

UCSB and Isla Vista Walking Tour

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The walking tour on the attached maps and text will take between 2 and 4 hours, depending on your speed and attention to detail. The tour starts near Cheadle Hall, the main administration building at UCSB, and ends near the east entrance of UCSB. Some specific directions on the route to take are in the text, but most of the time the walker will simply have to `connect the dots,' going from one location labeled by a letter to the next one, in alphabetical order.

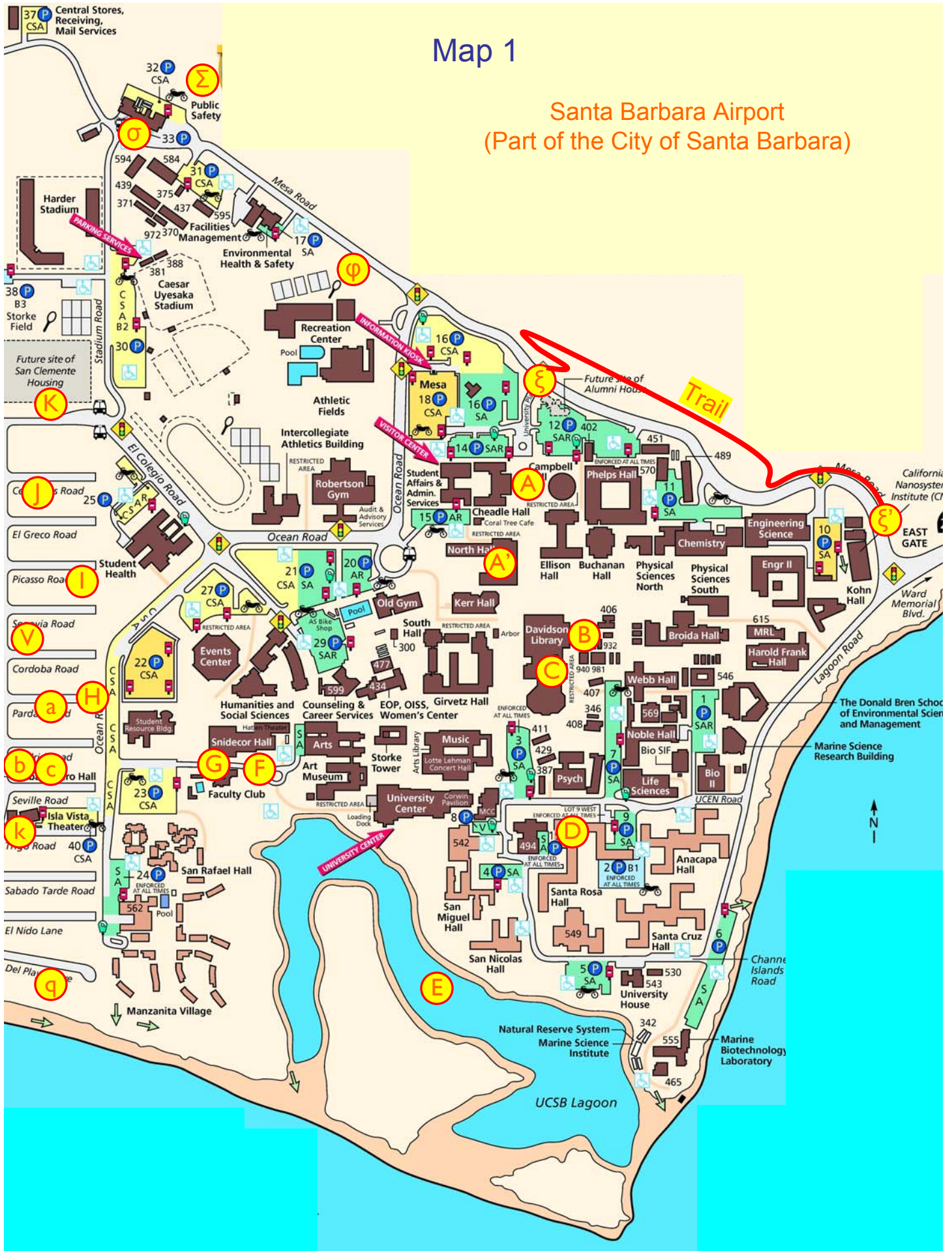
Note that Isla Vista does not have a useful system of sidewalks, so one must walk in the streets... be careful! However, most drivers in Isla Vista are aware of the large number of pedestrians walking in the streets.

What follows are 3 maps containing points of interest marked with letters, and then 11 pages of text that describe each point of interest. The first and third maps are based upon UCSB maps, taken from UCSB websites. The second map is based on a map taken from the Isla Vista Recreation and Park District, and shows all the parks in Isla Vista. It will be of interest to visit as many of those parks as you have time for.

This walking tour was developed for a Fall, 2006 Freshman Seminar, taught by Harry Nelson of the Physics Department. Please reports corrections, additions, comments to him.

Map 1

Santa Barbara Airport (Part of the City of Santa Barbara)



Self Guided UCSB/Isla Vista Walking Tour

- A** Start on campus at the plaza between Cheadle Hall and Campbell Hall. This plaza was filled with students and law enforcement during numerous demonstrations during the late 1960s and early 1970s. As you walk through campus, note at least four distinct styles of architecture, three of which corresponds to periods of UCSB's development:
1. Like Cheadle Hall, the 'large institutional buildings' that has been the style since UCSB became a general UC campus in 1958.
 2. Smaller-scale buildings like North Hall, the Library entrance, Webb Hall, and Santa Rosa Hall, which usually have roofs of rectangular red tiles. These buildings usually were designed prior to 1958, when UCSB was intended to become a small, liberal arts college.
 3. Even smaller-scale buildings, though often 2 stories, usually with clapboard exteriors, which were built by the U.S. Marines when UCSB was a Marine base between 1941 and 1946.
 4. One story buildings which are recent temporary structures.
- A** Plaque marking the occupation of North Hall by African-American students on October 1, 1968, which led to the founding of UCSB's Department of Black Studies.
- B** East entrance of the UCSB's Davidson Library; this portion of the library was the first UCSB building constructed on the Goleta Campus, designed in 1952; prior to Fall 1954, UCSB had been housed on the Riviera Campus (now the location of the Metropolitan Riviera Theater, 2044 Alameda Padre Serra in Santa Barbara, where foreign films are usually shown) and on the Mesa Campus, now occupied by Santa Barbara City College. Enter and go to the eighth floor of the newer 'tower' portion of the library.
- C** On the eighth floor of Davidson Library there is an architectural model of the campus, surrounded by aerial photos of the UCSB/Isla Vista areas. The earliest aerial photo dates from 1928, and shows that many streets in Isla Vista were already laid out at that time... the 3 subdivisions in Isla Vista (Ocean Terrace, Isla Vista, and Orilla del Mar) were set up in 1925 and 1926. Notice that several bluff top homes had been built already by 1928. The home recently demolished at 6515 Del Playa is visible. Spend some time studying the photos. When you exit the library, go by the main circulation desk and exit to the west. Before leaving note the two busts on your left near the stairs: these are of Thomas M. Storke (a very powerful force in bringing UCSB into existence) and Clark Kerr. The busts were sculpted by Francis Sedgwick, father of Edie Sedgwick, an artist, model, and companion of Andy Warhol.

- D** Santa Rosa Hall, the first dorm designed and built for UCSB; marine barracks were originally used to house students. Santa Rosa's design was made in 1954 by William Periera. The Santa Rosa Formal Lounge still displays a number of trophies for awards now long defunct. A number of prominent architectural motifs originated in Santa Rosa Hall's design: the three squares, growing larger sharing a common corner, and serrated edges, for example.
- E** The Campus Lagoon, which has been shown on maps dating back to at least 1870. The local Native Americans, the Chumash, called the Lagoon 'tiptip'. In the earliest campus plans, student housing was planned on the island in the Lagoon. Students used to sailboat, row, and paddle kayaks in the Lagoon. The odor of the Lagoon is not due to human pollution, but is characteristic of natural wetland areas.
- F** An ivy-covered fence marks the entrance to a long-defunct asphalt mine, which operated in the 1890's when the Isla Vista peninsula was called the Rincon Ranch.
- G** The UCSB Faculty Club was another site of protests in the 1960s-1970s. On April 11, 1969, a bomb was left near the pool. A custodian, Dover Sharp, picked the bomb up and was killed by the explosion; no suspect has ever been identified for the planting of the bomb.
- H** The Pardall Tunnel, built around 1967. The Pardall Tunnel is the main entrance to UCSB, at least in terms of number of users. Although functional, many people feel it is not particularly beautiful, nor does it provide an uplifting feeling upon entering campus from Isla Vista. Walk north along the footpath, and notice on your left (west) the eucalyptus trees that mark the property line between UCSB and private land in Isla Vista; both the trees and the mound are the boundary between 2 farms laid out before 1900.
- I** The Delta Gamma sorority house (6509 Picasso), the first sorority house (1955) planned in IV. Until 1954, UCSB had no dorms, and fraternities and sororities were the only group living available. The greek houses were in downtown Santa Barbara, and they all moved to Isla Vista (and affiliated with national organizations) by the mid-1960s.
- J** Paxton Hall (6519 Cervantes), the first fraternity house in Isla Vista, occupied originally by Lambda Chi Alpha.

- K** A solitary oak tree, a reminder of the oak forest that once covered much of the Isla Vista mesa. An 1870 map shows that the oak forest extended from Embarcadero del Norte to the UCSB RecCen. However, many oak trees may have been already cut down by that time; the wood was used for fires under giant kettles in which whales killed offshore IV where reduced to oil. Walk west along El Colegio (originally known as County Road or Broadway, renamed in the 1950's to El Colegio). Be careful crossing El Colegio.
- L** (Map 2) Friendship Manor (6647 El Colegio), an assisted living facility for seniors. Originally built as a private dorm for UCSB students. Eventually demand for this dorm plummeted as unrestricted apartments became available. Keep walking west on El Colegio, turn south on Camino del Sur.
- M** The Isla Vista Teen Center (889 Camino del Sur) with after-school programs for 7-12 graders who reside in Isla Vista; a Community Center is planned here.
- N** The Isla Vista community gardens; anyone can rent space to grow vegetables or flowers here. Contact the Isla Vista Recreation and Parks Department for a plot.
- N** Tipi Village (6730 Sueno) site of a village of back-to-nature hippies living in teepees throughout the 1970s. Complaints led to the eviction of the group.
- O** Small dragon-motif lath house, at the edge of a private residence, just to the south and near the eastern edge of Sueno Orchard (6723 Sueno).
- P** 895 Camino del Sur, Unit A was the home of Kevin Moran, a student accidentally shot by a Santa Barbara City Policeman (David Gosselin) early in the morning of April 18, 1970. Moran and his roommate, Thomas Thomiades, were listening to the radio while falling asleep, when they heard the AS President come on the radio and request that students come and help put out a new fire at the temporary Bank of America on Embarcadero del Norte. Moran and Thomiades left this apartment and headed downtown.
- O** United Methodist Church (892 Camino del Sur), site of many community meetings in the 1960s, and an architectural landmark. A new cell phone tower has been added on its north side. Walk north and east back to Camino Pescadero near El Greco.
- R** United Religious Center (777 Camino Pescadero) with a meeting room (Mosher Auditorium) where many public meetings take place, and where many in the IV religious community have offices.

- S** St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church (6586 Picasso), the first congregation that was established Isla Vista, in 1955. The church is one of the architectural standouts in Isla Vista.
- T** The Milton Roisman Jewish Student Center (781 Embarcadero del Mar) home of Santa Barbara Hillel Foundation. The building was completed in 2001, and is the very active hub of Jewish life in Isla Vista.
- U** St. Mark's University Parish (6550 Picasso), center of Isla Vista's Catholic community. Many community activities are coordinated here.
- V** The Institute of Religion (6524 Cordoba) , the LDS Student Center of Isla Vista.
- W** Freebird's (879 Embarcadero Del Norte), a 24-hour a day restaurant specializing in made-to-order burritos, called the 'best fast food in Santa Barbara' in 2006 by the New York Times. Owned and operated by Mark Orfalea, whose cousin started Kinko's in Isla Vista. The corner of Embarcadero del Norte and Pardall is one of the centers of Isla Vista, and was a focus of many disturbances in the 1960's and 1970s.
- X** The Isla Vista Foot Patrol (IVFP) office. Law enforcement in Isla Vista is formally under the jurisdiction of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff, a county-wide elected official, and their deputies; traffic issues are under the jurisdiction of the California Highway Patrol. From 1954 until the mid 1960's, most regular patrolling was the responsibility of the UCSB campus police; the Sheriff and Highway Patrol drove to IV as needed when serious crimes occurred. After the riots in the 1960's, a stronger and more regular law enforcement presence was needed, and the IVFP was formed. It is staffed by officers of the three agencies, whose shields are on the door.
- Y** The Isla Vista Bookstore (6553 Pardall), founded in the early 1960's, one of the oldest businesses in Isla Vista. Another long established business, the Varsity Bike Shop (6547 Pardall), is a few doors to the east. Ventura Enterprises (6549 Pardall) has an interesting old aerial photo of Isla Vista on its wall.
- Z** 905 Embarcadero del Norte (now IV Drip), site in the 1960's of the Unicorn Book Store, where Richard Brautigan first read 'Trout Fishing in America' in 1967. 901 Embarcadero del Norte, now the home of the Isla Vista Surf Company, was for many years the Campus Cue, a pool hall and central gathering spot. Locally made tiles from circa 1970 outside and to the east depict numerous counterculture images, including the Isla Vista Tree.

- a Sidewalk plaque outside of 6521 Pardall marking the location of the first business of Paul Orfalea, founder of the Kinko's reprographics chain. Paul Orfalea remains involved in the IV/UCSB community.
- a' Newman House (6503 Madrid Road), first of 4 buildings (1981) acquired by the student-governed Santa Barbara Student Housing Cooperative. The Co-op offers wide-ranging community involvement and economical housing.
- b 938 Embarcadero del Norte, for many years the home of Borsodi's, a coffee house and restaurant that featured music and poetry. Now the home of Javan's restaurant.
- c Self-storage (6522/6530 Seville Road) owned by Sid Goren, where many local bands practice. Some became very famous, including Toad the Wet Sprocket.
- d Embarcadero Hall (935 Embarcadero del Norte), formerly the Bank of America building. The first Bank of America building here was burned to the ground on Feb. 25/26, 1970 in a riot known as 'I.V. I'. The causes of the riot are complex and the subject of many studies. A second riot (I.V. II) occurred on April 17/18, 1970, when one of a group of students that stopped the burning of a temporary Bank of America structure, Kevin Moran (memorialized by a sidewalk plaque), was accidentally shot to death by a Santa Barbara City policeman, David Gosselin. The Bank of America at UC Irvine was burned down by unknown parties 8 months to the day after the first IV burning, on Oct. 26, 1970. Some say the bunker-like rebuilt structure now housing Embarcadero Hall was based on a design used by Bank of America for their Saigon, Vietnam branch, intended to survive in a war zone. The structure housed various nightclubs starting in the 1980s, and was the site of an altercation between Sheriff's Deputies and African-American students in 1991. UCSB has used the structure since 2002, and live theatrical performances now take place on Friday nights. UCSB apparently uses the old vault to store valuable art.
- e Anisq'Oyo' Park (950 Embarcadero del Mar), the central park of Isla Vista. Originally called Madrid Park, because Madrid Road used to go through it, Anisq'Oyo' is the Chumash place name for the Isla Vista mesa, and may be related to the Chumash word for the manzanita bush. The park was just empty, flat dirt lots until the late 1970's, when the central pond was dug, and the dirt used to make the amphitheater. The intent of the park is to emulate pastoral countryside, to provide a restful spot away from the dense urban streets of Isla Vista. Some argue that the park has become underutilized by most of the community, and overutilized by houseless persons. There is currently (2006) a process underway under the auspices of the IV Redevelopment Agency and the IVRPD to alter the park.

- f** Isla Vista Market (939 Embarcadero del Mar), the oldest business in Isla Vista, started in the early 1950's as the University General Store. Inside and in the back, left corner, high on the wall, is an early picture of the market.
- g** Isla Vista Food Cooperative (6575 Seville), founded in the early 1970's as an customer-owned business that makes natural foods and other products available at a good price. Open to non-members, and a renowned source of organic, hard-to-find, and bulk foods.
- h** Isla Vista Recreation and Park District (961 Embarcadero Del Mar), one of two special governmental districts founded in Isla Vista. The IVRPD manages the parks in Isla Vista, and provides recreation programs for K-12 students. The IVRPD was established in an election on Halloween, 1972, and is one of the few governmental agencies that grew out of the late 1960s/1970s milieu. IVRPD meetings often feature vigorous debate between the various groups in IV: students, homeowners, landlords, businesses, and families. Outside is the 'Free Box,' a place for exchange of goods, which dates from about 1970.
- i** Isla Vista Medical Clinic (970 Embarcadero Del Mar) founded in 1970, when treatment and advice on various health issues was difficult to get on certain topics, often related to mental health, drugs, and sexuality. The clinic has evolved into a source of health care for neglected communities.
- j** The Isla Vista Peace Monument, dedicated in 2003 after years of organizing, commemorates struggles for peace, in particular that in IV in the late 1960s/early 1970s. The last of the Isla Vista riots, 'I.V. III' culminated in the peaceful submission to arrest on June 10, 1970 of hundreds of community members in Perfect Park. During I.V. III LA Sheriffs had conducted violent raids in Isla Vista, bringing condemnation from across the political spectrum, and leading finally to the peaceful protest in Perfect Park where everyone chose to violate a curfew and be arrested. Criminal charges were ultimately dismissed against the protestors. Note the wooden boxes to the east of the Isla Vista Medical Clinic, which are part of a public composting program.
- k** Isla Vista Theaters (960 Embarcadero del Norte): the main theater was originally an independent theater called 'The Magic Lantern.' Magic Lanterns were predecessors, dating from the 1600's, of the modern slide projector. The original Magic Lantern theater was prosecuted by the County District Attorney in 1967 for showing an art film that contained full frontal nudity. The theater then lost financial backers and went out of business in 1968. The smaller theater was originally an eclectic bookstore, the 'Red Lion,' which went out of business at about the same time. Films are now shown on Friday nights here by a new group called 'Magic Lantern Films'.

- l** Site of Isla Vista's first restaurant, Nebi's Coffee Shop (6547 Trigo), now Super Cuca's 3. On the north wall of the restaurant is an aerial photo of Isla Vista dating from about 1961, when Nebi's opened for business.
- m** St. Athanasius Orthodox Church (976 Embarcadero del Mar) is the product of the devotion, starting in 1966, of Christian UCSB students and IV residents. The church members have been closely involved in Isla Vista issues.
- n** 6576 Trigo (Café Nirvana now closed). This was for many years the 'Sun and Earth' vegetarian restaurant, and had a geodesic dome in the back. The restaurant was portrayed in the Ross MacDonald mystery 'The Blue Hammer'. MacDonald was a famed Santa Barbara mystery writer, whose first mystery novel was made into the movie 'Harper' starring Paul Newman in 1966.
- o** Plaque at 6568 Sabado Tarde commemorating the tragic deaths of four young people and severe injury of a fifth on Feb. 23, 2001, when David Attias, a UCSB freshman, drove his car at high speed into a crowd.
- p** Memorial in the center of Little Acorn Park (6550 Sabado Tarde) to the four young people: Nicolas Bourdakis, Christopher Divis, Elie Israel, and Ruth Levy killed on Feb. 23, 2001 by David Attias. Attias drove his car at high speed into the others as they walked in the street on Sabado Tarde, which has incomplete sidewalks. Ruth Levy's brother Albert was severely injured. Attias was found legally insane and is incarcerated at Patton State Mental Hospital in San Bernardino.
- q** 6515 Del Playa, site of one of the pre-1928 residences on the Isla Vista bluff, torn down in the summer of 2006.
- r** 6543 Del Playa, Pelican Park, one of the beautiful bluff top parks in Isla Vista. Interpretative signs in the southern corners explain pelican and whale migrations. Other bluff top parks are west on Del Playa. From this park you can look down on the beach below, and see the spring gray whale migration.
- s** Beach at the foot of El Embarcadero. Long a gathering spot in Isla Vista, the famed companion of artist Andy Warhol, Edie Sedgwick, met the future star of the first reality show (An American Family) Lance Loud on this beach in 1969. On April 16, 1970 the landing by boat in disguise of activist Jerry Rubin, who had been banned from Santa Barbara County, was supposed to have occurred here. The I.V. II riot occurred the next night.
- s'** 6581 Del Playa, a very narrow house that demonstrates the narrow lot size of the original lots of the subdivisions in Ocean Terrace and Isla Vista.

- t Intersection of Camino Pescadero and Del Playa. Camino Pescadero marks the end of one subdivision (Ocean Terrace) and the beginning of another (Isla Vista), and so many east-west streets undergo 'jogs' at Pescadero, and also change names. The first three streets east-west streets back from the bluff: Del Playa, Sabado Tarde, and Trigo do not jog; all the rest do. West from the intersection of Pescadero and Del Playa are the dense street crowds on Friday and Saturday nights. Continue west along Del Playa... notice the blufftop parks on your left.
- u 6600 block of Sabado Tarde, where on Feb. 28, 2004 SBCC student Bradley Jones was punched by Slava Olsen; Jones fell, hit his head, and died. Olsen was convicted of involuntary manslaughter.
- v 6765 Del Playa, where early on Feb. 9, 1969, Santa Barbara County Sheriff Deputies arrested 6 African-American students, some of whom were involved in the takeover of North Hall in October, 1968. This event, viewed by many students as retaliation, heightened tensions and contributed to the environment that led to the IV riots one year later.
- w Memorial to Tyler VonRuden in Sea Lookout Park (6785 Del Playa); Tyler was a 22 year-old IV resident who fell off the cliff here on Sep. 25, 2005 and died. Deaths and serious injuries from falls from the IV bluff top are sadly frequent, happening a few times each year from at least 1966; alcohol and/or drugs are frequently a contributing factor.
- x Memorial to the Isla Vista Tree, which is a symbol of Isla Vista in many local documents and works of art. The park is locally known as 'Dog S---' park.
- y Geodesic dome house (998 Camino Lindo), dating from the early 1970's.
- y' Dedication of open space to Bill Wallace, a Third District County Supervisor who for many years resided in Isla Vista.
- z 6891 Fortuna Road, home where UCSB student Patty Laney resided when she was murdered in January of 1977. She was one of three Isla Vista women who were murdered by the Solvang serial killer Thor Nis Christiansen. The annual Isla Vista Juggling Festival in April is dedicated to Patty Laney's memory.
- z' Main parking area for surfers; the eucalyptus trees mark another old property line. The surfing at Sands Beach is regionally renowned, as a place where Pacific Ocean swells are not substantially blocked by the islands of the Santa Barbara Channel. Walk west from here along the blufftop all the way to the western point of the IV mesa, known as Coal Oil Point.

- α (Map 3) A celtic cross that marked the grave of Colonel Colin Campbell, a British military officer, who in 1919 purchased the land from the eucalyptus trees near the parking area on Camino Majorca to the Coal Oil Point; the vicinity of Coal Oil Point was called p'ok'oy by the Chumash. Campbell's body was eventually moved to Chicago, where his wife's family is prominent. 13
- β Gate to Sands Beach, called mixas by the Chumash, the beach along the western boundary of the Isla Vista mesa. A good vantage point for viewing the coastline, Santa Ynez mountains, and the Santa Barbara Channel. Much of the beach below is a reserved for the Western Snowy Plover, an endangered shorebird. Much of the land near here is part of the Coal Oil Point Natural Reserve, and is not open to the public, and is used for research on California's primordial environment.
- γ The oil platform 'Platform Holly,' built in 1966 about 2 miles to the southwest of Coal Oil Point, is the last remaining platform in California State controlled waters in the Santa Barbara area. Other platforms in the distance are beyond 3 miles from the coast, and thus under Federal jurisdiction. Holly pumps oil into the white, domed covered oil tanks to the north. Venoco Inc., the operators of Holly are seeking (in 2006) to expand operations.
- δ Two white, cylindrical oil tanks with domed roofs, where oil from Platform Holly is stored. Every 10 days or so, an oil tanker moors off Sands Beach and pumps the oil out of the tanks.
- ε Six mooring buoys, where every 10 days or so the oil tanker Jovalon stops and pumps out the oil from the two white oil tanks. Often sea lions sun themselves on the buoys. Head back along the Cliff House parking lot. You'll walk by the location of the old 'Enchanted Forest,' now cut down and off limits to visits. Once the Enchanted Forest was a well-known make-out spot.
- ζ Jacobs Hall, the main house of the Campbell Ranch in the 1920s and 1930s, when it was visited by Prince George, future King of England and father of the current Queen, and Cary Grant. Now the headquarters of the Devereux Foundation Santa Barbara, a center for people with developmental disabilities, which occupies the ground surrounding Jacobs Hall.
- ζ' Devereux Slough, called 'uksholo' by the Chumash, which is now usually dry in the summer and fall, and then a shallow body of water in the winter and spring. In 2006, exceptional conditions kept this slough wet all summer. Prior to European settlement, this slough connected with the much larger Goleta Slough, now the site of the Santa Barbara Airport. The connection of these two sloughs made Isla Vista a true island before European settlement.

- η The West Campus Stables, where UCSB students and staff keep horses.
- θ Abandoned Red Barn, originally part of the Campbell Ranch. UCSB has not had funds to make it earthquake safe.
- ι Orfalea Family Children's Center, principal childcare facility for UCSB students and staff. Children from 3 months old to 5 years old attend.
- κ Isla Vista Elementary School, since 1959 the school attended by IV and UCSB children. The school was rebuilt in 1999. The Isla Vista Youth Projects after school program for K-6 students takes place in temporary buildings behind the school. Walk north along Storke Road.
- λ Note that Storke Road goes downhill as you walk north, away from Isla Vista School. As you walk past Francisco Torres, you pass into the City of Goleta. The lowest spot is where the Devereux Slough used to connect to the Goleta Slough, rendering Isla Vista an island. European agricultural techniques caused sedimentation that filled the slough system. Continue north to Phelps Road, and take a right (to the East).
- μ Isla Vista Youth Projects childcare center (6842 Phelps Road). Founded in the early 1970's, the childcare center was for many years in the buildings just north of the Methodist Church in IV. Continue to the east, past the Storke Ranch housing, and then proceed east through the Storke Campus family housing, to the intersection of Mesa Road and Los Carneros Road. For part of this walk, there is a state ecological reserve to the left (to the north), which is a remnant of the Goleta Slough. Continue to the intersection of Mesa and Stadium Roads.
- σ (Map 2) Campus public safety center, where the fire department, ambulance service, and UCSB Campus Police are headquartered. The UCSB Campus Police perform all law enforcement activities on the UCSB Campus.
- ς Goleta West Sanitary District (GWSD), the first of the two special districts founded in 1954 by the homeowners who then dominated the population of Isla Vista. Originally called the Isla Vista Sanitary District, the GWSD handles sewage processing and street sweeping for Isla Vista and western Goleta. The name was changed in 1990 in response to Goleta residents who disliked the name 'Isla Vista'. The area to the north of the GWSD still has some of the equipment used to regulate the remnants of the Goleta/Devereux slough system, as well as a lot of wildlife, and good views of remnants of the sloughs.
- φ A large oak tree to the north of the RecCen, another remnant of Isla Vista's primeval oak forest.

⌘ Beginning of the mesa bluff trail along the northern edge of campus. The trail head is at the northern end of a cross walk across Mesa Road at the intersection with University Plaza, near Cheadle Hall. The trail winds down to a paved access road used by the Santa Barbara Airport staff when they work on the restoration of native plants in the portions of the airport immediately to the north of the UCSB campus. Actually, much of this land was once up at the level of the UCSB mesa, but the Marines bulldozed much of the dirt to the northeast to fill the Goleta Slough. As a result, the level of the land is 20 feet or so below the level of the UCSB mesa. A new fence with barbed wire atop marks the boundary of the airport, and the boundary between UCSB and the City of Santa Barbara. 15

Continue eastward along the paved road, past the access gate to the airport, and then continue straight beyond the end of the pavement. Eventually the trail turns right (south) and up into a small oak forest. This oak forest is one of the few places one can get a feeling for what the oak forest that covered Isla Vista during Chumash times was like. Continue up to the top of the UCSB mesa, where the trail winds along next to Mesa Road. There are good views of the airport and the remnant of the Goleta Slough from this portion of the trail. The Goleta Slough was a huge body of water that once spread, prior to European settlement of the area, from the UCSB mesa all the way across the airport to Hollister avenue. The Slough, known by the Chumash as sitiptip, was crucial to local Chumash existence. As soon as European agricultural techniques took hold, starting around 1790, the Slough began to silt in, due to dirt in the runoff water from the streams that drain into the Slough. However, as late as the 1950's, it was still hard to cross the Slough to get to UCSB. In the 1950's, UCSB students referred to the Goleta campus as 'Slough U'.

In the 1960's, there was a plan to extend Highway 217 (Ward Memorial Drive) along the Goleta Slough, Mesa Road, and Phelps Road, all the way through to rejoin the 101 near Sandpiper Golf Course. Opposition to this plan brought together many activists in 1969 who also were involved in the 1970 riots. The 'Sloughway' as it was called was ultimately canceled by the State of California.

There is also a good view, to the northeast, of a large mound just to the north of Highway 217. This is the last remnant of a large island, where many Chumash lived until European contact, called Mescalitan Island. Most of Mescalitan Island was also bulldozed by the City of Santa Barbara and the Marines in 1941-1942 to fill the Goleta Slough, and in the process, thousands of Chumash skeletons were disturbed.

⌘ End of the mesa bluff trail, and end of the tour. Be careful crossing Mesa Road when returning to campus.