

UC Merced uses CS Gold and iCLASS readers to manage campus access

About UC Merced

The University of California at Merced opened its doors on September 5, 2005, marking the opening of the first new American research university of the twenty-first century. The tenth campus in the University of California system, UC Merced enrolls approximately 1,200 students, with plans to expand to more than 25,000 in the coming decades.

The Cat Card

UC Merced's Cat Card program, named for the school's mascot, utilizes the CS Gold® campus card system from CBORD®, including a substantial HID® iCLASS® card reader installation for access control. The school manages its more than 300 iCLASS readers with an integrated network of Squadron® panels, designed to tailor hardware for specific access and alarm needs.

The Cat Card is used for

- Identification and status verification
- Library privileges
- Campus dining, including meal plans and flex accounts
- Building access
- Elevator access
- Laundry payment
- Photocopying and printing
- Bookstore purchases
- Athletic equipment check-out

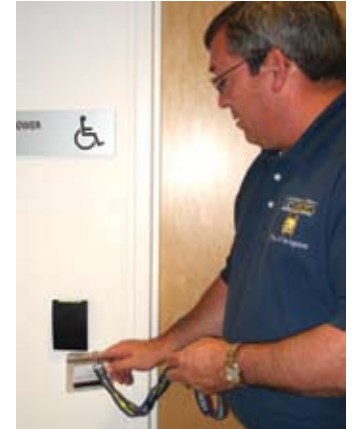
Success with iCLASS

When employees at UC Merced began researching options for the school's campus card system technology, they understood their unique position. The ability to start from scratch, with no existing system in place, has allowed the school to carefully plan for cutting-edge technology implementations. It is this freedom that has encouraged the team at UC Merced to search out the technology that suits their needs today and supports their vision for tomorrow.

Optimized to make physical access control more powerful, HID Global iCLASS 13.56 MHz read/write contactless smart card technology features all the user-friendly features of proximity, with enhanced security through encryption (using a secure algorithm) and mutual authentication. In addition to quickly reading data from the secure sectors within the card, contactless iCLASS credentials are ideal for the campus

environment because they allow user organizations to write data to those sectors on the card for multiple applications. This enables privileges and permission statuses to be stored on the card.

"We pride ourselves on being technologically advanced, so we needed a system that was not only powerful and sustainable, but that could carry us into the future," says Steve Noret, Assistant Registrar and Interim Campus Card Manager at UC Merced. "The iCLASS integration with CS Gold offered us that."



Flexible Privileges

Access control on a college campus is a complicated practice, so the staff at UC Merced uses CS Gold to manage access based on a variety of privileges. Some locks used on campus are configured according to time schedules. For example, student employees working in campus offices need access to those rooms during their shifts, but should otherwise not be allowed admittance. CS Gold can be configured to begin allowing access privileges thirty minutes before their shifts begin, and expire thirty minutes after they end.

UC Merced even uses iCLASS cards and readers with CS Gold to handle elevator control. "There are certain building floors that are only accessible via elevator if a patron has specific privileges associated with his or her card—like the floors where our top-level administrators work, for example," says Noret. "We are able to utilize our access control down to the specific floor of a specific building, tightening security when and where it is needed most."

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Frank Fimbretz, Supervising Locksmith at UC Merced, joins Noret in his support of the system: "I have been working in access control for about twelve years and have never seen a system that can do so much with privileges."

Powered by Squadron

The CS Gold system at UC Merced manages more than 300 doors across campus, so a powerful control system is essential. Squadron panels from CBORD simplify door management by allowing staff to easily configure multiple setups for hundreds of access points.



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“The Squadron panels simplify life for us tremendously,” says Fimbrez. “They are almost plug-and-play—just assign a new IP address and you’re online. I can easily create many different configurations and applications, ranging from installation to wiring to building locations.”

Future Plans

The staff at UC Merced has a number of plans in place to expand its use of CS Gold and iCLASS technology to enhance campus security. For example, the university plans to use the system to allow campus police to view alarms when inactive cards are presented at readers. This will make it easy to pinpoint when and where officers should be deployed to deal with security issues immediately.

Loss prevention is also a major consideration, especially in research labs containing valuable items such as microscopes, balance tables, and laptop computers. To prevent theft, Fimbrez has a vision to install wide-range readers on lab doors and place proximity stickers on expensive items within the room. The resulting security system will trigger an alarm in CS Gold when the pieces are taken through a lab door, allowing campus police to quickly recover the misappropriated items.

Tried and True

“I would definitely recommend the iCLASS/CS Gold integration to other schools,” says Fimbrez. “Since there are no moving parts inside the readers and no card swipes to worry about, the maintenance of the readers is minimal. I haven’t had an iCLASS reader fail yet—there really isn’t much that *can* fail. We are extremely pleased with the product.”

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