DAILY NEXUS

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UC students are increasingly failing introductory math courses,

UCSB reports highest pass rates

Wynne Bendell
Lead News Editor

The number of first-year University of California students failing introductory math classes has doubled in the past five years. However, UC Santa Barbara has reported the lowest failure rate, with an 8.2% failure rate for the 2025-26 academic year.

The UC-wide percentage of freshman who received a D or F, withdrew or did not pass an introductory math class in the 2025-26 academic year is 17.8%, 8.6% more than the 2020-21 academic year, which reported a 9.2% failure rate. This nearly-doubled increase has coincided with the UC deciding in 2020 to no longer require the SAT or ACT for admission.

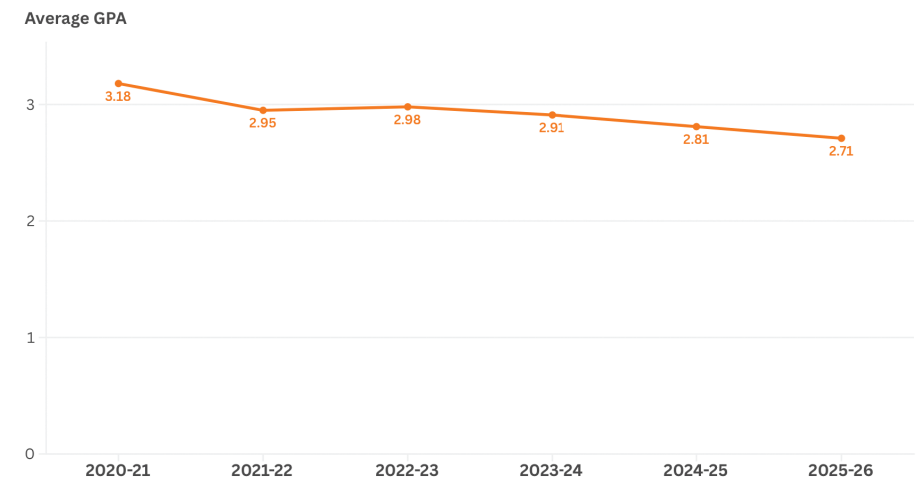
The UC defines introductory math courses to be calculus I, precalculus and preparatory courses. In addition to UCSB having the lowest failure rate among the UCs, it is the only campus that does not offer precalculus.

UC Merced has consistently had the highest failure rate out of the UC campuses, with a current introductory math failure rate of 36.4%. However, UC Riverside has had the sharpest increase in failure rate, from 5.2% in 2020 to 20.5% in 2025.

The average UC grade point average (GPA) in introductory math courses has also decreased from 3.18 in 2020 to 2.71 in 2025. UCSB has the highest average introductory math GPA out of the UCs.

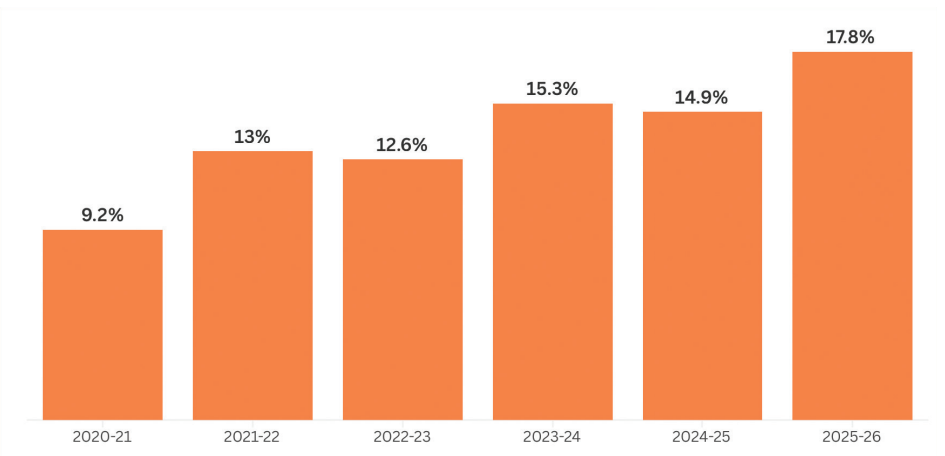
Despite this increase, the first-year retention rate for science, technology, engineering and math majors has remained consistently high at around 94% over the past seven years.

Average GPA in University of California introductory math classes



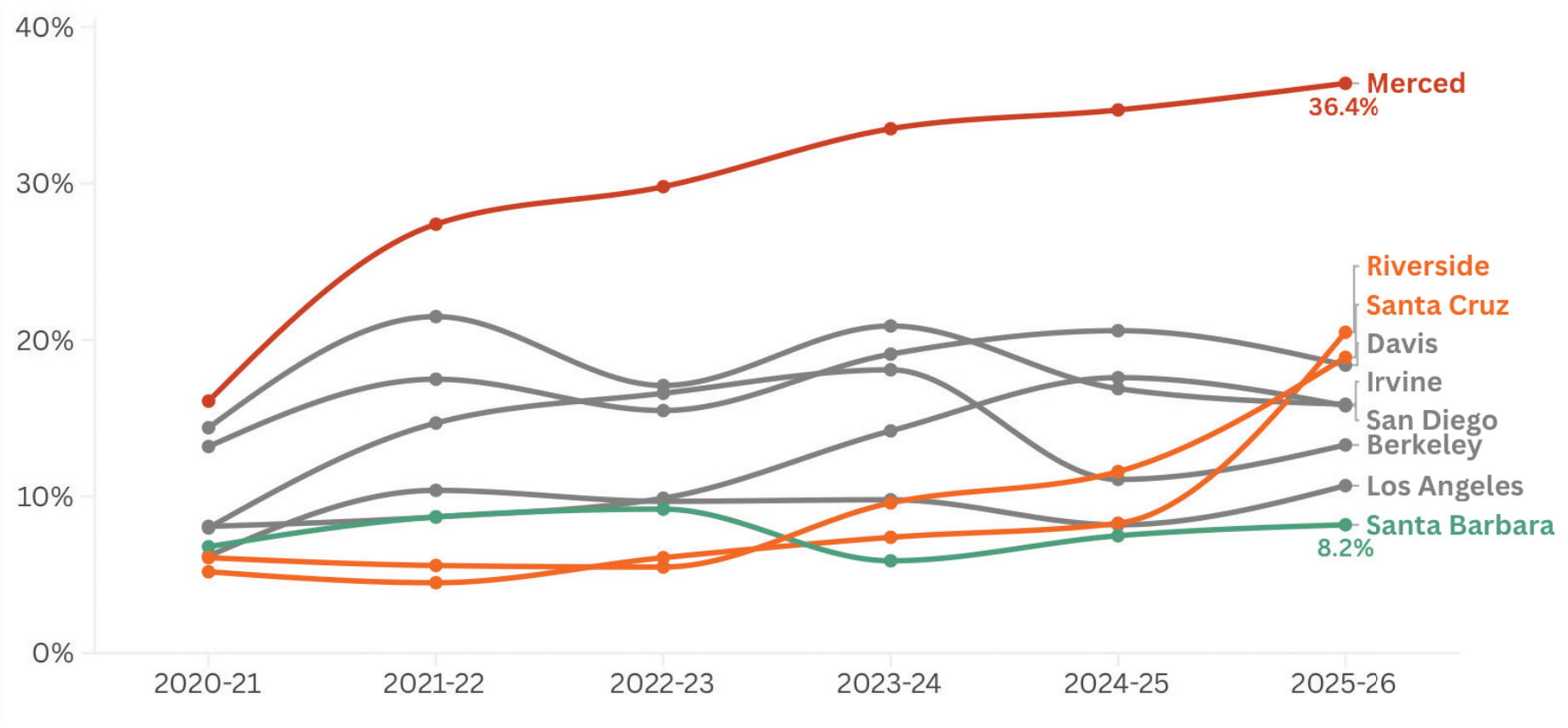
YUXUAN XIE/EDSOURCE

Rates of University of California freshmen who received a D or F, withdrew or did not pass an introductory math class since 2020-21



YUXUAN XIE/EDSOURCE

University of California freshmen failing introductory math by campus



YUXUAN XIE/EDSOURCE

Billionaire Tom Steyer speaks at Campbell Hall

Elle West
Staff Writer
Abigail Sylveste
Reporter

Tom Steyer, a billionaire, philanthropist, businessman and environmental advocate, spoke to UC Santa Barbara students on Oct. 13 in Campbell Hall. Coastal Conversations, a student-led fireside chat series, hosted the event free of charge to students.

Steyer unsuccessfully ran in the 2026 California gubernatorial primary, defeated by Democrat Xavier Becerra and Republican Steve Hilton. While addressing voter registration, Steyer asserted that young people's votes are critical for the country to make progress.

"[Politicians] are interested in votes, not people," Steyer said. "It [is] really important for our society, and the people sitting in this audience, that many more young people voted so that we can get a fairer representation."

Steyer spent 26 years as a San Francisco-based hedge fund manager before stepping down in 2012 to focus on philanthropy. In 2013, Steyer started NextGen America, a progressive political PAC (political action committee) to mobilize young people through voter registration, organization and education.

Steyer also addressed the challenge of encouraging civic engagement with climate change.

"Climate is not something that people care to change their lives about because they care about the North Pole. They may care, but they're not changing their life," Steyer said. "They do care about how much it costs to insure their houses because they may get washed away in a storm."

Third-year psychological & brain sciences student Jorby Camacho said he appreciated the opportunity to hear from a politician that has "such stature and importance in our democratic society." Camacho said he voted for Steyer in the 2026 California gubernatorial primary.

During the chat, Steyer addressed affordability and potential solutions for the nationwide housing crisis.

"It is not right for working people to live full-time and have to live in their cars. You guys were telling me how much it costs to live here and go to school, in terms of rent. Are you kidding?" Steyer said. "Why don't we use the things we know how to do now that we are completely different [from 100 years ago], so people can afford building houses again, so we can bring down the cost, [but] there's a lot of political roadblocks to getting it done."

Additionally, Steyer discussed the economic incentive of shifting toward renewable sources for electricity, highlighting that Californians pay "twice as much" than average in the U.S.

"I'm a huge believer in people having the right to generate their own electricity off their roofs and stick it into their own houses. It costs two to four cents to generate electricity off your roof. There is a revolution happening here in terms of money," Steyer said.

Host Ainsley Fields, a fourth-year English and history of public policy and law double major, brought up the high cost of living in Isla Vista and worsening living conditions due to coastal erosion.

"Ultimately, if we're not willing to basically get to net zero and start with this, then we can't really win that fight with nature," Steyer said. "A bunch of people are making a bunch of money by selling stuff that pollutes, and they love it."

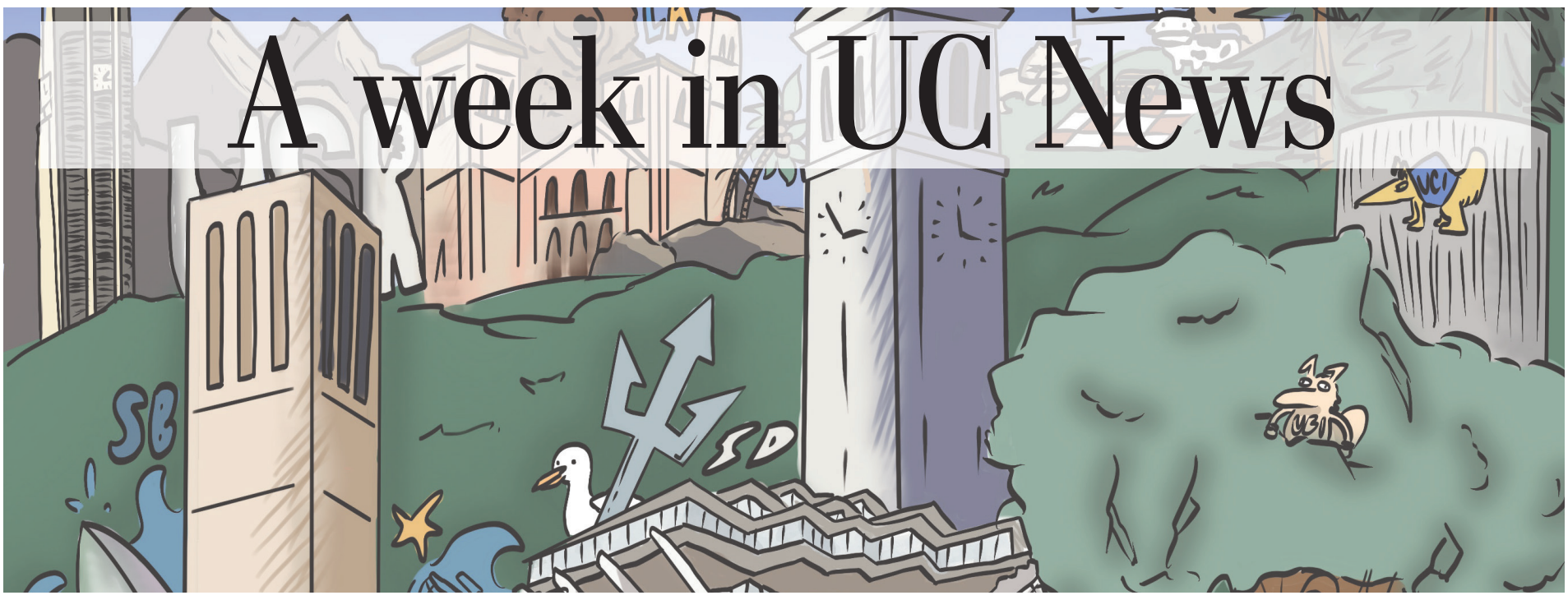
Fourth-year film and media studies major Sofia Escalante said she attended the event to learn more about Steyer, despite not voting for him. "I knew nothing about Tom Steyer and wanted to learn more about him for my own educational purposes," Escalante said. She added that she wished he answered a question about whether someone can "be an ethical politician" more clearly.



SHENGYU ZHANG / DAILY NEXUS

During the chat, Steyer addressed affordability and potential solutions for the nationwide housing crisis.

A week in UC News



Wynne Bendell
Lead News Editor

California public college students now automatically pass through first CalFresh barrier

All California undergraduate public college students that are enrolled at least half-time at their college will now automatically meet some eligibility requirements for CalFresh.

While visiting the San Francisco-Marin Food Bank, California Governor Gavin Newsom announced that students will no longer have to work at least 20 hours a week to be eligible for CalFresh. Now, associate's and bachelor's degree programs at all California public colleges and universities count as job-readiness programs.

According to a senior research manager at the California Policy Lab, Jennifer Hogg, student eligibility for CalFresh could increase by around 37%, to a total of 880,000 students.

This expansion came after federal funding cuts led to CalFresh Benefits being paused in November 2025 — leaving thousands of students across the country not having access to their benefits for over a week.

D.O.E. awards UC Berkeley researchers funding for AI research

The U.S. Department of Energy (D.O.E.) awarded four Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory researchers Early Career Research Program awards. Each researcher will be awarded $875,000 to fund their research for the next five years.

All of the awardees plan to focus their research on applying artificial intelligence (AI) to physics, biology and chemistry. Awardees Dan Wang and Marcus Noack will focus on physics research, with Wang using AI to control particle accelerators.

The third awardee, UC Berkeley assistant chemistry professor Bingqing Cheng, will use AI to try to find how electric fields affect chemistry. The fourth awardee, Asmit Bhowmick, plans to focus his research on molecular biophysics and integrated bioimaging.

The awards were given by the Office of Science of the D.O.E., which supports 32,000 researchers nationwide.

Reports show UCSD staff attend student protests undercover, report organizers' names to UCPD

The Students' Civil Liberties Union (SCLU) found that UC San Diego's Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Campus Life employed community specialists to attend student protests undercover as students during the 2024-25 academic year.

Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Patricia Mahaffey, confirmed in a statement to UCSD's The Guardian that the specialists filed reports to the UCSD Police Department after the events. Mahaffey claimed that the reports did not contain identifiable information about attendees or speakers.

However, the SCLU reports show that the specialist's reports identified UCSD students by their full names. According to the reports, UCSD hired the specialists' after the 2024 Palestine Solidarity Encampment.

SCLU president Aryan Dixit claimed that the specialists positions focused on Palestinian and Muslim on-campus events. The University denied this claim, stating that "no events were deemed higher priority."

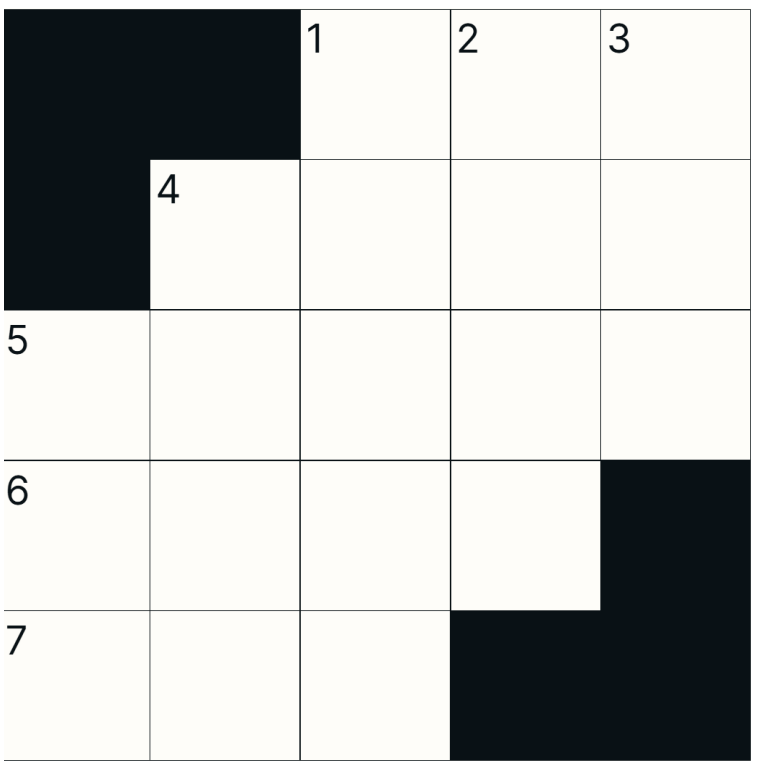
While the University has stated the specialist role no longer exists, The Guardian could not independently verify that there are no specialists on the UCSD campus.

The Daily Nexus Crossword

Kendrick Lam
Games Contributor

Across
1. One way to pay with a credit card
4. Giveaway from a poker player
5. Daily ___ (where you can find this crossword!)
6. Final, for example
7. Korean boy band that performed at the 2026 FIFA World Cup final halftime show

Down
1. State that's second largest in size and population
2. One attending the All Gaucho Reunion, say
3. Counterpart of "thx"
4. Send a message like 3-Down
5. Omaha's state (abbr.)



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"Reading smut made me an English major."

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Senate hears update on lagoon lights and cameras, tax on I.V. ballot



SHENGYU ZHANG / DAILY NEXUS

The Director of Capital & Physical Planning explained that once the design proposal is submitted, it will be under review for four to six months.

Elijah Obando
University News Editor

UC Santa Barbara representatives presented the lagoon lighting and camera path project design proposal to the 77th Associated Students Senate at its Oct. 14 meeting.

The mock-up shows dozens of lights planned to be installed on the west side of the lagoon near Manzanita Village, with two cameras set on the ends of the path closest to the oceanside of the lagoon.

The project is a part of a continued effort to address student safety — especially at the Campus Lagoon which has been a high-crime location for several decades.

The mock-up shows dozens of lights planned to be installed on the west side of the lagoon near Manzanita Village, with two cameras set on the ends of the path closest to the oceanside of the lagoon.



Courtesy of Director of Capital and Physical Planning Josh Rohmner

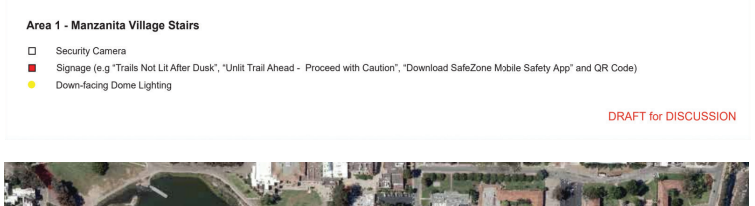




Courtesy of Director of Capital and Physical Planning Josh Rohmner

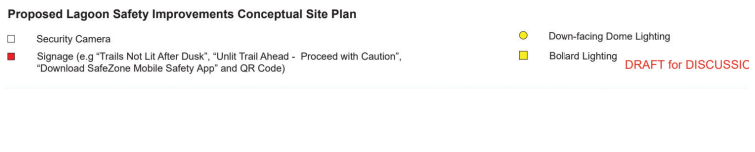


Courtesy of Director of Capital and Physical Planning Josh Rohmner





Courtesy of Director of Capital and Physical Planning Josh Rohmner



External reports

The Director of Capital & Physical Planning, Josh Rohmer, explained that once the design proposal is submitted to the California Coastal Commission, it will be under review for four to six months.

Regarding the proposed security cameras, University Police Department (UCPD) Chief Matthew Bly stated that there are policies for how UCPD can use them.

"We built out some updated policies last year when it comes to security cameras and how those cameras are used by UCPD as far as not enforcing things like minor alcohol violations and minor drug violations," Bly said. "This will be more of a deterrent and investigatory tool should we have a significant crime against a person occur on that area of our campus, specifically the area of the lagoon or lagoon island."

On Oct. 19, 2025, an attempted sexual assault occured at the lagoon, which set these safety measures in motion. With student mobilization, UCSB was granted a temporary permit to construct lights and cameras while students continued to work toward a permanent solution.

Public forum

During public forum, Isla Vista Community Services District (IVCSD) President Katherine Carmichael requested support from the Senate for a new tax — Measure E2026 — that will be on the ballot for I.V. residents in November.

If approved, Measure E2026 would impose a 6% utility tax on trash, water, electricity and sewage and a 7% tax on methane. The tax would affect students living in off-campus housing within I.V. According to the IVCSD website, the tax's estimated revenue of $1.2 million per year would go toward "local improvements and services."

"So importantly, these funds will be locally controlled only to be spent locally," Carmichael said. "The county, the state [and] the federal government can't touch any of this money. Time and time again, we have witnessed that we can't wait for outside agencies to prioritize Isla Vista."

Carmichael stated that the goal of the tax is to prioritize measurable "on-the-ground results," which will indirectly support their effort toward cityhood.

Later in the meeting, Senator and second-year physics major Alec GeoSimonian introduced a resolution endorsing Measure E2026. Some senators questioned whether the association should voice support for a tax that would raise costs for students.

A statement from Senator and fourth-year statistics and data science major Atticus Gonzalez — who was not at the meeting at the time — was read aloud and raised concerns over affordability and accountability.

In the statement, Gonzalez argued that students who pay their own utilities would face higher bills.

"Given how expensive Isla Vista already is, I am concerned about the financial burden this could place on students," Gonzalez's statement read.

Gonzalez also questioned the lack of specific targets and deadlines for the proposed improvements the tax would cover.

"I think we should understand exactly how the money will be allocated and measurable improvements residents can expect before endorsing the measure," Gonzalez's statement read.

Other senators shared concerns over the association's role in endorsing a ballot measure without gathering student input. Even so, Senator and second-year communication major Jake Horvitz emphasized that the Senate was voted into their positions by the student body and they have a responsibility to take a stance.

However, Senator and third-year computer science and sociology double major Kyara Vivanco Cortes highlighted the low voter turnout at last year's election.

"If you look at how many people actually voted for us, I don't think we necessarily represent the entire school's population, which is why I think it would be so crucial that we at least get research done on [the tax] before we choose to take a stance or not," Cortes said.

The Senate ultimately referred the resolution to the Advocacy Committee for further deliberation.

Proposed and passed legislation

The Senate passed two bills updating the Black Women's Health Collaborative (BWHC) and Isla Vista Tenants Union (IVTU) legal codes. The BWHC bill updated their name and board positions, and the IVTU bill added an additional position.

The Senate also passed a bill establishing an Alumni & Donors Relations Committee under the Office of the President. The committee aims to strengthen connections between Associated Students (A.S.) and alumni, providing opportunities for networking and fundraising.

A bill updating the hiring process for A.S. department chairs was introduced and referred to the Liaison Committee.

During financial allocations, the Senate approved $7,500 for A.S. Student Staff and $16,300 to support the Isla Vista Farmers Market's events throughout the year. The senate also approved $13,700 to the Finance Committee as additional funding.

All financial allocations came from the Senate Unallocated account.



IVCSD plans to permanently use Soltopia's harm reduction methods every weekend

Elijah Obando
University News Editor

The Isla Vista Community Services District directors supported a proposed weekend harm-reduction program for Del Playa Drive at its Oct. 13 meeting.

The proposed Isla Vista Harm Reduction Project would provide police-alternative safety services on Friday and Saturday nights using similar methods employed at Soltopia.

The project utilizes a three-tiered response system that prioritizes community intervention before law enforcement involvement. According to the project proposal, "harm-reduction ambassadors" at tier one would de-escalate conflicts and contact law enforcement at tier three.

Isla Vista Community Services District (IVCSD) General Manager Jonathan Abboud requested the board's support to continue the project's development and explore funding sources. The program requires an estimated annual budget of $270,000 and would operate from 9 p.m. to 3 a.m.

Abboud proposed seeking additional funding from Santa Barbara County (SBC), specifically the unused funds from its legal settlement with UC Santa Barbara.

In 2022, SBC sued UCSB for not having enough housing to accommodate its increasing student population. The settlement required the University to begin the San Benito Student Housing Project and pay the county $3.7 million for "direct community-facing projects."



DAILY NEXUS FILE PHOTO
IVCSD Community Programs Engagement Director Myah Mashhadialireza highlighted the decrease in citations at Soltopia utilizing the same tier system.

With pending planning and funding approval, the district hopes to begin the program in late winter or early spring.

IVCSD Community Programs Engagement Director Myah Mashhadialireza highlighted the decrease in citations at Soltopia utilizing the same tier system.

"I think the best example is what Deltopia was like before Soltopia in terms of what an enforcement-only model looks like versus what the tiered approach resembles," Mashhadialireza said. "I think what we saw this year was the 94% reduction in medical calls and then zero arrests and citations, even when sheriffs were on site."

Longtime I.V. resident Henry Sarria raised concerns during public comment on whether the model would translate well, since Soltopia utilized the system during the daytime. The board acknowledged the difference but emphasized the program would represent one part of the broader effort to address safety concerns within the community.

The board also approved a $26,135 agreement with Dixon Resources Unlimited to collect parking occupancy data using license plate data and drone imagery. The proposal aims to evaluate the effectiveness of IVCSD's Parking Compliance Program.

The agreement allows Dixon Resources Unlimited to conduct vehicle surveys four times per day over two days using license plate data to analyze parking patterns. Drone imagery would be used to estimate the amount of vehicles parked in off-street areas, including driveways and parking lots.

IVCSD Director Spencer Brandt stressed that the data collected from license plates are anonymized — allowing pattern identification without risk to privacy.

Finally, the board received an update on the fiscal analysis that will determine whether I.V. can financially sustain cityhood.

The board previously approved $40,500 toward the study in March which authorized the fiscal analysis. However, Abboud reported that progress has stalled due to delays from SBC.

IVCSD requested data from SBC, which requires them to evaluate the costs to provide that information. Brandt expressed frustration with the delay and suggested bringing the matter to the SBC Board of Supervisors to quicken the process.

U.S. Rep. Jared Huffman discusses the rise of Christian nationalism in America at Book Talk

Annika Farin
Reporter
Hannah Wauson
Reporter

United States Representative Jared Huffman for California's 2nd Congressional District visited UC Santa Barbara on Oct. 13 to discuss his new book, "No Prophets: The Fight to Save Democracy from Christian Nationalism."

Published in 2026, "No Prophets" recounts the Jan. 6 insurrection in 2021 on the U.S. Capital in Washington D.C. and how the fallout has impacted the rise of Christian nationalism in America. Specifically, Huffman makes the claim that Christian nationalism and facism are interlinked.

The book talk, moderated by associate professor of religious studies Joseph Blankholm, highlighted Huffman's perspective as a humanist and only open nonbeliever in the United States Congress examining the influence of Christian nationalism in America.

Huffman, a UCSB alum, credited the origins of his relationship with religion and his humanist beliefs to a course he took at UCSB in 1985 in the Department of Religious Studies.

Huffman stated that in the course, "Religion and Politics in America Today," taught by professor Walter Capps, he studied the rise of the new religious right which motivated him to study the inner workings of the Christian nationalist movement.

"I studied the power players and political agenda of that movement when I was at UCSB and while I disagreed strongly with what they stood for, it was a movement that attempted to work within the system of democracy to win the culture war," Huffman said.

Huffman said that his main focus when first elected to office in 2012 was environmental and climate issues. However, when President Donald Trump took office in 2017, a shift in Huffman's priorities occurred due to Trump running on a platform that emphasized the importance of religious tradition.

"I had already felt uneasy about all the encroachments of religion I experienced in Congress, but this was a real breaking point that drew me into the fight to protect church-state separation which, right now, is mainly a fight against Christian nationalism," Huffman said.

Attendee Isa Halle, a first-year political science major, noted that Huffman's status as a UCSB graduate piqued her interest the most.

"I thought it was really interesting to see a UCSB [alum] in Congress," Halle said. "It's kind of motivational."

Similarly, Zhai Gen Tan, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Political Science, highlighted how the book talk made him reflect on the prevalence of Christian nationalism in America.

"At least in political science, the study of how religion and religious groups influence politics is less studied than what most people think," Tan said. "So, having to sort of hear what other speakers and representatives come and talk in a thoughtful way is always important to add to that kind of conversation."


SHERINE JOHN / DAILY NEXUS
Huffman's is a humanist and only open non believer in the United States congress.



CUEL hosts third annual Eco Expo

Isabel Laezman
Reporter

The UC Santa Barbara Greti U. Croft Center for Undergraduate Environmental Leadership hosted their third annual Eco Expo on Oct. 12, showcasing campus environmental organizations, initiatives, academic programs and other opportunities.

The Eco Expo serves as a tabling event for environmental clubs and programs to advertise their purpose and activities to students who may want to join. The event featured a passport activity in which students could collect stamps in their passport from the different tables in order to get a burrito at the end.

The participating organizations included many on-campus student organizations such as Off The Grid, Environmental Affairs Board, the Edible Campus Program, Turtle Up and Associated Students Recycling, among several others. Also participating in tabling were several academic departments and opportunities.

The event was held on the first floor of the Student Resource Building and included free prizes for students who engaged with participating organizations.


SHENGYU ZHANG / DAILY NEXUS

The Eco Expo is held annually to connect students with organizations, initiatives and programs that all center around the environment.

The Bren School of Environmental Science & Management, offering UCSB's environmental graduate programs, was present and tabling at the event. Additionally, the Benioff Ocean Science Laboratory, an on-campus marine research and conservation center, was present and advertising their undergraduate research and mentorship opportunities.

The Eco Expo was hosted by the UCSB's Center for Undergraduate Environmental Leadership (CUEL). CUEL is a department on campus that provides training, resources and opportunities for UCSB undergraduate students interested in working in the environmental field, regardless of their major.

CUEL is primarily led by Executive Director Erika Zollett. Zollett emphasized how helpful CUEL is at providing resources for students interested in helping the environment.

"CUEL offers several resources for undergraduate students, such as academic classes as well as opportunities with private, government and nonprofit organizations," Zollett said. "It is a great opportunity for interested students to come out and learn more about these opportunities, since all the different organizations and departments are gathered together at the same time and place."

Though still a relatively new event on campus, Eco Expo has had growth in turnout this year, with about 25 organizations participating in tabling and over 500 students in attendance, according to Zollett.

At the event, representatives of the different organizations and departments answered questions from students and emphasized the importance of being environmentally involved in the UCSB community.

In the future, CUEL, along with the participating organizations, hope to help continue UCSB's legacy of strong environmental activism and involvement, which is rooted in student activism following the Santa Barbara oil spill in 1969.

Zollett, in agreement with other CUEL administrators, noted that she "hopes to see the Eco Expo continue in future years" and that she would also like to see "more similar events in which environmental organizations collaborate."

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UCSB Parking Information

Halloween 2026

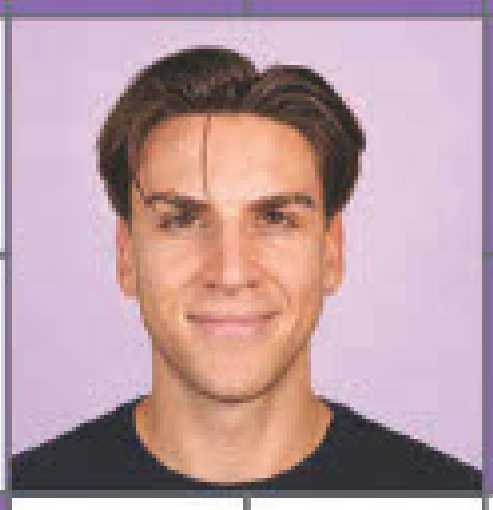
- **Registered UCSB Students** with an Annual Night & Weekend parking permit can park in designated lots on campus beginning at 9am on Friday, October 30th until 7:30am on Monday, November 2nd
- Designated lots for night and weekend holders are in Structure 22, and Mesa 18. All other campus lots are subject to closure.
- **Apply/purchase online by going to tps.ucsb.edu/epermits.** Permit verification can take up to three days, so purchase by October 22nd.

No Overnight Visitor Parking is allowed on the UCSB Campus on Friday October 30th and Saturday October 31st

$52.50 – valid through June 30, 2027.
One permit per registered student; vehicle must be linked to permit.

TPS

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PHOTO

A Legacy of Stone

In photos



Hermes (John Sylvester, right) holding Poseidon (Benjamin Maman, left)'s face in Hermes Comes to Sarpedon.

Shenyu Zhang
Photo Editor

Presented for its first fall intensive musical, Shrunken Heads Production Company produced showings of "A Legacy Of Stone" from Oct. 16-18 at Lotte Lehmann Concert Hall. Inspired by the myths of Medusa, this musical explores the interpersonal dynamics of responsibility and autonomy in the midst of tense conversations, deep sorrow and fear, and the occasional upbeat singing from Perseus. With the orchestra freed from the pit, the cast expresses their characters' personality and struggles in front of a cheering audience after the end of each song.



Athena (Kimberlly Baldwin, right) speaking to Medusa (Lena Wessel, left) with a tense look.



Perseus (above) checking for a pulse of the slain Medusa (below).



Perseus (center) banters among his sailors.



Perseus (Lemon Taylor) sings about his mission against Medusa in Adventure!



Athena (center) stands among her Priestesses at the end of Never Mind.



Perseus sings amidst sailors and members holding a cardboard boat in the air.



The cast lines up at the end of the show.

SPORTS

GAMES OF THE WEEK



Women's Soccer

vs Cal Poly SLO

The Gauchos take on Cal Poly in the Blue-Green Rivalry on Oct. 21. UCSB looks to claim bragging rights against its longtime rival.



Women's Volleyball

vs Cal Poly SLO

UCSB faces Cal Poly in a two-game series on Oct 22. and 24. The Gauchos look to sweep the Mustangs.



Men's Soccer

vs Cal Baptist

The Gauchos face Cal Baptist on Oct 21. UCSB looks to keep its momentum going as it takes on the Lancers.

Gauchos snap losing streak with weekend sweep over Riverside, five-set win over California Baptist

Izabella Nickerson
Asst. Sports Editor

UC Santa Barbara Women's Volleyball (10-2, 6-2 Big West) broke their two-game losing streak this weekend, beating UC Riverside (4-15, 0-8 Big West) 3-0 on Oct. 16 and California Baptist University (3-16, 0-7 Big West) 3-2 on Oct. 17.

Returning home, the Gauchos shut out the Highlanders. Opening up the first set, the Gauchos led 5-0 with help from senior setter Milan Rex, who nailed three service aces. The Gauchos led for the entire first set, reaching 20 first at 20-18 and closing the set 25-18 with help from three kills.

During the second set, the Gauchos dominated with 18 kills as a team while the Highlanders recorded only 10 kills. The Gauchos led at 19-10 with a 6-point scoring streak and effortlessly finished the set at 25-13 with a 12-point lead.

Down two sets, the Highlanders were desperate to gain one and put up a fight in the third. Tied at 5-5 and 8-8, the Gauchos gained the lead at 12-9 and 19-18 but tied up again at 20-20. Pivotal kills by senior middle blocker Bella Mathis and senior outside hitter Auburn Tomkinson pushed the lead to 24-22, and the two ended the set with a block assist at 25-22. The sweep came together with the efficiency of Tomkinson from the net, who led the match in kills at 15 and tied her season high.



Gauchos celebrate after the point.

"I am so proud of this team for bouncing back after last weekend, we've put in the work this week, and it's awesome to see that showing on and off the court!" Tomkinson said.

Staying at home, the Gauchos then played California Baptist University for the first time on Saturday. Opening the first set with a 5-point streak, the Gauchos led 12-6 with help from back-to-back kills by sophomore outside hitter Gabi Martinez, retaining the lead for the remainder of the set and easily claiming the victory at 25-17.

The second set was more challenging for the Gauchos, who trailed from early on. Attempting to gain the lead, they strung a 4-point streak with multiple kills from Martinez, but remained behind at 17-18. The Gauchos trailed for the remainder of the set and lost 22-25.

Tied 1-1 in sets, the third set ended similarly with the Lancers taking the win 27-25. The Gauchos predominantly led until 12-12, before the Lancers pulled ahead and remained there for the rest of the set.

Down 1-2, the Gauchos claimed the fourth at 25-23.



Gabi Martinez goes for the kill.

Building a 6-point lead at 21-15, they were 4 points away from victory before the Lancers retaliated, taking 7-1 of the next points, tying the set at 22-22. Crucial kills by Martinez and sophomore opposite Avery Gibbs regained the lead at 24-22 before the Lancers hit one more, making it 24-23. A powerful kill by senior outside hitter Emma McDermott ended the set.

Tied 2-2, the Gauchos took the fifth and final set in an exhilarating battle, at 19-17. Just 4 points away from the win at 11-9, the Lancers capitalized on the Gauchos' attack errors and hit a kill to lead at 12-11. The Lancers' lead at 16-15 almost ended the set, but the Gauchos fought back, stringing together 2 points. The set ended with help from a block assist by senior middle blocker Sandrea Thomas and Martinez.

Martinez contributed from the net with 23 kills, and McDermott and Tomkinson both added 13.

Next, the Gauchos will take on California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo in a Blue-Green rivalry match on Thursday, Oct. 22, at 7:30 p.m. and head to Cal Poly for a rematch on Saturday, Oct. 24.

Devin Greer talks UCSB Women's Soccer and Pride Night ahead of contest with UCSD

Samia Agarwal
Staff Writer

For some athletes and fans in college sports, LGBTQIA+ pride is simply an off-the-field concern. But for UC Santa Barbara Women's Soccer star forward Devin Greer, it's the focal point of an event she has been planning for months.

This past Saturday, Oct. 17, the UCSB women's soccer team hosted the UC San Diego Tritons in a Pride Night-themed match that Greer helped organize.

When asked about the goal of the event, Greer explained that she wanted to create a welcoming environment for the LGBTQIA+ community.

"The premise is to show that Harder Stadium is a place for everyone and that everyone should celebrate Pride," Greer said. "Also to just show kids ... and LGBTQ+ young athletes that they are also welcomed in the collegiate level [and that] they can play soccer and still be who they are authentically."

According to Greer, the planning process took her several months, especially because she aimed for the game to feature representatives from local LGBTQIA+ organizations.

"In the spring, I reached out to [the associate athletic director] and I was like, 'I really want to bring this to life and make it happen next fall,'" Greer said. "So I've been planning this for a couple months now, to just have a game specifically for Pride, and have LGBTQ+ organizations in the community and on campus involved."

The organizations offered Pride-themed freebies for attendees, which Greer described as a "really cute" perk for those attending the game.

"Usually at our games, they pass out little things and trinkets. So they're gonna pass out these heart-shaped stress balls that are rainbow and have the logo on it," she said.

Greer emphasized the importance of representing and spotlighting Pride in athletics to create community and empower those in marginalized groups.

"I feel like there's a lot of discourse on social media talking about 'Why do we have Pride in sports' and 'You should leave that gay stuff or whatever out of sports.' But having Pride-themed games just shows that people who are different — whether that is [their] sexuality, background, ethnicity — that [they] belong in sports and are welcomed," Greer said.

Greer shared that one of her inspirations for the Pride-themed event was dealing with her own experiences feeling unwelcome in certain spaces.

"I've been in spaces where I wasn't welcome for who I was," Greer said. "So I think it's important to have those open spaces and open conversations that help and benefit everyone, even if you aren't a part of a certain community."

Greer gave a shoutout to professional queer athletes that she finds to be role models, including former United States women's national soccer team players Abby Wambach and Megan Rapinoe, as well as U.S. track and field distance runner Nikki Hiltz. She shared that she hopes she can serve as an inspiration to young LGBTQIA+ athletes as well.

"Growing up, I feel like I unfortunately didn't really have a Black queer athlete that I really looked up to, which is why I want to be a more public-facing person, to be that role model," Greer said.



Devin Greer clears the ball.

When asked what one sentence she would say to all queer student athletes, Greer kept it concise: "I would just say, it's okay to be yourself."

Finally, Greer ended by encouraging the community to "come out and support" UCSB basketball, volleyball, soccer and other women's sports matches.

COLUMNISTS





What we keep wearing: Animal print

Arna Churiwala
Fashionista

Animal print is one of the few fashion choices that can make you look incredibly chic or like you have just lost a bet. The difference, of course, is usually confidence.

A leopard-print coat can make someone look like a glamorous Italian heiress, a '90s supermodel or someone's wonderfully unhinged aunt. A snakeskin boot suggests you have somewhere important to be. And a zebra-print bag? Suddenly, your otherwise unremarkable outfit has a personality. Now, deer print is joining the conversation, proving that even Bambi is getting a fashion moment.

Animal print has always walked a fine line between sophisticated and slightly ridiculous. Fortunately, fashion seems to be having more fun with that line than ever. And for anyone whose daily wardrobe rotation consists of jeans, a plain T-shirt and whatever bag can fit a laptop, a good animal print might be exactly what the outfit needs.

Animal motifs have been associated with status and power for centuries, but their place in modern fashion has a particularly glamorous history. Christian Dior helped establish leopard print as a high-fashion staple in the mid-20th century. Later, designers such as Roberto Cavalli turned animal prints into their signature, embracing bodycon silhouettes, slinky fabrics and excess.

By the '60s and '70s, animal print had become part of a broader aesthetic of rebellion and sexual liberation. It appeared in wardrobes of rock stars and bombshells alike, eventually finding its way into the maximalist glamour of the '90s and early 2000s. Think Kate Moss in leopard, vintage Versace campaigns and the general understanding that a woman wearing animal print probably isn't interested in blending in.

Of course, animal print has also spent plenty of time being dismissed as tacky. But that might be part of its appeal. Few patterns can look so luxurious and so outrageous at the same time.

The trick is finding your animal. Leopard and cheetah are the original bombshells. Leopard's rosettes feel classic, while cheetah's smaller, solid spots have a sportier edge. A leopard coat can do the work of an entire outfit. Even if your destination is just your friend's pregame, the outfit can suggest more interesting plans.

Then there is zebra, the artsier version of the animal print. Its sharp black-and-white stripes feel graphic and modern, making it surprisingly easy to style. A zebra print shoe or handbag can break up an otherwise neutral outfit without requiring a complete commitment to the jungle.

Snakeskin, meanwhile, is for the person you should probably fear. Sleek and slightly sinister, it brings a different kind of drama. A snakeskin boot or bag feels polished while still bringing fun. It is quieter than other animal prints, like a mysterious woman at the bar who leaves before you can ask her name.

And then there is deer print, the unexpected newcomer. The fawn-like pattern is emerging as a fresh alternative to traditional animal prints for autumn 2026. With its soft brown-and-white spots, it feels sweeter and more woodland-romantic than its predatory predecessors.

The trend is a reminder that animal print does not have to mean aggressive glamour. It can also be playful, delicate or adorable, depending on which animal you choose to channel for the night.

On the runway, animal print has always offered designers an opportunity to turn up the volume. Cavalli built an unmistakable aesthetic around animal motifs, flowing fabrics and sensual silhouettes, while Alaïa used leopard print in bodycon designs that made the pattern feel sculptural rather than merely loud. More recently, the return of statement dressing has brought zebra and other animal motifs back into the fashion conversation. The current deer-print revival is part of that same appetite for patterns with personality. But how much animal print is too much?

A leopard belt is one thing. Leopard trousers, a zebra coat, snakeskin boots and a cow-print bag might suggest that you got dressed in the dark at a particularly ambitious zoo. And yet, maximalism is partly about challenging the idea that every piece of an outfit needs to behave itself.

Fashion has always had a complicated relationship with bad taste. Trends once dismissed as gaudy or excessive often become desirable again when the right designer, celebrity or street-style star embraces them. Animal print makes that tension especially obvious. The same leopard coat can look luxurious on a runway model and tacky on someone waiting for the bus, depending on who is looking — and how much they are willing to spend.

Perhaps the answer is not to exercise restraint, but to dress intentionally. If you want your leopard coat to compete with your zebra shoes, go for it. If you would rather start small, try snakeskin flats with a monochrome outfit or a deer-print cardigan with a miniskirt. Animal print can be the entire outfit or one little detail that makes it feel like your own.

On campus, animal print offers a way to make basics feel a little less basic. Leopard ballet flats with jeans for class, a snakeskin belt peeking out from beneath an oversized sweater or a zebra-print bag that makes the walk to the library marginally more exciting: the possibilities are endless. And when the day turns into dressier dinner plans or a last-minute night out, the same statement piece can come along for the ride.

Whether you are a leopard girl, a snakeskin girl or a newly converted Bambi enthusiast, animal print offers the same invitation: to be a little louder, a little stranger and perhaps a little less concerned with looking perfectly put together. After all, fashion would be very boring if we were all trying to behave.

Arna Churiwala believes a little wildness is always in style.



COURTESY OF THE REALREAL

Zebra print's sharp black-and-white stripes feel graphic and modern, making it surprisingly easy to style.



COURTESY OF SHOSHINGTON.COM

Animal print had appeared in wardrobes of rock stars and bombshells alike — think Kate Moss in leopard.



put me on aux: Big hair & an even bigger legacy: Dolly Parton

Siobhan Stewart
Beat Reporter

Long before you hear her signature twang, you recognize the image: big blonde hair, outfits dripping in rhinestone, radiant in pure sparkle. Dolly Parton wasn't just an icon, she was a force of nature. In the wake of her passing, it is only fitting to step back, appreciate the empire she created and honor a timeless legacy that will forever shape music culture.

The theatrical glamour and famously high hair was a choice by a visionary. It was more than just a cheap camp look, it was image control long before modern pop marketing existed. Nashville executives like Chet Atkins told her that her flamboyant style and big hair would ruin her career, but she leaned into her style and stayed authentic to herself. Rather than conforming to country music's conventional expectations, Dolly embraced extreme femininity on her own terms, famously joking that "it costs a lot of money to look this cheap." By owning her visual identity entirely, she maintained authority over image and inspired generations of artists, from her goddaughter, Miley Cyrus, to Chappell Roan. She proved that authenticity isn't a career risk but the key to unlocking your full potential and turned total self-authenticity into artistic power.

Yet behind the oversized wigs and glamour, Dolly's image never overshadowed the magnitude of her musical talent. Beneath the dazzling exterior was a musician of unfiltered talent. She had an extraordinary high-register and clear soprano voice with an Appalachian twang. Dolly was known for her distinctive vibrato and vocal range that had a light folksy tone. She received 10 Grammy Awards and was inducted in the Country Music Hall of Fame (1999), the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (2022) and was Billboard's #1 Country Music Artist of All-Time. The accolades she accumulated are just a small insight into her talent and impact on others. She wrote over 3,000 songs during her career, and always said she hoped that she would be remembered as a good songwriter. She took herself more seriously as a songwriter than anything else, and viewed it as her true calling and most authentic form of self expression.

Nowhere are her songwriting gifts more evident than in "Jolene," a track that was released in 1973 as the lead single to her 13th studio album of the same name, and has resonated across generations since. The song is about a vulnerable confrontation between a woman and a beautiful rival, and the track ended up ranking No. 63 on Rolling Stones "500 Greatest Songs of All Time" and surpassing 1 billion streams on Spotify. It transcended country music and became a global cultural song that touched billions. Rather than falling into the classic trope of bullying the "other woman," Dolly flips the narrative, admitting she cannot compete with Jolene's beauty.

The same empathy that defined her songwriting extended beyond the studio and into her philanthropic work. Her core philosophy, "when you're in a position to help, you should help," guided her efforts on education, medical research and disaster relief. Her donations and foundations helped countless people. Inspired by her generosity and work in children's literacy, Jeff Bezos and his partner Lauren Sánchez donated a $100 million grant that allowed her to distribute the funds to charities and philanthropic causes of her choice over a 10-year period.

While her songs defined an era of music history and her philanthropy changed millions of lives, Dolly's ultimate achievement was how she curated a legacy on her own terms. She proved that real stardom isn't just how bright you shine on stage but how much light you leave behind for others.

Her big hair, rhinestones and signature twang made her an icon, but her craftsmanship and radical empathy made her immortal. Dolly Parton wasn't just a legendary artist, she created the blueprint for anyone who ever dared to remain completely themselves. The rhinestones may fade, but the light she left behind will play forever.

Siobhan believes you can never have too many rhinestones.



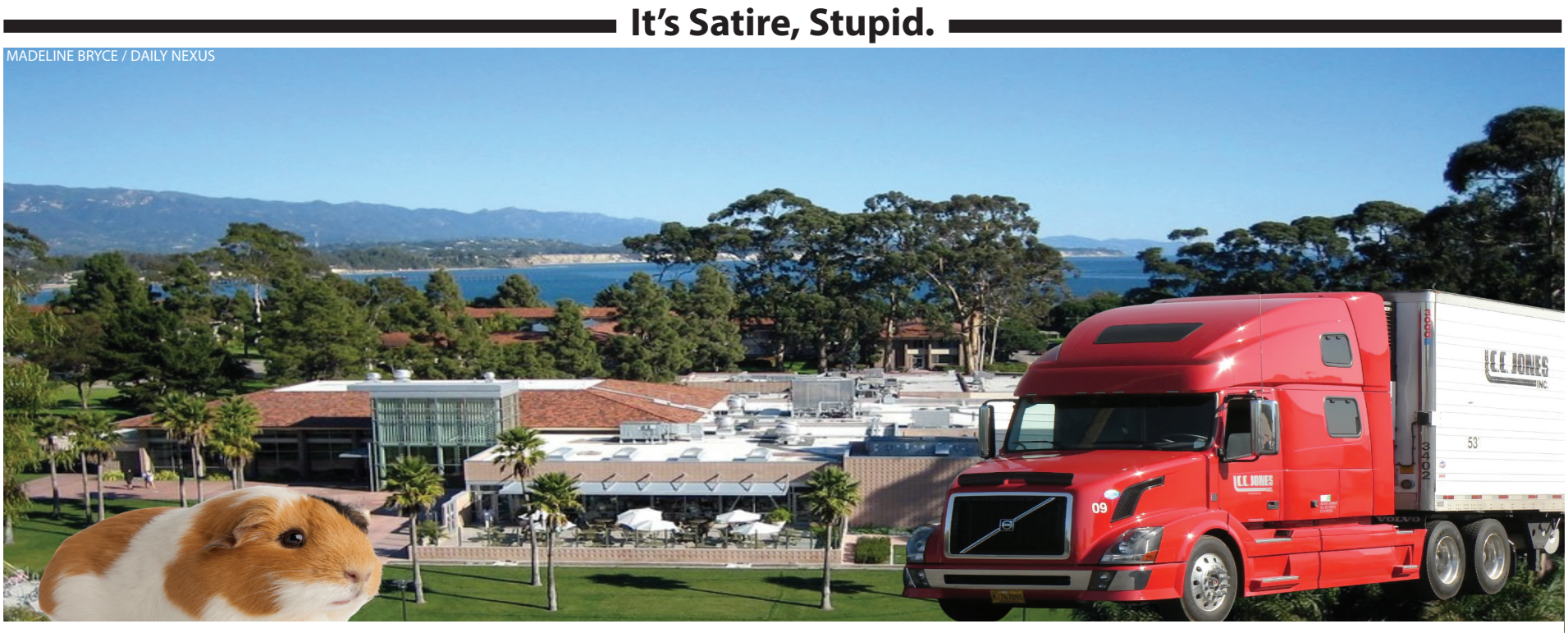
COURTESY OF THE TENNESSEAN

Daily Nexus Stench

NEXUSTENTIALISM

It's Satire, Stupid.

MADELINE BRYCE / DAILY NEXUS



DLG set to receive mystery meat from frat hazing ritual

Jessie Joint
Frat Veterinarian

While UC Santa Barbara students dining in the hallowed halls of De La Guerra Dining Commons may be familiar with the entertaining nature of the fraternity hazing process — which often includes table-top speeches from pledges — they were unaware they were participating in a more "interactive" aspect of hazing.

The problematic practice of hazing involves a variety of pointless torture methods skewed toward mid homo-eroticism, but the ritual of making fraternity pledges raise animals only to later end their lives themselves is seen to be one of the most morally bankrupt. However, due to recent meat shortages caused by the rising demand for protein-heavy foods, De La Guerra Dining Commons (DLG) has turned to UCSB's fraternities to request donations of the meat remaining from the hazing activities, leading to the incoming mystery meat order to DLG.

Pi Iota Gamma (P.I.G) was the fraternity selected to, in just a few days, eliminate and donate their guinea pig "remnants" following the completion of the "raising cycle," during which pledges cared for their assigned pet and grew to love it. This appalling concept was not lost on many of the frat pledges who had joined rush a few weeks into the fall.

Mike Hunt, a second-year communication major, was eager to show off his pet, which he held up to his face and stared into his eyes with melancholic sadness only seen in Victorian children.

"I love my cute pet guinea pig so much, I named him after my two favorite things: meet 'Sydney Sweeney PS5,'" Hunt said. "He is just the sweetest, and we both share similar interests like carrots and burrowing ourselves underground to escape the crushing pressure of reality — he really is just like me."

With time to the DLG shipment growing shorter, more pledges have been coming to the sobering reality about what will happen to their beloved pets. One pledge is inspired to take action.

P.I.G pledge Robb Err, a first-year data science major, notified us of his plot to secure the guinea pigs' freedom. The Daily Nexus waited outside the P.I.G house where we saw him descend from the second story window before slipping off the siding and crash-landing alongside a massive trash bag that seemed to be vibrating.

"I couldn't stand the thought of all those cute guinea pigs being killed for no good reason, so I'm taking them all to the edge of I.V. and I'm releasing them into the wild," Err claimed as he made a grand gesture with his hands from the bag to the sky. "They at least have a chance that way."

As Err arrived at the edge of the street and prepared to open the bag, he turned around to see all of his fellow frat pledges sprinting behind him.

"No, please! Not my precious mini piggy!" Hunt yelled.

Many of the pledges have obsessively installed AirTags on their guinea pigs and were notified when they were taken from the house. As the pledges ran in tears and were reunited with their beloved pets, they agreed to not end the lives of their animals but to embrace the true nature of the P.I.G house, instead gaining about 50 new house mascots.

The guinea pigs of the P.I.G fraternity now live lavish lives eating as many carrots as they can consume with the companionship of their equally piggy frat boys. Sadly, DLG is now in crisis without their order and are scrambling local horse stables and gym bros for suitable mystery meat.

Jessie Joint has adopted a guinea pig.

MADELINE BRYCE / DAILY NEXUS



Sick Halloween enthusiast overdoses on cough drops while trick-or-treating

Charlie A. Newsance
Immunouncompromised

Autumn is the perfect time for feeling wistful, baking treats and one of the most highly anticipated activities: trick-or-treating. However, something that coincides with these spooky festivities that few wish to participate in is the cold and flu season that creeps up this time of year.

The students of UC Santa Barbara are so enthusiastic about Halloween that they begin their spooky celebrations weeks in advance. Leading up to the holiday, come Friday nights, the streets are lined with ghouls, goblins and party animals alike out on the prowl for festivities.

For first-year art major Peter Skellington, Halloween night is the most important evening of the year, for the sole reason of being able to obtain exorbitant amounts of candy. He has his sights set on a bountiful harvest of sugary treats to feast on, and refuses to be deterred by pesky illnesses.

"While others may lazily throw together their costumes at the last minute, I begin planning my costume for next year the morning of Nov. 1! This is necessary to create a costume that will help me obtain the most candy," Skellington told the Daily Nexus.

Going out with friends, attending classes and studying for midterms all fall to the wayside in favor of preparing for Peter's favorite day. However, a week before the candy countdown clock was set to strike, a metaphorical and literal chill began to creep upon the candy connoisseur.

"It started with a sniffle, nothing crazy y'know? I just figured it was allergies or something that would clear up after a day or so," Skellington said.

Skellington told the Nexus that he had the foresight to purchase a box of cough drops and throat lozenges when his pesky sniffles persisted and later developed into a sore throat, despite his efforts to eradicate any signs of sickness from his body.

On the evening of Oct. 16, Skellington, with multiple pillow cases in hand, a route for optimized candy collection and his throat lozenges, was ready for action.

Unfortunately, it seemed the residents of Isla Vista were not on the same page with Halloween plans as Peter.

"For whatever reason a lot of people in I.V. just don't feel like sharing their candy! They kept offering me alcohol, claiming they didn't even have any, but I knew they were lying because they had a lot of 'gummy' candies," Skellington said. "Of course I still ate and drank what they gave me because I'll be damned if I don't get at least one piece of candy by the end of the night, even if it is just weird-tasting gummies."

Skellington's night took a turn for the better when a glowing jack-o'-lantern in the distance drew him to the stoop of a house, upon which he found a bowl full of individually wrapped chocolates. Above the bowl, a slip of paper in the shape of a mushroom read, "Please take one :)."

Skellington, with his runny nose and mostly empty pillowcase — save for his lozenges — made a decision. Skellington reports that, in his hurry to sprint away after depositing the contents of the bowl into his pillowcase, he stumbled, which resulted in his candy and medicine spilling out everywhere. Despite the fall, Skellington rapidly shoveled the miscellaneous candies back into his bag before continuing on his way, nibbling on his bounty as he did so. He was so lost in his sugary joy that he failed to notice he was gleefully devouring his lozenges in addition to his candy.

Skellington chalked up the dizziness and nausea he was feeling to the exertion typical of the trick-or-treating hustle.

Once Skellington reached the final house on his block, victory was so close he could almost taste the candy melting on his tongue. A tongue which now felt limp in his mouth, as his vision began to fog and his torso began to sway. Lead feet made their way up the steps, and he weakly knocked on the door.

Unfortunately for Skellington, the combination of alcohol, 73 throat lozenges, 18 gummy 'candies,' 11 'chocolates' and a three-mile walk fared too much for Skellington's body, as he promptly passed out on the doorstep with paramedics hitting the scene soon after.

Skellington has since recovered, having sworn off candy, promising to spend the rest of the Halloween season partying and drinking with others.

MADELINE BRYCE / DAILY NEXUS



Us versus them: How the ILP Wall has divided UCSB

Serrano Ham
Excluded

UC Santa Barbara students don't remember where they were when the wall went up, but they certainly remember the first time they saw it. The Interactive Learning Pavilion Wall, a barricade stretching from the Music Building bike racks all the way to the bike path behind the library, has become a defining feature of the new academic year, with societal changes already becoming apparent.

The wall, which is an alleged placeholder for the highly anticipated new bike path between the library and the Interactive Learning Pavilion (ILP), was constructed overnight and has since disrupted bike flow, with far-reaching consequences. Students have been ruthlessly divided, with friend groups and study groups alike being broken apart by this physical barrier.

Carla Neumayer, a first-year Earth science major and resident of the Santa Catalina Residence Hall, shared how the ILP Wall has altered the course of her life.

"I haven't been able to visit my friend in Santa Cruz since the wall was put up. I feel our ties of friendship beginning to fray due to our separation," Neumayer said.

Alice Mann, a fourth-year art major, was similarly impacted, although she had a different take.

"Forget not being able to visit my friends, I haven't been able to go to my lectures because the ILP Wall is blocking all the entrances," Mann commented.

The students on the east side of the wall, with access to Goleta and the greater Santa Barbara area have become more worldly, boldly exploring areas outside of UCSB and enjoying wider cultural experiences. The students on the west side of the wall, however, haven't been so lucky.

These students have been grossly neglected by the UCSB administration and, being inaccessible from all main roads, have begun to suffer from resource shortages.

Hubert Fat, a first-year economics major stuck on the west side of the wall, was very eager to share his experience.

"The only place I can eat is DLG! Ortega and all the places at the University Center (UCen) were closed when the wall went up, so none of the employees have been able to return to work. I'm starving! I can't eat any more taco pizza or those freaky fish cakes," Fat complained.

Students on the east side have tried to provide some relief packages, which contain essentials such as liquor shooters, Target gift cards and Rocky Horror Picture Show flyers. These have reportedly all been confiscated by resident assistants of various freshmen dorms, most likely for their own personal use.

Unsurprisingly, there have been reports that, despite this major change to the UCSB infrastructure, Snag deliveries have continued to make it across the wall without any delays.

Serrano Ham doesn't know the difference between east and west.

SCIENCE & TECH

Happy International Wombat Day!

Preksha Koushik
Assistant Science Editor

If you're anything like me, you've been counting down the days until International Wombat Day, which just so happens to be today, Oct. 22nd. For those of you who aren't me, you probably have some questions, such as: What is a wombat? Why does it have a day? Why in the world do they poop cubes? Lucky for you, your local self-proclaimed "wombat super fan" can answer these questions, plus the most important question of all: Why should we care?

Our friends, the wombats, are primarily found in Australia and are marsupials, known for their pouches that contain growing joeys, or baby marsupials. Though not all marsupials have pouches, the most commonly known ones, kangaroos, koalas and wallabies, do. Despite this connection to marsupials, wombats can be described as looking like "short, stocky bears."

Unlike some other marsupials, they have pouches facing their rear. This characteristic is important as wombats are known to burrow, and a front-facing pouch would cause dirt to be shoveled into or near the pouch and possibly harm the joey. In order to burrow, the San Diego Zoo explains that wombats have "wide, strong feet with large claws." These features allow for the building of an extensive tunnel system, with one entrance and "several tunnels that can reach up to 650 feet" long.

Scientists at the University of Tasmania found that their cube-shaped poops are "formed within the last 17 percent of the colon" through the drying of its feces along with muscular contraction. The resulting cubes are "unique in the animal kingdom" and are likely used to communicate with other wombats. A group of wombats is called a wisdom.

There are three known species of wombat: the common, bare-nosed wombat, the northern hairy-nosed wombat and the southern hairy-nosed wombat. Although the average observer might assume these three look similar, the San Diego Zoo elaborates on the physical differences of these species: The common wombat has "coarse fur and short, round ears," while the hairy-nosed wombats have "soft fur and much larger ears."

The common wombat has three subspecies: mainland, Tasmanian and Flinders Island. The northern hairy-nosed wombat is critically endangered, with roughly 100 individuals remaining according to PBS in 2021. Thankfully, due to conservation efforts, the Australian Wildlife Conservancy claims that there are now around 300 northern hairy-nosed wombats in Epping Forest National Park in eastern Australia and more in populations elsewhere.



LUNA PLUMMER / DAILY NEXUS

Despite the other wombat species not being classified as endangered, the same threats that northern hairy-nosed wombats face also affect them.

Bush Heritage Australia, an organization dedicated to protecting Australia's ecosystems and landscapes, has determined several factors that have reduced overall wombat populations.

In Victoria, Australia, a bounty of $1 for every wombat killed was offered, a policy that remained in place from 1926 to 1966. Today, Victoria still considers wombats pests, despite all wombat species being protected everywhere else in Australia. Bush Heritage Australia also considers how "Habitat loss and competition for food with introduced herbivores – rabbits, cattle, sheep and goats – are now the biggest threats for wombats."

International animal days, such as International Wombat Day, bring awareness to environmental issues as a whole while highlighting a specific animal. Focusing on one animal at a time allows for the observance of their unique issues, while also keeping in mind the dangers that affect most animal species.

Ultimately, celebrating the world's animals is an important step in raising awareness and advocating for environmental conservation and the protection of species around the world.

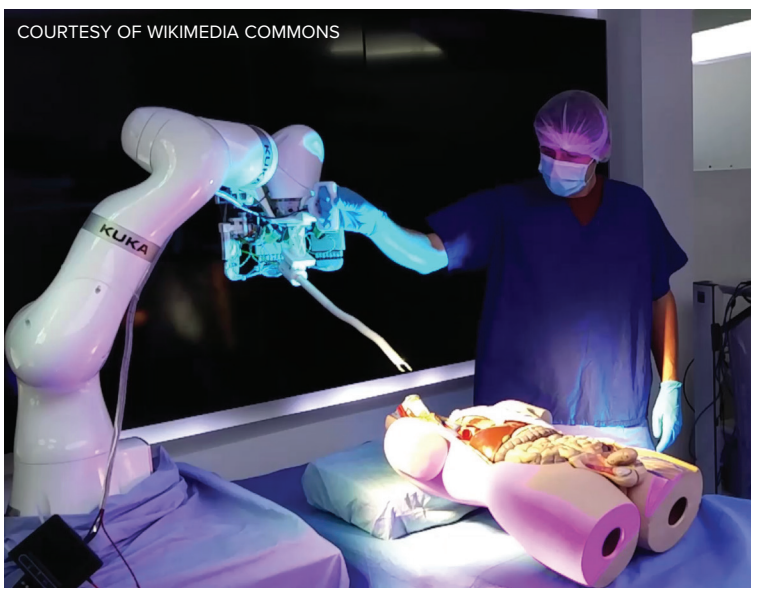
Research in Review: Brain surgeon robots, the AI Commons and El Niño

Aria Khaitan
Assistant Science Editor

Brain surgery by robots – Both possible and life-saving

Thromboses, or blood clots, kill approximately 274 Americans everyday. These large clumps of cells, which arise from platelets, proteins and other blood cells thickening, can disrupt pathways in the body that are necessary for survival, and inadequate access to care makes it increasingly difficult for people to be saved. Elliot Hawkes, an associate professor of mechanical engineering at UC Santa Barbara, is working toward making thrombectomies more accessible in hospitals all over the country by combining robotics with surgery – putting human lives meticulously and safely in the hands of robots.

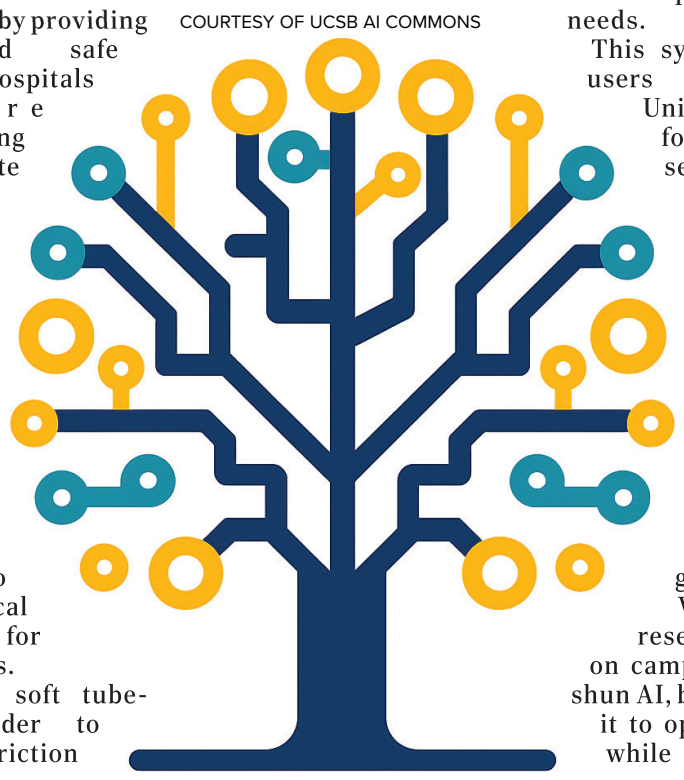
Thrombectomies are extremely difficult and time-consuming procedures that can only be performed by select surgeons in the country, making care for those suffering from blood clots very inaccessible. The surgery also must be completed in a relatively short window of time to ensure successful recovery. This is where autonomous robots come in – by providing sufficient and safe surgeries in hospitals everywhere without needing the immediate supervision or intervention of an actual surgeon. However, due to the extremely dangerous nature of the procedure and the intensity of the tools used, Hawke looked to alter the surgical tools themselves for use by the robots.



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The robot is soft tube-shaped in order to decrease the friction and pressure of the tools, follow pathways in the body and remain inside the blood vessel, eventually using other tools to heal the clot itself. This design ensures safety of the patient and aligns with the meticulous precision needed for this surgery. It is important to consider artifical intelligence's (AI) role in the functionality of the robot however, since it will be responsible for making decisions and taking actions throughout the procedure. After extensive testing, research and development, it is possible to move this robot into clinical practice in the future – making lifesaving healthcare more accessible.

COURTESY OF UCSB AI COMMONS



How UCSB is navigating the emerging world of AI

With the new advancements in AI that continue to creep their way into our everyday lives, UCSB has balanced preserving academia and staying on the cutting edge of technology by launching the UCSB AI Commons this month. This platform is a nuanced and multi-leveled framework that gives the students, professors and staff access to a wide variety of AI tools. With a diverse student body and a wide range of educational topics being covered on campus, it is imperative that our AI platform be comprehensive and adaptable to different needs.

This system ensures that users stay within the University's protocols for data privacy and security.

UCSB's AI Commons were designed in order to mitigate the misuse of AI, while providing UCSB community members with versatile and safe AI tools which are also secure alternatives to general open AI.

With these tools, researchers and labs on campus do not need to shun AI, but can rather adapt it to optimize its benefits while being cautious and aware of its risks. This strategy may prove to be the best way for UCSB to move forward in a fast-paced technological advanced world while continuing to stay grounded in academic values.

Further, UCSB is putting a strong emphasis on AI literacy throughout campus and ensuring that its users understand ethical, academic and responsible usage of AI platforms and tools. Within this effort, UCSB is launching the AI@ Work Certificate program, which will train employees on AI technology and how to utilize it in the best way possible.

An inside look at El Niño

El Niño is threatening our shores and homes in Isla Vista and we need to know: how intense of an impact can we expect? El Niño is a global climate pattern that repeats every two to seven years of the storm only gets worse, which aligns with the rising temperature of the ocean and the overall global warming patterns we witness in our everyday lives. It may be October, but we still walk around in 90-degree weather with the threat of the largest El Niño since 1950 hanging over us. Surface temperatures in the Pacific Ocean are four degrees higher at the equator, surpassing the threshold for El Niño and brewing a worse storm.

Water expands as it gets warmer, meaning that the excess water moves as a Kelvin wave along the coastline and rises sea levels on the shores of California. This can cause potential flooding and cliff erosion, both of which are severe threats to I.V.

Santa Barbara, being prone to flooding due to its foundation on Mission Creek, has had a history of landslides and intense floods


COURTESY OF ANATOLIY GROMOV ON UNSPLASH

as a fluctuation of ocean temperatures, rising sea temperatures, storms and harsh weather are brought to the coast of California. Samantha Stevenson, climate scientist and Bren associate professor at UCSB, claims that there is a 75% chance that this storm will be the strongest El Niño since 1950.

Every year, the intensity and homes overlooking the ocean on Del Playa Drive have a major risk of eroding or falling due to the rising sea levels and incoming storms.

Therefore, it is imperative that residents take care and prepare for the incoming weather and don't sit still before it is too late.

LA VISTA

“Ya esta aqui”



CORTESIA DE NOTICIAS TELEMUNDO

Jeannie Gutierrez Rubi
Editora

“Cuando él se fue, yo tenía un calendario ... yo iba marcando los días, iba marcando, yo iba marcando. Ahora voy contando los domingos, digo: ‘ya tiene tres domingos de estar ahí’; no sé si algún día voy a dejarlo de contar, pero ya está aquí”, dijo entre lágrimas la madre de Kelvin Torrez al enterrar a su hijo.

El joven había salido de Managua, Nicaragua, en abril de 2022 y desapareció seis días antes de la fecha en que le tocaba cruzar el río Bravo, cerca de Piedras Negras, México. Otro migrante que acompañó a Torres en su intento de cruzar el río le contó al padre de Kelvin que la corriente del río Grande se lo había llevado.

Su hermana, Verónica, había seguido la localización del teléfono de Kelvin y miraba cuando cruzaba fronteras y llegaba a cada ciudad. Verónica recordó que la última vez que habló con su hermano fue un mes después de partir de la casa de sus padres en Mateare.

Veronica contó a Noticias Telemundo que el día antes de su intento de cruzar el río Bravo, Kelvin se había despedido de ella, diciendo “Dios quiera que pase bien y podamos volver a hablar ... y si me pasa cualquier cosa, pues recuerden que siempre los quise y quería una mejor vida para todos.”

La siguiente madrugada, Verónica recibió un texto desesperado de Kelvin. “Vero, Vero, ayúdame, me perdí.” Verónica había perdido una llamada de su hermano y ya no se encontraba la ubicación en su teléfono. Reflejando en el último mensaje de su hermano, Veronica lamento,“eso te destruye”.

Los padres de Kelvin no se darían cuenta de la ubicación de sus restos hasta el 27 de agosto del 2022, después de contactar a las autoridades nicaragüenses y estadounidenses por meses, suplicando que les ayudaran a encontrar a su hermano.

La organización ‘Texas Nicaraguan Community’ había publicado en Facebook que a 130 millas de Piedras Negras se había encontrado lo que presumen que eran los restos de Kelvin en el condado de Webb, cerca de Laredo, Texas.

Pero según la organización, la morgue del condado Webb era una de las “más difíciles por su falta de acceso a información y su forma exigente en cuanto a la identificación de los restos” y que el condado“no quiso apoyar en el proceso de la toma de ADN”.

Dos años después de la muerte de su hijo, tras varios meses de trámites prolongados y ardientes para la familia del joven desaparecido, los restos de Kelvin fueron regresados a Nicaragua el 21 de abril de 2024.

Su madre lamentó: “Salió un 22 de abril de la casa hace dos años, y dos años después volvió a salir un 22 de abril, pero esta vez ya para el cementerio.”

El padre de Kelvin vio en televisión cómo habían sacado del agua el cuerpo de su hijo.

Todavía vestido con la camisa verde con la cual lo vio irse de la casa por la última vez.

En el entierro, su padre limpió las lágrimas de su esposa y la hermana de Kelvin con una camisa verde y la extendió sobre la ataúd de su hijo, diciendo “Solo pensé que mi camisa tenía sudor mío, tenía mi ADN, entonces vine ... y se la dejé allí con él ... para estar siempre juntos”.

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ON THE MENU

The world's most expensive spice

Sahasra Hanumiahgari
On The Menu Editor

If I was the gambling type, I would bet money you have heard of saffron; the spice more expensive than gold. While this isn't true — saffron is in fact the most expensive spice in the world and has been nicknamed as "red gold" for a reason. This aromatic can cost anywhere between $600 and $1000 for one pound, depending on quality, color intensity, moisture levels and post harvesting handling. Don't worry though, Trader Joe's sells 0.025 oz jars of Spanish saffron for about $6, if you ever find yourself needing some.

Saffron is harvested from Crocus sativus and the cultivation process is extremely meticulous; the stigmas from the plant need to be harvested a few weeks after the flower blooms and must be picked at midmorning when the flower is fully open to the sun. Each flower contains only three strands of this highly demanded spice; it can take between 70,000 and 200,000 flowers to produce just one kilogram of saffron. It's mainly grown in Iran, Afghanistan, India and Spain; other countries have tried to grow it as well because of its value, yet Iran still produces 90% of the world's saffron.

While its origins are debated, it's generally agreed that it was first domesticated in Greece and has been cultivated for more than 4,000 years now. It holds value beyond monetary, as it's been referenced in mythology all over the world.



SAHASRA HANUMIAHGARI / DAILY NEXUS

Saffron is harvested from the flowering plant, saffron crocus, which blooms in the fall and features purple-colored flowers.

In Ancient Greece, Hermes, god of travelers, used saffron to heal his injuries and Aphrodite, goddess of beauty, used it to enhance her looks. In Hinduism, saffron is associated with Lord Vishnu and symbolizes purity and courage. It's even used in religious ceremonies and rituals. According to ancient Persian mythology, saffron was created by the tears of Kaveh, an epic hero, when leading a revolt against an evil king and was also used by goddess Anahita to heal the sick and wounded. Ancient Egyptians believed saffron had healing powers, while also using it for beauty products.

Many of these myths have one thing in common: saffron has medicinal properties. Maybe our ancestors were on to something, leading me to read a long article by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that goes through the effects of saffron on different conditions (sidenote: I learned that saffron was used by midwives during the Middle Ages during childbirth). The article To summarize my readings, saffron has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties which have been observed to protect against chronic diseases. This is not to say consuming extreme amounts of saffron will make you immortal, however, another CDC article references researcher Marzieh Agha-Hosseini's findings that using 30mg/day was effective in relieving symptoms related to premenstrual syndrome, among other benefits.

While saffron may have medicinal uses, it's most important use, in my opinion, is in cooking. It's one of those tastes that can't be described; if you know, you know. Like most dry herbs, saffron needs to be bloomed using heat and some kind of fat or moisture. This is generally done by steeping the strands in warm (emphasis on warm) water or milk, depending on the dish, which concentrates the flavor and allows it to be evenly distributed across your dish! This also helps the saffron release its iconic rich, golden color. While its uses are, of course, unlimited, saffron generally goes best with rice dishes like tahdig, a Persian crispy rice dish, risotto or, you guessed it, biryani.

The next time you want to really elevate a dish, really take it to the next level, try adding just a pinch of saffron and treat yourself.



COURTESY OF CON POULOS

Bastani is a traditional Iranian ice cream which is saffron and rosewater flavored. It is usually served with crispy wafers.



COURTESY OF CORRIGAN SISTERS

When making biryani, saffron water is added to the rice which adds depth to the dish's flavor and gives it a warm yellow-orange color.



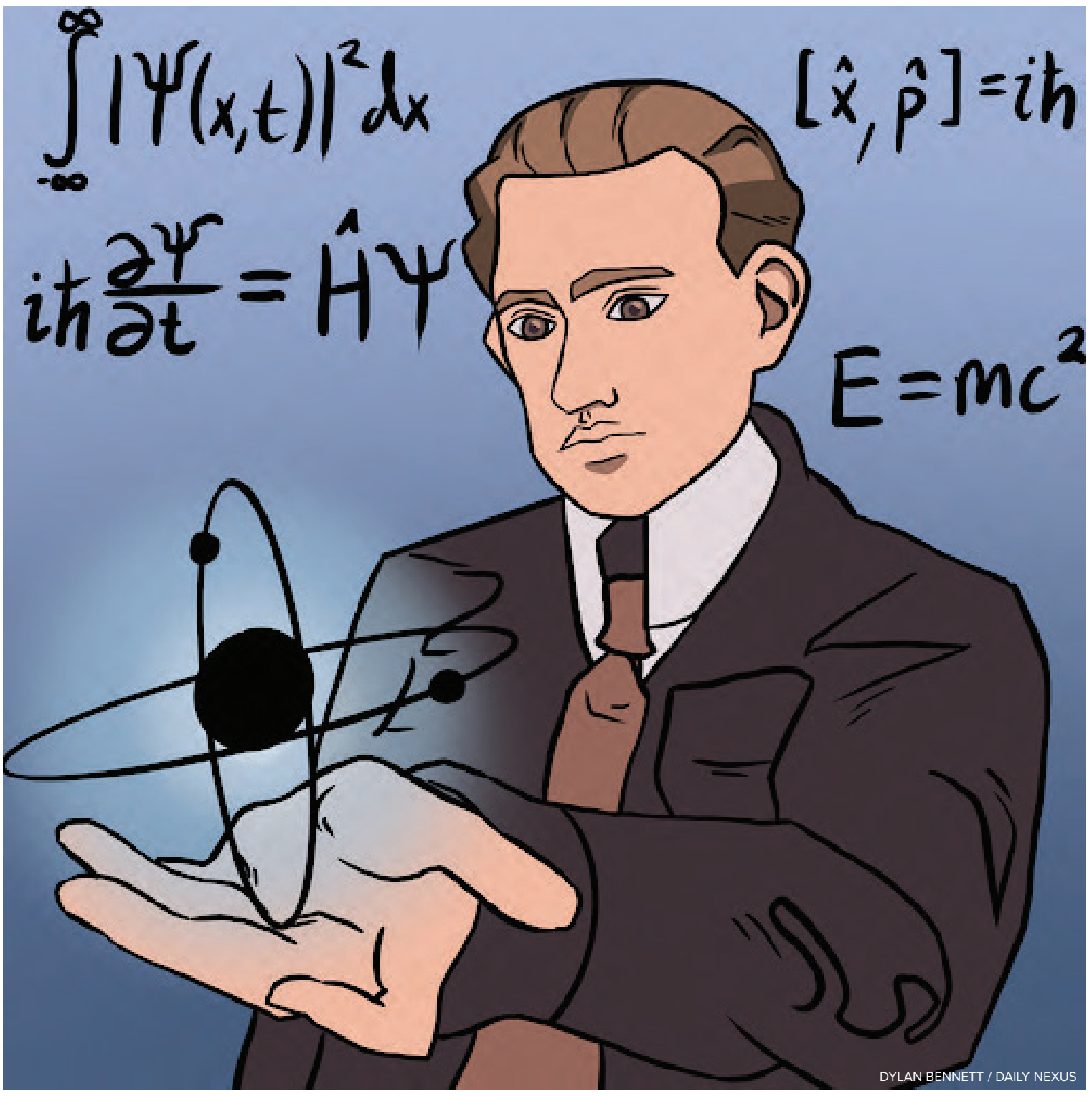
COURTESY OF RUMI SPICE

Although paella doesn't always include saffron, it can add a floral scent, making the traditional Spanish rice dish even more delicious.



OPINION

Quantum gibberish: the buzzword of choice



DYLAN BENNETT / DAILY NEXUS

Dylan Bennett
Reporter

Have you ever heard "quantum" in your favorite TV show or from your favorite superhero and been captivated by the awe of what it entails? Even if you are not pursuing physics, I am sure that you have some conception of quantum mechanics — some vague sense of trepidation, puzzlement or awe. Certainly, quantum mechanics lends itself well to this feeling: the uncertainty principle, entanglement, superposition and wave-particle duality. These principles tell us of intrinsic theoretical uncertainty in the most fundamental fabric of reality. And, let's face it, we don't like encountering uncertainty. I could ask you to choose between two nearly identical phrases as to which elicits a more profound feeling: field theory or quantum field theory, consciousness or quantum consciousness, space or quantum space. That very opacity of scientific terminology begets our imagination, giving us free rein to speculate about, and thereby reinforce, the linguistic potency of even nonsensical usage of scientific language.

How, then, do we distinguish between a scientifically warranted term and an unwarranted rhetorical one? Looking at "quantum," we can define it rigorously within its own scope; borrowing from Merriam-Webster, quantum, as an adjective, means "of, relating to, or employing the principles of quantum mechanics." Merriam-Webster also lists a second definition: "large, significant." This second definition would seem to imply that "quantum," at least, has some claim to figurative usage in a particular context. However, I think you would be likely to agree with me that when someone uses the word quantum, our first thought often concerns something vaguely complex and theatric like symbols revolving around someone's head as they ponder something deep, rather than something being large. We can now, with a proper definition, hold a magnifying glass to quantum's particular contextual usage and ask meaningfully about its validity.

Pop culture is full of instances of scientific terms and phrases being used to invoke the recognizable authority of science without always sticking to their original definitions. Screenwriters, especially, frequently utilize science terminology to signal a character's intelligence or bolster the plot's perceived plausibility. This is evident in the highest-grossing film of all time, "Avengers: Endgame," where Tony Stark creates a "Time-Space GPS," which allows characters in the quantum realm to navigate through time. Art is by no means required to adhere strictly to purely physical reality — science fiction would suffer tremendously if so. However, its use at least suggests that scientific language confers upon some logical foundation, even if divorced from the thorough empirical and mathematical process of science.

But why do we find this convincing? I know that I have at times found some of these phrases engaging, even when I can recognize the disconnect between what is being said and the actual science it is attempting to invoke. At best, this is a trivial ignorance that permits us to enjoy science fiction, but at worst, this seemingly harmless association can be exploited by bad-faith marketing to mislead people about the scientific rigor of projects or practices. This is why science communication is so important; the wider this gap between scientific work and public understanding becomes, the easier it is for scientific language to be mistaken for scientific evidence.

A 2025 study published in Nature Human Behaviour found that "jargon increases satisfaction because laypeople assume the jargon fills gaps in explanations that are otherwise incomplete." The study found that jargon elicited a positive response even while simultaneously decreasing comprehensibility. This suggests to me that the more unfamiliar we are with the science being referenced, the more room the cultural associations and our own speculative imagination have to determine our perception of it. As long as a word sounds sufficiently complex that we could imagine it remedying some mode of failure, we can be fooled by it. Do not be worried, dear reader, for I have a quantum warp drive for just such an occasion.

To understand what quantum mechanics actually is, we must first know what it is not. It is easy, with a technically demanding field, for people to misinterpret or extrapolate some conclusions from quantum mechanics. "Quantum" has a very close linguistic relation to quantization. This can lead to the misconception that quantum mechanics describes the entire universe as discrete — as if reality has a finite resolution. While it is true that certain quantities, like energy levels in atoms, are discrete, there are also many variables that aren't discrete, and quantum mechanics does not indicate that space is discrete.

Why, then, is "quantum" so often the word of choice? Quantum isn't an especially long word with an uncommon linguistic root, but it is culturally loaded, carrying the weight of a rather intriguing 20th-century history. Quantum mechanics is known to defy our everyday intuitions about reality. Perhaps the most significant of these clashes concerns measurement. Experimentally, particles have been seen to behave differently when they are subjected to measurement — most famously in the double-slit experiment, where the interference pattern of particles changes when we put a measuring device on the other side of one of the slits. This helps explain why "quantum" so often serves as a modifier for the mysterious, the incomprehensible and the profound.

The figures of quantum mechanics are themselves also rather larger than life: Werner Heisenberg, Erwin Schrödinger, Paul Dirac, Max Born and Niels Bohr, all of whom were named Nobel Laureates for their contributions to atomic and quantum theory. Heisenberg was only 23 when he formulated the first rigorous mathematical form of quantum mechanics. The field was enough to unsettle even Albert Einstein. He was seriously disturbed by the probabilistic nature of quantum mechanics, believing that the theory was incomplete because all of his experience with classical theories said that if one knew all initial variables in a system, they could determine all future behavior — yet quantum theory disobeyed this principle. When one uses "quantum," it digs up this turbulent and transformative history — and apparently borrows some of this legacy's authority in the process.

Quantum mechanics is a remarkably successful theory, and it produces incredible results and models of subatomic particle behavior. It makes it all the more ironic, then, that modern culture has misappropriated "quantum" to lend credibility and mystique to unrelated ideas and practices in order to make them seem more interesting. Quantum mechanics is not under any threat of collapse from the revocation of the word we use to describe it.

Dylan Bennett is not falling for this quantum trap

VIEWS EXPRESSED ON THE OPINION PAGE DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE *DAILY NEXUS* OR UCSB. OPINIONS ARE SUBMITTED PRIMARILY BY STUDENTS.

HOROSCOPES

The signs as how they are coping with midterms

ARIES
MARCH 21 - APRIL 19
Pulling all-nighters the day before

TAURUS
APRIL 20 - MAY 20
Taking increasingly long naps

GEMINI
MAY 21 - JUNE 20
Consuming excessive amounts of caffeine

CANCER
JUNE 21 - JULY 22
Crying on the phone to your favorite confidant

LEO
JULY 23 - AUGUST 22
Laying on the Arbor lawn

VIRGO
AUGUST 23 - SEPTEMBER 22
Writing daily detailed to-do lists

LIBRA
SEPTEMBER 23 - OCTOBER 22
Laughing at your TA's jokes

SCORPIO
OCTOBER 23 - NOVEMBER 21
Sleeping in the library the night before your exam

SAGITTARIUS
NOVEMBER 22 - DECEMBER 21
Calculating the lowest possible grade you can get

CAPRICORN
DECEMBER 22 - JANUARY 19
Setting an arbitrary screen time limit

AQUARIUS
JANUARY 20 - FEBRUARY 18
Daydreaming about Week 1

PISCES
FEBRUARY 19 - MARCH 20
Fighting the urge to pass/no pass the class

ARTSWEEK



JAESA VERDAGUER / DAILY NEXUS

Hyperpop star Tiffany Day performed at UCSB on Oct. 16. Students enjoyed an energetic concert hosted by A.S. Program Board in the UCen.

Charlotte Davis
Reporter

Lively up-and-coming pop star Tiffany Day made her UC Santa Barbara debut on a warm Friday night, bringing her signature high energy to a crowd full of enthusiastic students in the University Center Hub. The Oct. 16 show, hosted by the Associated Students Program Board, came after the Canadian-American singer-songwriter dropped her brand new album, "HALO," on April 3.

Lang2midi, a local Santa Barbara DJ, kicked off the night with an EDM-style set. The doors opened at 8 p.m., so the set was short to warm up the crowd as they trickled in for the main event. With no specifications about what time she would arrive, the crowd began chanting at around 9:15 p.m. for Day. Nicknamed 'Tiff' by her fans, Day didn't make her fans wait too long and appeared on stage exactly 15 minutes later in a grey-striped long-sleeve shirt and her signature blonde hair.

Day first rose to fame in March 2017 when a candid video of her singing a cover of "Hallelujah" by Leonard Cohen into a conveniently acoustic well in Italy went viral on social media. She has YouTube videos as old as ten years with some of her first pop songs, featuring everything from polished covers to sincere videos with titles such as "an unnamed song I wrote an hour ago" and "a memory we own."

As a classically trained multi-instrumentalist, Day taught herself how to play guitar — though she didn't play any instruments onstage. The star produces most of her own music and has a lot of creative freedom. In 2021, she uniquely mapped her college journey onto a conceptual series of four pop EPs, each corresponding to a different school year. Her first one she called "THE RECOVERY PROJECT," and it focused on the loneliness and homesickness from moving away from home. The next two, "THE DEPENDENCY PROJECT" and "THE RENEWAL PROJECT" focused on relationships and codependency before she ended the series with "THE GRATITUDE PROJECT," which expressed her appreciation for her college friends' support.

The energy was soaring and the bass was booming as she danced around the stage, jumping and hyping up the crowd. Tickets went for $20 for students and $40 for non-students, and the event garnered around 725 eager attendees according to a member of the Associated Students Program Board. Two students even drove all the way from UC Riverside just to see her. The seniors, Emma and Andrea, said, "We're just so excited to get to see her so close, especially since we tried to see her a few months ago." They really enjoyed the indoor setting — apart from the heat.

There was no shortage of stuffy air due to the indoor venue. Only a few ceiling fans frantically tried their best to keep everyone cool. Luckily, about halfway through Day's performance, event staffers passed a few water bottles into the crowd.

Owen Souza, a fourth-year political science major, commented on the warmth experienced by many during the concert. "The Hub could use a lot more circulation, especially under the stage," he said.

Paisley Koh, a first-year economics and communication double major, has been a fan of Day for several years and attended one of her concerts in 2023.

"I liked her old music, when she was more indie-pop, but I like the transition to hyperpop." Koh said.

Day's first album, "Lover Tofu Fruit," was released in 2024 and sounds a bit different than her current style. She made the pivot from bedroom pop into hyperpop and electronic dance with "HALO" and has gained many new fans because of it.

UCSB alum Ethan Rogers, a stylish concert-goer, remarked that "THE GRATITUDE PROJECT" was the first instance of the hyperpop genre that Day had released.

"She's such a talented songwriter," Rogers said. Like many of her fans, he expressed an appreciation for the depth of the lyrics that she achieves while keeping the tone upbeat and playful.

"HALO" centers on Day's struggle with identity — a very relatable concept for young adults. Track 11, "AMERICAN GIRL," opens with the line, "How can I be myself, if I don't know who the fuck I am," which captures a conflict many college students may experience. Day's vulnerable lyricism has earned her more devoted fans than her distorted, pitch-shifted vocals alone, but together they produce a complete showstopper.

She titled the album "HALO" as a nod to her mental health journey as she nearly walked away from music following creative exhaustion. She mentioned in an interview for KMUW that the title is also inspired by her childhood feelings and experience growing up in Wichita. The hyperpop album and genre switch is definitely a triumph for the young star. Hyperpop might be an oversimplification for this masterpiece, though, as it was crafted from other influences such as trap, hip-hop and dubstep.

"I was journaling about it for months. I always wanted to belong to a niche, and [electronic music] felt like it was calling to me, but it terrified me what people would think of me and my music," she told Fader in an interview. She felt a little discouraged when she initially released it to minimal fan interaction, but after posting thirty times in a row she found herself with new followers and new fans.

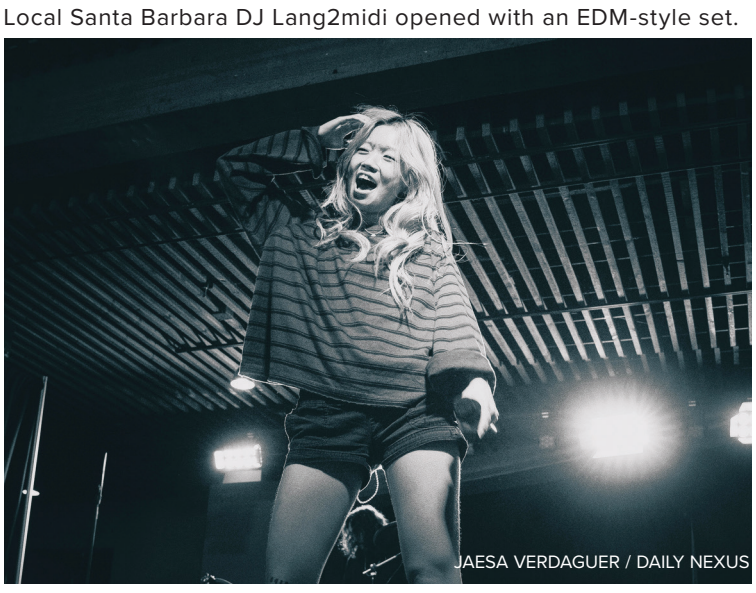
Day didn't name her tour "HALO" unintentionally; the 26-year-old played her newly released songs off of her "HALO" album almost exclusively. The crowd didn't seem to mind. They sang every word excitedly, even when she slowed things down for "IT'S NOT LIKE THAT ANYMORE." As one of her more emotional songs, it features lyrics such as "If maybe I just stopped reaching out, would anyone notice me? [...] But I'm too embarrassed to tell anyone that I got help." The vulnerable, heartfelt lines are not a departure from her usual lyrical candor, but the track's pacing is much less upbeat.

"It's okay to cry guys, it's cool," Day said to the amusement of the attendees. There were a few watery eyes, but the energy picked right back up again when she followed it up with "NO LUCK."

With the last notes of the set, Tiffany waved goodbye and left the stage, but the crowd wasn't ready. A chant of "one more song" quickly filled the Hub until she reappeared to a roar of cheers. She ended the night with "AMERICAN GIRL," and the room sang its now-familiar opening line back to her as loudly as they could. For a song about not knowing who you are, it was a fitting finale for a crowd of college students still figuring that out themselves.


JAESA VERDAGUER / DAILY NEXUS

Local Santa Barbara DJ Lang2midi opened with an EDM-style set.


JAESA VERDAGUER / DAILY NEXUS

Day performed many songs from her most recent album "HALO."


JAESA VERDAGUER / DAILY NEXUS

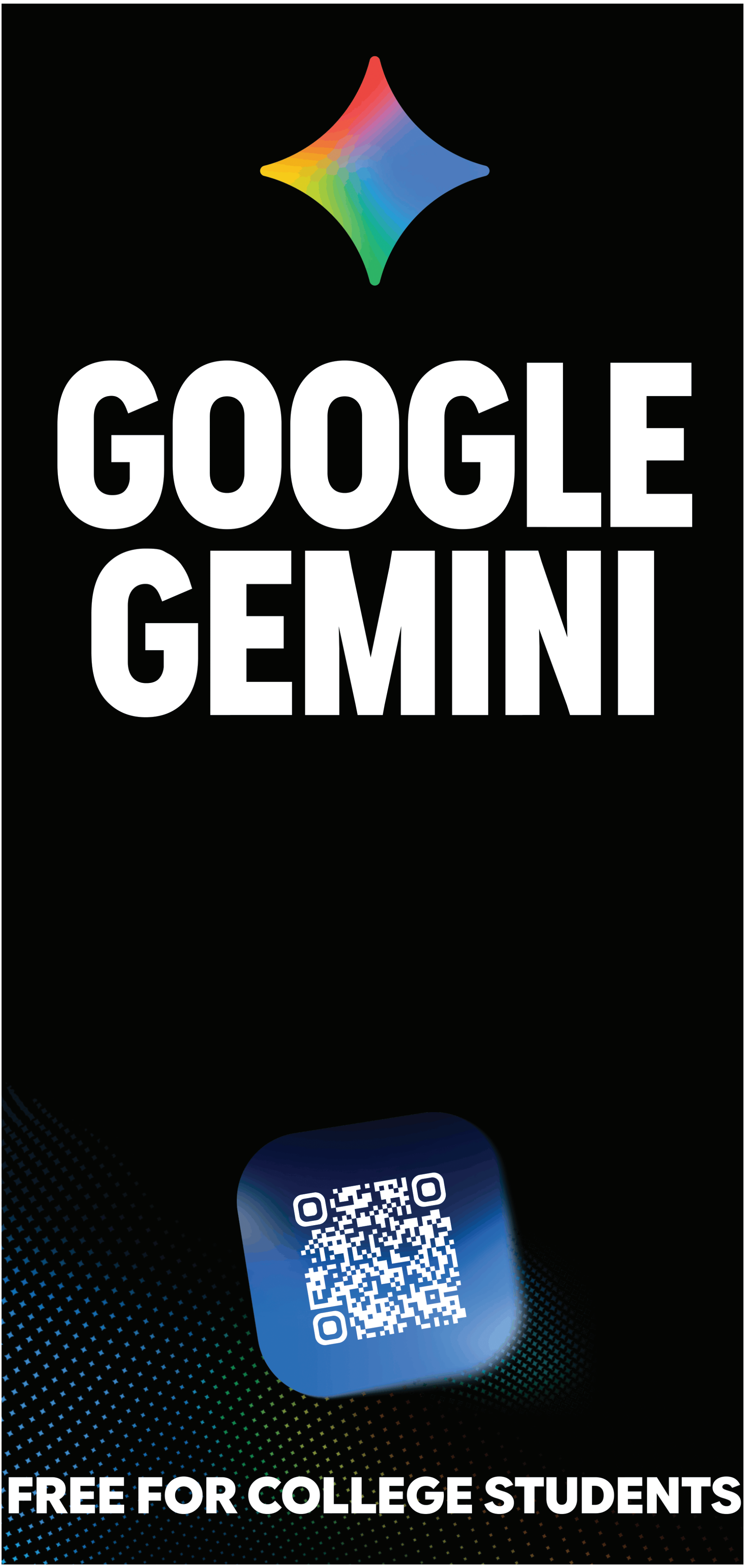
Day first rose to fame in 2017 when a video of her singing a cover of "Hallelujah" by Leonard Cohen went viral on social media.


JAESA VERDAGUER / DAILY NEXUS

"HALO" centers on Day's struggle with identity — a very relatable concept for young adults.


JAESA VERDAGUER / DAILY NEXUS

Day ended the night with "AMERICAN GIRL," a song many in the crowd resonated with.


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