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## Record number of freshmen expected at UC Merced

UC Merced this fall will host its highest number of freshmen and transfer students since the campus opened in 2005.

Campus officials said 2,013 incoming students have accepted the university's offer of admission for the fall 2010 semester -- a 35 percent increase over the previous year.

Officials expect the actual number of new students to be closer to 1,450, bringing the total projected enrollment to 3,985.

"Through managed growth, we have exceeded our target numbers for the past four years in a row while staying in line with state resources," said Kevin Browne, assistant vice chancellor for enrollment management, in a press release. "This shows that UC Merced is an increasingly popular choice for students."

The campus has received 524 more statements of intent to register than it did last year. Final enrollment figures for the fall term typically are available in late October.

Hundreds of admitted students and their families have already attended new student orientation, which began in June.

When the school first opened its doors in 2005, enrollment projections for 2010 were at 5,000.

Those early numbers were estimates from 10 to 15 years ago, according to Brenda Ortiz, UC Merced spokeswoman.

Each year the UC Office of the President checks with each campus for an updated enrollment projection. With a few years under its belt, UC Merced has a much better handle on what actual enrollment looks like, she added.

Overall, the UC system received 34,116 statements of intent to register from California freshmen. This figure represents a slight decline compared with last year. The number of transfer students who intended to register at UC campuses this fall increased by 2,000 to 15,718 students.

The 10-campus statewide system will experience a slight increase in the diversity of its student population this fall, according to UC Office of the President.

The largest increase for underrepresented students came from Latinos, who now make up 23.1 percent of the system's freshmen, up from 20.9 percent. African Americans had a small increase, from 3.8 to 3.9 percent of the incoming freshman class. Native Americans increased from 0.6 to 0.8 percent.