Innovative Nanotechnology & Society Course Implemented at Community College

A new community college course, Nanotechnology in Society, was offered at Santa Barbara City College during Spring 2011. This innovative course was created through continued development of the 2008 INSCITES course, “Green Works: Exploring Technology and the Search for Sustainability”. The INSCITES program, a partnership of the California Nanosystems Institute (CNSI) and CNS, is focused on blending historical context, basic scientific principles, societal implications, and technological understanding to develop truly interdisciplinary courses, open to all majors, with no prerequisites. To allow adoption of this curriculum at the community college level and to enhance the nanotechnology and sustainability foci, CNS faculty, Education Director, UCSB graduate students, and an SBCC instructor and administrator collaborated to revise and refine the course content. Seventeen students are currently enrolled in the first offering of this course.

Diverse enrollment
This collaboratively-developed curriculum has attracted a truly interdisciplinary audience. Students enrolled in the SBCC Nanotechnology in Society course are pursuing a wide variety of degrees, including:

- Business economics
- Engineering (chemical, mechanical, electrical, and computer)
- Biology
- Political Science
- Manufacturing and welding
- Sports psychology
- Enology
- Media arts
- Emergency medicine
- Marine science
- Geology

Students in Professor Bullock’s Nanoscience in Society course at Santa Barbara City College make solar cells using titanium dioxide and raspberry juice during one of the course’s hands-on laboratory sessions.

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