Five things to know about CSUF this fall

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With classes resuming, here are five things to know about Cal State Fullerton this fall:

1 Titan Student Union expansion project has broken ground.

The $20 million Titan Student Union expansion project, which will offer more than 25,000 square feet of new space, a new front entrance with a grand staircase, more natural lighting and modernizing renovations, is underway at Cal State Fullerton.

The goal is to create a living space for students and faculty between classes, said Dave Edwards, executive director of the university's Associated Students Inc.

"The original parts of this building were built in the '70s," Edwards said. "It's time to modernize the building and bring it to the needs and demands of our current students."

The TSU was built in 1976 and expanded in 1992; its current size is about 140,000 square feet.

"One of the exciting things about this expansion project is blending that old history of the TSU from the '70s with a modern flair for today's college students," Edwards said.

The TSU is one of the most-used buildings on the CSUF campus, with about 6,000 people using the facility each day.

As part of the project, which is expected to be completed in February 2017, more study areas and meeting rooms will be made available for students' use.

"It's an opportunity for students, organizations, faculty and staff to gather and meet outside their classrooms," Edwards said. "It's a new place to congregate as a community and build that sense of community."

The renovations will also allow offices and centers housed in the TSU to be more readily and easily found, he said.

The TSU will remain open throughout the expansion.

The expansion project, which was approved by the California State University Board of Trustees in 2013, will be funded by existing cash reserves from the student center and the university's Associated Students Inc.

No student fees are associated with the project, Edwards said.

A groundbreaking ceremony will be held 1-3 p.m. Sept. 16 outside the TSU. CSUF President Mildred García and student leaders will lead the event.

2 Pollak Library renovations will focus on earthquake damage.

With recent approval from university officials, Pollak Library's first phase of renovations is moving forward.
The first priority is repairing structural damage from a March 2014 earthquake that still has portions of four floors on the south side of the library closed.

“Most of it is not usable,” said Scott Hewitt, interim university librarian. “The ceilings were damaged, and that’s really the main issue.”

Due to the earthquake, library staff have had to recover and move nearly 400,000 books to the north side of the library; the air conditioning system also became disconnected and moved about a foot from its original spot during the quake.

Although renovations for the CSUF library were being discussed prior to the 5.1 magnitude earthquake, the damage has required officials to speed up the process.

“It really provided more momentum,” Hewitt said.

CSUF received $6 million from the CSU chancellor’s office for earthquake repairs. The remainder of the renovations are estimated to cost between $30 million and $40 million.

Hewitt hopes the library’s upgrades will allow the facility to be more attuned to the needs of university students and faculty.

New carpet and paint are on the list of pending renovations, as are adding more student and faculty areas.

Hewitt would like to keep all student areas on the first floor of the library and move all faculty areas to the second floor.

Citing the need for additional seating for students as one of the library’s biggest concerns, Hewitt said the facility will remove shelves to allow the addition of more student seating areas.

The project also calls for the addition of outdoor tables, sun shades and electricity around the outside of the building.

The second floor of the north building will see the addition of an advanced technology commons.

“Almost every academic department has their own unique software or hardware requirements,” Hewitt said. “This will be a place where those requirements will be met.”

Demolition is expected to begin this month.

While the demolition takes place, Hewitt, along with other university officials, will work to develop and finalize architectural plans.

Phase one of the project is expected to be completed in 2017. It is unknown how many phases will make up the project.

“Right now we’re just trying to move ahead as soon as possible,” Hewitt said. “Nothing has been decided on phase two.”

The renovation project will include upgrades and renovations within the library with no expansion planned. “We will stay within the current outer skin of the building,” Hewitt said.

3 More parking added on campus.

More parking spaces have been added to the CSUF campus – 71 spaces, to be exact. The curbside spaces were added on East Campus Drive, adjacent to the Fullerton Arboretum on the north side of campus.

The new parking spaces can be used by anyone with a valid CSUF parking permit.

The university offers more than 11,300 parking spaces to its students, faculty, staff and visitors, said Michael Yu, the university’s parking and transportation field operations manager.

“That was the quickest, easiest and most cost-effective place to add parking, so that’s why we did it there,” Yu said.
In 2014, CSUF introduced stacked parking to a number of its parking lots through the use of a third-party company to alleviate the abundance of vehicles.

“The 71 spaces will not beat the entire demand, but it will definitely help,” Yu said.

Yu’s tips for avoiding parking chaos include: get to campus early, use the university’s mobile parking app — available for download on m.fullerton.edu — that offers a live availability count of parking spaces in the parking structures, carpool when possible and don’t spend too much time trying to get the closest parking spot to campus.

4 CSUF continues to award the most bachelor’s degrees in the state to Latino students.

CSUF was recognized as first in the state and fifth in the nation in awarding bachelor’s degrees to Latino students by Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education. This is the third year in a row the university has been in first place.

The university was additionally lauded in the 2015 State of Higher Education in California: The Latino Report for its efforts to close the achievement gap between students underrepresented in higher education and their peers.

CSUF President Mildred García has said this is something she is most proud of when reflecting on her time at the university.

“As the demographics are changing in this country and Latinos become the largest ethnic group in the country and in California, we have to ensure that Latinos are graduating at high rates so that they become informed and educated citizens who go back into the community and become our workforce, and that we give every student who lives in Orange County and California the opportunity to have that higher education that gave so much to me,” she said in May.

5 Concert Under the Stars, CSUF’s largest fundraising event of the year, is Sept. 19.

This year’s theme for the annual Concert Under the Stars fundraiser, organized by University Advancement and directed by the College of the Arts, will be “The Motown Sound.”

The music event is attended by thousands of people and is the university’s largest fundraiser of the year. Proceeds go toward CSUF scholarships and programs.

Entertainment is provided by CSUF students and alumni. The list of performers and other details will be released closer to the event date.

For more information and to purchase tickets, call 657-278-3480, send an email to concert@fullerton.edu or visit fullerton.edu/concert.

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