

UC SANTA BARBARA

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New UCSB Research Unit Formed to Promote Arts in Isla Vista

Catherine Cole is a firm believer in the transformative power of art.

The UC Santa Barbara professor of drama and dance has recently put that conviction and her concern for students to the test, creating Isla Vista Arts (IVA).

This endeavor will enrich the diverse Isla Vista student community with the dynamic potential of music, film, drama, comedy, and visual arts.

"Throughout the world, the arts have served at the vanguard of social change," Cole said.

"The arts build community, reformulate patterns of interaction, and stimulate people to imagine new realities."

Officially, Isla Vista Arts will operate as a research sub-unit under the umbrella of UCSB's Interdisciplinary Humanities Center.

In practice, it serves as an umbrella for a variety of weekly film, theater and visual arts events and classes in the Isla Vista community, home to about 40 percent of UCSB's students.

Among the arts projects that IVA already promotes:

- Associated Students Program Board films (every Tuesday night, I.V. Theater)

- Magic Lantern Films (every Friday night, I.V. Theater)
- "Improvability" improvisational troupe (every Friday night, Embarcadero Hall)
- I.V. Live variety show (every Saturday night, Embarcadero Hall)
- Middle Eastern Center Film Series, (every Wednesday, March 30 - June 8, Embarcadero Hall)
- Art Symposium (every Wednesday evening, I.V. Theater)

A calendar of Isla Vista Arts events is available on the IVA Web site, www.islavista-arts.org.

Cole said there is room for many more programs.

"We did this not only to bring coherence and greater impact to the existing programs," she said. "We also want to stimulate new ideas."

Cole, who authored the proposal to create IVA, is the director. She is assisted by graduate students Jason Davids Scott and John Carnwath.

Isla Vista Arts is affiliated with Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life, a national consortium of colleges, universities and cultural institutions dedicated to supporting the civic work of university artists, humanists and designers.

"UCSB is a member of this consortium," Cole said. "To me, that's an important linkage to a national trend in the humanities and in education."

IVA brings the great strengths of higher education---teaching and research---to bear on complex problems in our community."

But most important, Cole said, are the UCSB students living in Isla Vista and the bridge IVA builds between their community and the campus. "IVA creates a confluence between students' spaces of living and learning," she said.

"Isla Vista is actually a very, very interesting community," Cole said. "I believe it can become a great asset to the campus. Isla Vista is an opportunity waiting to happen."

Related Links

[Isla Vista Arts](http://www.islavista-arts.org)

About UC Santa Barbara

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