

More space for more students

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Over the next two years, Cal State Fullerton's 37-year-old student center will undergo a major facelift.

The university recently was given the thumbs for an expansion of the Titan Student Union, a building that hasn't been updated in 21 years.

The California State University Board of Trustees approved the \$20 million project to be funded by existing cash reserves of the student center and by the university's Associated Students, Inc.

The student center was built in 1976 with 70,000 square feet to support a student population of 21,500. There was a subsequent expansion in 1992 when the population was about 24,400.

Now, with CSUF's student population at 38,325, it's time for an overhaul, said Titan Student Centers Director Kurt Borsting.

"This project will expand this important university facility – currently 140,000 square feet – and also will include renovation of existing space, primarily on the second floor, to address space and service needs," Borsting said in a written statement.

The expansion project includes:

- Expand the facility by approximately 20,000 to 25,000 square feet in new construction, creating a new signature entry and lounge spaces for the student union.
- Modernize and improve approximately 24,000 square feet of existing space on the second floor of the facility, upgrade and reorganize various office space, public use facilities, such as conference and meeting rooms, and open spaces
- Replace and upgrade 16 dated and energy-inefficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems throughout the existing building

Titan Student Union is a central hub on campus for students, visitors and the community. It is home to a campus pub that serves alcohol, various eateries, lounge and study areas, conference and meeting rooms, a bowling alley and a video game arcade. It also accommodates a number of programs and student services.

During the planning process that began two years ago, ASI hired Brailsford & Dunlavey program management firm to see what areas of the TSU needed some love.

Students were asked to share their thoughts and ideas on how to effectively improve and update the Titan Student Union and how it can best serve future Titans.

More than 6,000 students participated in the survey and several hundred participated in the focus groups and stakeholder meetings that were used as tools for student feedback, said Borsting.

Facility-use patterns, data from meeting room and event space bookings, food court activity, financial data,

and other available information was reviewed to understand how the current center is serving the campus community and what areas need to be prioritized for future improvements.

“One of the things we heard loud and clear was that students are looking for exciting, engaging spaces where they can be in between classes,” said Borsting.

Designing a place where students can socialize and meet up with their friends is one of the main focuses of the expansion, he said.

Students are currently using the food court as a hangout spot, so building a new lounge and recreation area will help improve the utilization of the dining hall.

Borsting expects the design phase to take an additional 18 to 24 months before construction begins.

Since a good part of the construction will be on the second floor of the facility, various programs and student services on the second floor will be move to temporary locations.

“The approval by the CSU Board of Trustees is one of the important first steps in the process,” associate vice president for facilities planning and management Jay Bond stated. “As we move into the next phases, we will work closely with ASI and a design-build team to plan and ultimately build this exciting project. It will allow the TSU to serve our students even better for decades to come.”

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