

UC Santa Barbara

Center Reports

Title

UCSB is Spatial

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How can you take advantage of such opportunities for academic and creative growth?



Just participate. Visit our Website www.spatial.ucsb.edu, sign up for spatial@ucsb e-news, and start attending spatial@ucsb noontime brown bags and other events. You may be surprised at the wide reach of spatial thinking as a means of scientific discovery, as an inspiration to artists, and as a process well worth studying in its own right.



*Mike Goodchild, Professor of Geography,
Director of spatial@ucsb:*

“spatial@ucsb aims to change what people think of spatial thinking—from something that only experts need to know about, to something that everyone should use.”

UCSB IS SPATIAL



spatial@ucsb
perspectives for teaching and research

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What is **spatial@ucsb**, and what does it mean for you?

spatial@ucsb is an initiative to further our understanding of spatial thinking and to expand its uses. To UCSB faculty members it offers:

- **Resources for research.** **spatial@ucsb** is your source for data, applications, and training in all types of spatial analysis and display. It provides access to advanced technology, such as geographic information systems (GIS) to faculty in all departments. It also incorporates the expertise of the UCSB Department of Geography, one of the highest-ranked geography faculties in the nation. It is affiliated with a number of outstanding research centers at UCSB, including the Alexandria Digital Library, the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis, the Center for Spatially Integrated Social Science, the Center for Nanotechnology and Society, and the primary site of the National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis.

*Don Janelle, Research Professor and Program Director of **spatial@ucsb**:*
“One of the benefits of the spatial perspective is that it is an incubator for interdisciplinary work. Any spot on the map has its own politics, health patterns, demographics, culture, and physical environment. The spatial perspective gives you a way to integrate this information and see new connections.”

- **Sharing of knowledge.** Spatial thinking and its related technologies are powerful tools of discovery and understanding, with exciting potential in virtually all the scientific and humanistic disciplines. **spatial@ucsb** helps turn that potential into reality by providing a forum for faculty and students at UCSB (and beyond) to share the results of their spatially-focused work. The center’s public lectures, brown-bag presentations, and networking all act to create an ever-widening spatial community of scientists and scholars.
- **New avenues for collaboration.** Along with the sharing of knowledge, **spatial@ucsb** fosters new partnerships and networks devoted to the study and use of spatial thinking. Few centers have such wide interdisciplinary reach, from computer science and psychology to religious studies and the arts.
- **Creative tools.** **spatial@ucsb** is part of the university’s multimedia infrastructure, with close ties to the Four Eyes Lab at the Department of Computer Science and the Allosphere at the California Nanosystems Institute.

spatial@ucsb is new—it was established in 2007—but it is already having an impact in a number of academic departments.

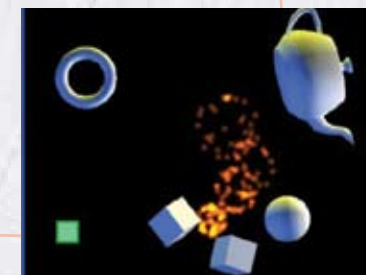
For example:

In Black Studies, **spatial@ucsb**’s GIS expertise has enriched the department’s research in a number of areas. Professor George Lipsitz says, “The existence of **spatial@ucsb** is essential for us to get knowledge that, as a small department, we wouldn’t otherwise have.” For Lipsitz and others in the department, spatial analysis is an important tool for studying topics such as housing discrimination, black migration patterns, black and Mexican relations in Los Angeles, and patterns of social interaction among customers and owners in black-owned businesses.

In Computer Science, **spatial@ucsb** works with the Four Eyes Lab (the name stands for “Imaging, Interaction and Innovative Interface”), a project to improve human-computer interaction and create display systems that mimic 3-D reality. Assistant professor and Four Eyes co-director Tobias Höllerer recently gave a **spatial@ucsb** brown-bag talk on the lab’s work with “anywhere augmentation,” a merging of GIS, global positioning, and mobile computing in portable systems that enable users to “annotate any physical object wherever they go” (by simply pointing to an object, such as a building, one could mark it for others who are using the same database). “The great thing about **spatial@ucsb** is that it organizes the scene for all participating researchers. It’s one-stop shopping for any spatial researcher on campus, or off campus for that matter,” Höllerer says.



Residential Areas in Los Angeles



3D visualization from Four Eyes Lab