

## Q&A WITH SUA

*Send in your questions, and we'll share the answers!*

### **Question:**

Does SUA have a full-service Student Center?

### **Answer:**

It certainly does. The Student Center has three full floors with many different amenities. The Dining Hall holds just under 300 occupants at one time, with hardwood floors and tables that seat 10 apiece. At one end of the Dining Hall, you will find a large video wall composed of six large-screen videos that can display six individual shows or one large one. The students use this video wall for Saturday night movies and many other uses. Super Bowl, anyone? At the other end of the Dining Hall are clusters of stuffed chairs used for lounging during all hours of the day.

On the 2nd level, the Student Center Plaza, you will find outdoor seating with trees in a plaza. On one side are the mailroom, student mailboxes and the ATM machine. On the other side, students can access the bookstore, the game room and the new coffee house that serves specialty teas, coffees (espresso and lattes) and after hours snacks until midnight.

On the 3rd level is the Conference Center with a reception area and four conference rooms, which include video-teleconferencing capability. The 3rd level also includes the Student Health Center staffed by a nurse practitioner. The Health Center also provides flu shots.

### **Question:**

Is SUA safe? What about the city of Aliso Viejo?

### **Answer:**

The Orange County Sheriff said on July 1, when Aliso Viejo was incorporated, that it is now the safest city in California. Eighty percent of SUA is bordered by wilderness park, and at the single main entrance, security personnel always stop to greet all visitors, 24 hours a day. The campus is closed to uninvited visitors from 10:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. Security staff cover all areas of the campus 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

SUA also operates 64 video cameras strategically placed around the campus to monitor building entrances and major thoroughfares. Most of the cameras are found in parking lots and merchandise areas, and all of them feed back to video monitors in the security offices, where they are always monitored.

The parking lots also contain 40 code-blue emergency stations that instantly alert security in case of trouble. The stations are also monitored by video cameras.

All buildings and rooms have electronic access for students provided through their computers — serving as student identification, room key and charge card for their student account.

**Question:**

It is difficult to assess SUA's quality, since it is brand new. What are some of your indicators of quality? How do you measure your chances of success as a university?

**Answer:**

There are both tangible and intangible measures. Among the tangible measures are endowment, quality of faculty and quality of student body.

SUA started with an endowment of \$250 million, which guarantees it financial stability and allows SUA to provide the educational opportunities that students want and need.

Second, the quality of SUA's faculty rivals any other small, liberal arts college among the list of outstanding liberal arts colleges in the United States. Take a look at SUA's catalogue ([www.soka.edu/catalog](http://www.soka.edu/catalog)), examine the schools that the faculty attended and compare that list against any other small, private liberal arts college. You will not find SUA wanting.

Third, the "stats" on our entering class are outstanding. Recently, the president of Claremont McKenna College, Pamela Gann, said that SUA's entering class was outstanding and far and away better than any other entering class of a start-up institution she had ever seen.

As to the intangible measures, SUA has already built its alumni center, and we have not even graduated our first student. This shows that we believe in ourselves and in our mission, educating students for the role of a global citizen in our ever-changing world. This confidence is manifested throughout the faculty and the student body. We are all joined together by a common mission—namely, to respond to the vision of SUA's founder, who eloquently argues that it is through education that we discover our true selves, the human family and our place in the global community.

The faculty is strongly motivated to give students an education that reflects this outlook and have worked tirelessly to produce a curriculum that meets traditional goals of education while also looking beyond to explore the depths of the human experience. The strength of our university community is our firm commitment to serve the student as heart and core of the university.

Of course, in the end a university is only as good as the student's willingness to apply him or herself to the learning environment. In this respect, whether a university succeeds or fails really depends on the effort and commitment of each student.

Private colleges pride themselves on offering students something special. What is SUA's "something special" for its students? It is how we treat one another. Students, faculty and staff have come to SUA because their personal values and aspirations resonate with those of SUA. Faculty members focus on close interaction and dialogue as fundamental tools for each student's development. We have small classes, yes, but what happens within them and outside of them is our something special. We feel that peace and human rights begin with self-awareness, self-mastery and dialogue.

*If you have questions of any kind about SUA, please send them to SUA at either [admission@soka.edu](mailto:admission@soka.edu) or [info@soka.edu](mailto:info@soka.edu). We will use this World Tribune column to share our answers with others who might have the same questions.*