit rally, the Gaucho Welcome, to kick off the new 2025-2026 academic year.

Image



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Some of UCSB's newest Gauchos wheel their belongings into campus residence halls.

Image



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Move-In Weekend brought the smiles — and the stuff

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- “Along with you, my wife, Eleni, and I are thrilled to join the vibrant Gaucho and Santa Barbara community,” Assanis told the lively crowd as he took the Thunderdome stage. “Together we will make new friends, hear your stories and make new discoveries.”

“Nearly 130,000 students — from 54 California counties, 43 states throughout the U.S. and from more than 46 countries — applied to become Gauchos this year,” he continued. “We chose you because we believe in you. You are here for an outstanding education, transformative experiences and important life connections. And we are all here to help you and support you every step of the way.”

True to those words even before saying them, Assanis and Eleni were on hand during Move-In Weekend to meet incoming students and families as they arrived on

campus. They shook hands, loaded and rolled moving carts into residence halls, and even checked out a few rooms — with plenty of selfies snapped alongside happy new Gauchos.

UCSB's annual Week of Welcome celebrates the start of a new academic year with an array of events meant to inspire a sense of Gaucho pride. In addition to the campus's first-ever pep rally, the full slate of programming also includes workshops, presentations, physical activities and social events to introduce resources and services available for students — and to start facilitating new connections.

Classes begin Thursday, Sept. 25.

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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.