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CONTACT:

Brenda Ortiz, University Communications

Office: 209-228-4203 | Cell: 209-628-8263 | Email: bortiz@ucmerced.edu

Record Spike in Applications Nets Enrollment Increase

*The university sees 7 percent overall increase in undergraduate students;
Plans slower growth for next academic year*

MERCED, Calif. — A fall census shows enrollment at the University of California, Merced, has reached 6,195 students — a 7 percent increase over last year — as the campus continues to grow in both numbers and competitiveness.

After evaluating a record application pool of more than 18,000, the university enrolled 1,757 new undergraduate students for the 2013 fall semester.

The freshman class jumped by nearly 11 percent, from 1,495 to 1,654 — making it the largest freshman

class in the campus's history. In addition, the campus added 103 transfer students and 101 graduate students.

“The numbers show that UC Merced is playing an important role in the San Joaquin Valley and the state of California by creating access to an excellent research university,” Chancellor Dorothy Leland said. “We are extremely proud of the caliber of students who have accepted the challenge to join in building this innovative university.”

UC Merced students continue to come from a wide variety of backgrounds and regions. About 37 percent of all undergraduate students are from the Central Valley, 34 percent

Quick Facts

- UC Merced has started the 2013-14 academic year with more than 6,000 students — a 7 percent increase over 2012-13.
- The incoming freshman class totaled 1,654, the largest to date.
- The campus awarded 28 incoming Regents' Scholarships, UC's most prestigious scholarship award.

from the greater Los Angeles area and 27 percent from the Central Coast and San Francisco Bay Area.

The university enrolled 28 new students who were awarded the UC Regents' Scholarship based primarily on their high academic and personal achievements, twice as many as anticipated.

“Well-qualified students consider us an excellent choice for their next four years,” said J. Michael Thompson, associate vice chancellor for Enrollment Management. “They understand how UC Merced can provide a life-transforming experience for them and their communities.”

For the first time since 2005, the campus enrolled more female students than males.

Of its undergraduate population, 62 percent are first-generation students and Pell grant eligible — the largest percentage within the University of California system.

This fall, the campus also saw a 9 percent increase in graduate students. There are 358 graduate students enrolled this semester, compared to 329 in Fall 2012. The increase in graduate-student enrollment supports the university’s ambition to rank among the top public research universities in the country.

To help accommodate growth, the campus has added new housing and dining options. With the new five-story residence hall, called Half Dome, 2,100 students reside on campus. Six new food venues are also available to meet the increasing needs of the students, faculty and staff.

Fall enrollment figures have come on the heels of a robust summer session. There were 1,880 students taking classes on campus this past summer, compared to 1,732 in 2012.

“We’ve continued to experience remarkable growth since the campus opened,” Thompson said. “However, we are planning a much slower rate of growth over the next few years until the facilities and infrastructure needed to support 10,000 students by 2020 are built.”

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UC Merced opened Sept. 5, 2005, as the 10th campus in the University of California system and the first American research university of the 21st century. Situated near Yosemite National Park, the campus significantly expands access to the UC system for students throughout the

state, with a special mission to increase college-going rates among students in the San Joaquin Valley. It also serves as a major base of advanced research, a model of sustainable design and construction, and a stimulus to economic growth and diversification throughout the region.