

UC SANTA BARBARA

THE Current

September 15, 2009

Eileen Conrad

UCSB Offers 'School for Scientific Thought' for High School Students

A total of 100 high school students have enrolled in UC Santa Barbara's new "School for Scientific Thought" to learn about "Mutants, Spirals, and Riots," "Industrial Espionage," "Biology and Ecology of Infectious Diseases," and other "hot topics" in science and engineering in the first of a series of free Saturday mini-courses offered by the California NanoSystems Institute and supported by the National Science Foundation.

The innovative educational program exposes students in grades 10 through 12 to concepts in science beyond the typical high school science curriculum, ranging from cosmology to infectious diseases and from nanotechnology to reverse engineering.

Instructors are UCSB scientists and engineers currently engaged in doctoral research, who want to share their enthusiasm for science and their expertise in current research.

"The School for Scientific Thought (SST) will give high school students a sense of just how exciting science and technology can be, and also show them that scientists are ordinary people with wide-ranging interests," said UCSB Physics Professor Elisabeth Gwinn, faculty sponsor for the program. "Our Ph.D. candidates are gaining a wonderful opportunity to develop their own courses, with much more freedom than is typical in a teaching assistantship at a university."

They're also developing the skills to create friendly learning environments for non-experts through their collaboration with SST program coordinator Wendy Ibsen, a senior member of the California NanoSystems Institute's education staff and one of the major architects of the SST program."

The first course begins on Sept. 19.

Classes are scheduled from 10 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Lunch will be served to participants.

In the afternoon, students are invited to remain on campus until 3 p.m. to take part in tours and other campus programs.

There will be no homework or examinations.

Another session is scheduled for the winter quarter.

Early registration for this already popular program is recommended.

Students are invited to apply online at www.leaps.ucsb.edu/pages/sstapp.html.

Winter courses will focus on nanotechnology, RNA, field biology, quantum mechanics, and human-ecological systems.

Program information is available at www.leaps.ucsb.edu/pages/sst.html.

QuickTime course videos can be viewed at the site, and students may register online.

For more information, call 805-893-8527 or e-mail sst@cnsi.ucsb.edu.

Related Links [School for Scientific Thought](#)

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we

draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.