

UC SANTA BARBARA

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## **UCSB Partners with Dow Chemical Company to Increase Lab Safety**

UC Santa Barbara is working with The Dow Chemical Company on a pilot program to increase laboratory safety awareness and practices in the College of Engineering and the campus's Departments of Chemistry, Chemical Engineering, and Materials.

"The Lab Safety Partnership with Dow underlines the College of Engineering's dedication to a culture of laboratory safety that aligns with industry best practices," said Rod Alferness, dean of the College of

Engineering. "Striving for the highest possible standards positions UCSB as a lab safety leader among academic research institutions."

Dow's best practices focus on incident prevention and on spurring a high level of engagement in safety awareness among faculty and students. Dow has similar safety partnerships under way with the University of Minnesota and Penn State University.

"Our alliance with Dow enables UCSB to stay at the forefront of materials research, but is also critical to the world-class educational mission of the University," said Craig Hawker, professor of materials and director of UCSB's Materials Research Laboratory. "This innovative partnership is a tremendous opportunity to work with Dow, an industry leader in safety practices, bringing a renewed culture of safety awareness to UCSB and providing our students with the best preparation for their

future careers."

The partnership with UCSB reinforces Dow's commitment to stimulate collaborative innovation with U.S. universities. In October, Dow awarded UCSB \$15 million to establish the Dow Materials Institute to advance the education of scientists and engineers and to promote the discovery of revolutionary new materials. Also in October, Dow announced that it would invest \$250 million over the course of 10 years among 11 academic institutions, including UCSB, that have demonstrated excellence in research and in science and engineering education.

"Partnering with leading U.S. universities is central to Dow's goal to strengthen research in scientific fields important to Dow and the nation's future," said William F. Banholzer, Ph.D., executive vice president and Dow's chief technology officer. "Dow recognizes that laboratory safety is a continuing challenge for universities everywhere, and we have the expertise to be part of the solution."

University laboratory safety has improved steadily over the last two decades, thanks largely to the enactment of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Laboratory Safety Act in 1990.

Through this laboratory safety partnership, UCSB will form an interdepartmental team, with graduate students and faculty from each participating department. Working with Dow, the team will establish a baseline on safety culture and behavior, and then develop a program to address critical needs. In addition, Dow will host members of the UCSB team at its sites to share its best practices, and collaborate on ways to adapt those practices to a university setting.

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† Top image: Alessandro F. Moretto is the chemical laboratory safety officer for the Division of Mathematical, Life & Physical Sciences and the College of Engineering. Among the elements of UCSB lab safety practices are lab coats, goggles, and fume hoods.

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## **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.