

UC **SANTA BARBARA**
Chemical Engineering

Letter from the Chair



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I hope that 2025 and the new term are off to a great start for you all. It's always a pleasure to see our community of exceptional students and faculty return to campus, ready to tackle new challenges and make meaningful contributions.

As you'll read in this e-newsletter, our department received thrilling news that UCSB received a six-year, \$22 million grant from the NSF to start the BioFoundry for Extreme and Exceptional Fungi, Archaea and Bacteria (ExFAB), a first-of-its-kind user platform and equipment to enable the discovery, phenotyping and engineering of extreme microbes to harness their power and promise to enable the next generation of synthetic biology. The center involves multiple faculty from engineering and the sciences and serves as another example of the interdisciplinary research taking place on our campus and within our department. ExFAB is one of nearly ten major centers funded by federal agencies that involve chemical engineering faculty. You'll also read about how the university's commitment to collaborative research was recently highlighted by Times Higher Education, which ranked UCSB at No. 8 in the world for interdisciplinary research.

In addition, 2024 was a remarkable year for prestigious recognitions for our faculty. We've included a few stories about some of the accolades they received in recognition of their significant accomplishments and leading-edge research.

I hope you enjoy this update from our department, and I wish you happiness, success, and innovation in 2025!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Gordon', followed by a horizontal line.

Michael Gordon

Chair, UCSB Department of Chemical Engineering

Warren G. and Katharine S. Schlinger Professor of Chemical Engineering



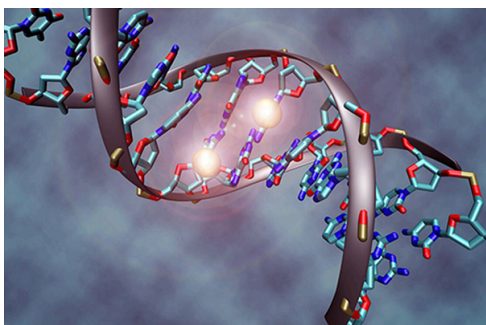
UCSB to Lead \$22M NSF-Funded BioFoundry on Exceptional Microbes

The center will tap into synthetic biology by designing first-of-its-kind instrumentation, novel robotic workflows, and technology powered by machine learning.

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UCSB Ranks Eighth Globally for Interdisciplinary Research

The inaugural rankings from *Times Higher Education* included nearly 750 universities from around the world.

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Keeping the Faith

UCSB chemical engineers develop novel technique to determine how faithfully DNA modifications are copied from one cell generation to the next.

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UCSB and ASML: The Benefits of Collaboration

Researchers in the lab of chemical engineering professor and chair, Michael Gordon, are pursuing fundamental research for one of the world's largest companies.

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Experimenting with ChemE

A new teaching lab, made possible by an endowment by Douglas Asbury, gives undergraduate students a chance to become familiar with the discipline through an immersive hands-on experience.

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Faculty Honors



Excellence in Education

Chemical engineering professor James B. Rawlings has received the nation's highest honor in chemical engineering for education.

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Michelle O'Malley Appointed to Cliff R. Scholle Endowed Chair

The chemical engineer pioneered a new research field focused on anaerobes, enabling the next generation of biotechnology.

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Professor M. Scott Shell Elected AAAS Fellow

The department's vice-chair was cited for his creative contributions to molecular simulations, including powerful methods for coarse-graining and free-energy estimation.

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A Catalyst for Discovery

Chemical engineering professor Phillip Christopher receives a major award from the North American Catalysis Society.

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Siddharth Dey Receives Prestigious NSF Early CAREER Award

The chemical engineer will pursue a project that employs light to track the location and movement of cells during early embryonic development.

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