

UC SANTA BARBARA

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## **‘Citizens of Nowhere’**

Few issues in the current U.S. political climate sparks more fervent debate than the role and fate of undocumented immigrants. A new series at UC Santa Barbara, “Changing Faces of U.S. Citizenship,” will explore immigration and seeks to bring the Santa Barbara community into the national conversation on this contentious subject.

The first event of the series, “Citizens of Nowhere: The Case for Embracing the Stateless,” is Friday, Feb. 16, at 4 p.m. in the McCune Room on the sixth floor of UCSB’s Humanities and Social Sciences Building. David Baluarte, an associate clinical professor of law and director of the Immigrant Rights Clinic at Washington and Lee School of Law, will be the speaker. A panel discussion featuring four UCSB scholars will follow.

[Helen Morales](#), the Argyropoulos Professor of Hellenic Studies in the [Department of Classics](#) at UCSB and a co-organizer of the series with [Beth DePalma Digeser](#), a professor of [history](#), called the project “timely and urgent. It is an invitation to examine U.S. citizenship, the challenges it faces and what might happen to it in the future.

“However,” she continued, “citizenship has been a longstanding interest of ours (we are both scholars of the ancient world) and the project will also explore how U.S. citizenship came to be formed: what it took from ancient Greek and Roman models of citizenship, and how it changed with Reconstruction and women’s suffrage. Why are some groups of people second-class citizens? Did you know that it is legal for disabled employees to be paid less than the minimum wage? And that convicted

felons cannot vote?”

The discussion panel will include Ben V. Olguín, the Robert and Liisa Erickson Presidential Chair in English; Paul Spickard, professor of history; Diana Valdivía, UCSB undocumented services coordinator; and Kalina Yamboliev, a history graduate student.

“Changing Faces of U.S. Citizenship” is part of UCSB’s [“Critical Issues in America”](#) series, which is sponsored by the College of Letters and Science. It is co-sponsored by the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor, the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Equity, and the Academic Senate.

Among future events in the series is a screening of the documentary about the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment, “14: Dred Scott, Wong Kim & Vanessa Lopez” on Thursday, March 8 at 7 p.m. in UCSB’s Pollock Theater. A Q&A with the film’s director, UCSB alumna Anne Galisky, will follow.

Other events will include a conference on the humanities in prisons co-sponsored by UCSB’s Interdisciplinary Humanities Center, and several speakers. Scheduled are Julie Chavez Rodriguez, state director for U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris and formerly senior deputy director of public engagement for the Obama administration; Bonnie Honig, Nancy Duke Lewis Professor of Modern Culture and Media and Political Science at Brown University, who will speak about protest from Antigone to Colin Kaepernick; and Dan-el Padilla Peralta, professor of classics at Princeton University and author of “Undocumented: A Dominican Boy’s Odyssey from A Homeless Shelter to the Ivy League.”

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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.