

Dean's Office Special Initiatives

Jeffrey's Jazz Coffee House 2.0

This project is for a visioning process to conceive the next phase of an exciting project in Isla Vista (IV), conceived to build community, enrich cultural life, and connect this adjacent township more directly with the educational mission of the University.

Conceived by Dr. Jeffrey Stewart, award-winning scholar from the Department of Black Studies, the Coffeehouse emerged in the wake of the 2014 shooting tragedy, originally intended to provide a space for students to come together to heal through appreciation of jazz and related genres of music and spoken word. The project quickly gained support and involvement of other faculty (especially Professors Victor Rios [Sociology] and Kim Yasuda [Art Department]) and developed an enthusiastic following among students.

Funding from various sources supported the effort for the first four years, yielding the impressive series of activities detailed below. Those funds are now exhausted, leaving the project at a crossroads. This visioning process will conceive and pilot a successor version of the project, which would both build on the success of the first phase, and expand the activities in exciting and ambitious ways. In particular, we are interested in exploring how the Coffeehouse could: 1) expand the repertoire from Jazz to a wider range of musical and artistic genres; 2) become more extensively integrated with the UCSB academic mission, through an increased number of courses that make use of the venue; 3) house and support efforts to engage the predominantly student inhabitants of IV, working together for community-building and improvements in the quality of life.