

January 16, 2018 | By Christine Clark

## UC San Diego Named Nation's No. 1 Surf-Friendly School by Surfer Magazine

**Campus lauded for its academics, affordability and proximity to Black's Beach**



Surfer Magazine has ranked the University of California San Diego as the No. 1 college in the country revered by many surfers for high academic standards, illustrious alumni and nearness to quality surf. With a nationally-ranked surf team, UC San Diego has consistently been named a top school for surfing by other media in addition to Surfer, such as Transworld Surf magazine and Surfline.com.

With the campus's proximity to Black's Beach, a world-renowned surf break, many UC San Diego students and faculty can be seen walking to the beach with a surfboard under their arm. In addition, UC San Diego's recreation department offers surf classes to students throughout the year. Students can also join the surf club on campus, or the surf team, which is one of the most competitive in the country, holding six national titles.

"UC San Diego offers a world-class educational experience to students, as well as vibrant student life opportunities," said Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. "Our unique location near the beach and among other premier research institutions on the Torrey Pines Mesa makes the campus an ideal place to pursue academics and an active lifestyle."

Surfer also noted that UC San Diego is centrally located among 70 miles of San Diego coastline. "Drive 10 minutes north or south and you'll find fun numerous reefbreaks and beachbreaks."

The magazine added, “Not only does UC San Diego rank as the No. 7 public university in the country, UC San Diego’s Scripps Institution of Oceanography is one of the oldest, largest, and most important centers for ocean and earth science research, education and public service in the world. An added perk: UC San Diego offers a 1-unit course called ‘The Physics of Surfing.’”



With many members of the UC San Diego community passionate about surfing and the environment, the campus has helped launch research and technologies that benefited both. For example, the world’s first algae-based, sustainable surfboard was developed by UC San Diego biology and chemistry students and faculty. Stephen Mayfield, a professor of biology and algae geneticist, who has been surfing for more than 45 years, headed the effort to produce the surfboard. “An algae-based surfboard perfectly fits with the community and our connection with the ocean and surfing,” he said.

Mayfield, along with Skip Pomeroy, a professor of chemistry and biochemistry, also recently led a research effort to produce the world’s first algae-based, renewable flip flops—a development that could rid beaches worldwide of one of the biggest sources of trash. Each year, approximately three billion petroleum-based flip flops are produced, many of which litter beaches around the globe. The researchers hope to produce their sustainable flip flops, which will degrade over time—for \$3 a pair—making the campus innovation a revolution in sustainable design.



In addition, researchers at Scripps Institution of Oceanography also developed the new “Smartfin,” a surfboard fin equipped with sensors to record ocean data. The project is a collaborative effort between the campus and the Surfrider Foundation, designed to help surfers gather data for climate scientists to study the health of the world’s oceans.

UC San Diego has many famous surfing alumni including: Rusty Preisendorfer, founder and CEO of Rusty Surfboards; Ricky Grigg, big-wave pioneer and professor of oceanography at the University of Hawaii; Tom O’Keefe, founder of Red X Fin Systems; Isabelle

Tihanyi, founder of Surf Divas surf school; Mark Massara, director of the Sierra Club's California Coastal Campaign; Jon Sundt, founder of the San Diego-based Altegris Investments, Inc.; and Evan Slater, Hurley vice president of marketing.

"UC San Diego is the best school to be a surfer because it's the perfect cover-up," Slater told Surfer Magazine. "People take you seriously because you're going to a 'smart' school. In the meantime, you get to learn Blacks' most intimate curves for at least four years."

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UC San Diego's [Studio Ten 300](#) offers radio and television connections for media interviews with our faculty, which can be coordinated via [studio@ucsd.edu](mailto:studio@ucsd.edu). To connect with a UC San Diego faculty expert on relevant issues and trending news stories, visit <https://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/media-resources/faculty-experts>.