

UC San Diego

UC San Diego News Center

By Christine Clark

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UC San Diego Moves Forward on Path to Division I



Photos by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

UC San Diego is one step closer to the reclassification as a non-football NCAA Division I university. The campus's Academic Senate recently announced by vote of its membership that it has endorsed moving forward to Division I.

UC San Diego Athletics and university administrators have been in discussion with the Big West Conference for the last several years in regard to potentially becoming a conference member, which is the next step in the transition to Division I. The conference is comprised of nine institutions including four other UC schools—UC Santa Barbara, UC Irvine, UC Davis and UC Riverside. Work on that aspect of the process is ongoing.



Alumni Father and Son Team Up to Establish Athletics Scholarship

The transition to Division I athletics is an exciting time for current UC San Diego students and for many alumni as well—including Julian “Skip” Schink, '76, and his father, David, '63. In 2014, the two men established a scholarship for UC San Diego student-athletes.

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The faculty council's review followed a vote by the UC San Diego undergraduate students last May that passed a fee referendum which would provide financial support for the move to Division I. A total of 8,828 ballots were cast during the May 24 vote with 6,137 in favor, 2,567 against and 124 abstentions.

"We are pleased both students and faculty have reached the same consensus that UC San Diego is poised to become a Division I campus," said Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. "In UC San Diego's short history, the campus has grown to become a world leader in education, research and patient care. The collective votes by both students and faculty demonstrate UC San Diego's continued growth and trajectory as one of the globe's most influential universities."

UC San Diego's Faculty Athletic Representative Cliff Kubiak, a professor of chemistry and biochemistry, was heavily involved in discussions that resulted in the Academic Senate's affirmation of the transition. "The principle of shared governance is important in our campus culture," said Kubiak. "A distinct characteristic of our institution is that administration, faculty and student voices are all heard on issues that affect the entire campus. The value of that precept was demonstrated in this process."



The average GPA of student-athletes at UC San Diego is higher than that of the student body as a whole.

The vote from the senate, which includes tenure-track and tenured professors, as well as lecturers, select administrators and other academic staff, was the conclusion of a months-long process that included reports from five different Academic Senate committees on the subject.

Dominick Suvonnasupa, president of UC San Diego's Associated Students during the fee referendum vote, was enthusiastic about the results of the Academic Senate vote. "As reflected by the voter turnout and the margin in favor, this was an important issue to the students and I'm happy to see that it will be moving forward in a united fashion," said Suvonnasupa, who graduated in 2016. "A move to Division I has the potential to positively impact all of our students."

Under the NCAA Division II classification, UC San Diego athletic teams have won 30 national championships, and the campus has been honored with the NCAA Presidents' Award for Academic Excellence based on strong graduation rates among UC San Diego student-athletes. The average GPA of student-athletes at UC San Diego is higher than that of the student body as a whole.

Revelle College senior basketball player Adam Klie maintains a 4.0 cumulative GPA in bioengineering.



A total of 8,828 ballots were cast by UC San Diego undergraduate students during the May 24 vote to go D1—6,137 were in favor, 2,567 were against and there were 124 abstentions.

“For me, the passing of the Division I [student] vote is something I will look back on and be proud of,” Klie said. “It was something I contributed to and will be a part of the legacy my class of athletes leaves for the university. I, personally, cannot wait for the day when I turn on the TV and see the UC San Diego basketball team playing in the NCAA tournament.”

If an invitation to join the Big West is extended, it would prompt the referendum to kick in during the fall quarter of the next academic year. A portion of those student

fees will go to student-athlete scholarships.

Earl W. Edwards, UC San Diego’s Director of Athletics for more than 17 years, said he was pleased with this latest outcome. “The professionalism, fairness, cooperation and leadership demonstrated by the Academic Senate over the past few months while dealing with this resolution are much appreciated by the Athletic Department,” said Edwards. “The move to NCAA Division I is a step that will truly benefit the entire campus and we’re excited that the faculty vote was affirmative.”

For more information on UC San Diego Athletics, click [here](#).