

10 × 10 Career Lessons: Syllabus

Economics 86 — Spring 2026 (section 77989)

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Class Time: Tue 5:00p-6:20p
Classroom: Malk Hall 520
Course Web Page: econ.ucsd.edu/muendler/teach/26s/86

1 Description and Objectives

This course presents essential insights, skills and approaches to support your professional aspirations and to help you design your career path. Through instruction and through interactions with experts, many of them UC San Diego alumni, you learn from ten leaders over the course of ten weeks the 10 lessons each expert considers crucial—and you might otherwise not hear about in college. Mindset matters for real-world career planning and core competencies. In discussions with the experts and alumni, you will learn about effective strategies to leverage skills and pursue suitable and promising individual career trajectories.

2 Course Schedule

1. **Tue, March 31:** Ken Kroner (CEO, Pluribus Labs; formerly Senior Managing Director, BlackRock)
2. **Tue, April 7:** Deb Bronston-Culp (Founding Partner, Samothrace Partners)
3. **Tue, April 14:** Marc Muendler (Professor and Chair, UC San Diego, Economics)
4. **Tue, April 21:** Chris Stomberg (Managing Director, NERA Consulting)
5. **Tue, April 28:** David Victor (Professor, UC San Diego, Co-director Deep Decarbonization Initiative)
6. **Tue, May 5:** Alexis Volen (COO, Cire Equity)
7. **Tue, May 12:** Chris Tolles (President and COO, Transparency Analytics)
8. **Tue, May 19:** Erich Gazau (CIO, Papa)
9. **Tue, May 26:** Jaime Lizarraga (formerly Commissioner, Securities and Exchange Commission)
10. **Tue, June 2:** Brian Malk (Founding Partner, Midtown National Group)

3 Prerequisites

None.

4 Format

The course will be held in seminar style and **in-person** only. Remote participation is not possible.

For the first hour or so of each class, the invited guest speaker will discuss their personal 10 lessons. The speakers and instructors encourage you to ask questions. After the speaker's formal presentation concludes, we will use the second part of class for open discussion. You are expected to be attentive during the formal presentation and to participate in the subsequent class discussions. Laptops and other electronic devices are strongly discouraged—except between the formal presentation and the subsequent class discussion for a short poll (Canvas quiz), which you can complete on a small hand-held electronic device in little time.

5 Reflection Papers

In preparation for the speaker series, you are expected to submit a half-page initial reflection paper by Friday, April 10. The initial reflection paper should include schooling and career lessons you have learnt to date and would share with others as advice, discuss areas of lacking knowledge that you are aware of, and describe the expectations that you have for this course and the speakers. The initial reflection paper will be graded on coherence and succinctness for a Pass/No Pass grade.

At the conclusion of the speaker series, you are expected to submit a two-page final reflection paper by Friday, June 12. The final reflection paper should contrast your initial knowledge and expectations with main lessons that you took away from individual speakers and from the group as a whole. The final reflection paper will be graded on the progression of your reasoning and insight compared to the initial reflection paper, as well as succinctness, for a Pass/No Pass grade.

6 Attendance and Canvas Surveys

You are expected to attend at least 8 out of the 10 in-person classes to pass the course. If you cannot attend a class for a reason beyond your control, you must notify the instructor of record (Marc Muendler) or reader (Eugenio Piga) right away, ideally in advance.

During class, between the formal presentation and the subsequent class discussion, you will be asked to answer an online poll, in the form of a [Canvas](#) quiz. Please have your own hand-held electronic device ready with Canvas access to class. Your answers to the quiz will not be scored, only your participation will be recorded.

At the end of the quarter, your Canvas records must show participation in eight (8) out of the ten in-person lecture days. The responses to the Canvas quiz will be used for the count.

7 Reflection Questions and Group Discussions

Starting in week 3, on Tuesday, April 14, you will be divided into discussion groups with around half-a-dozen students per group. The groups may be re-randomized later in the quarter. You are expected to find 20 to 30 minutes outside of class per week to meet with your discussion group to engage in a reflection question about speakers in past weeks or for that week. As a group member, you are expected to post a selfie with the group

or, if you cannot meet, a photo or screenshot of a written answer to the reflection question by Friday of the respective week at 11:59pm.

Week 4, April 24: What do you think can make a career similar to a play in several acts?

Week 5, April 31: What do you consider the best first job out of school?

Week 6, May 8: What may be benefits of consistency without exception, and how can you achieve it?

Week 7, May 15: How can you best invest in your network?

Week 8, May 22: What do you think a performance mindset entails?

Week 9, May 29: In which ways do you think relationships build over time?

Week 10, June 5: What principles would you apply to calibrate a career compass?

8 Software

Please consider installing the Canvas app on a hand-held electronic device and have the device ready between the formal presentation and the subsequent class discussion for a short poll (Canvas quiz). Laptops and other electronic devices are strongly discouraged, and please store away the hand-held electronic device after taking the short poll (Canvas quiz).

9 Assessment

The only grading option for the course is Pass/No Pass. In order to pass the course you must complete *all* of the following:

- Attend at least 8 out of 10 in-person classes;
- Turn in a half-page initial reflection paper by April 10, 4:50pm (submission to [Canvas](#));
- Submit at least 5 out of 7 selfies from group meetings (or answers to the weekly reflection question) by Friday, 11:59pm, of weeks 4-10 (submission to [Canvas](#));
- Turn in a two-page final reflection paper by June 12, 4:50pm (submission to [Canvas](#)).

Submission of the half-page initial reflection paper by April 10, 4:50pm also serves to certify **commencement of your academic activity** for purposes of financial aid.

10 Academic Integrity

Principles of academic honesty are strictly applied. You are expected to honor the highest standards of academic integrity, and principles of academic honesty are strictly enforced.

Students are expected to do their own work. The complete UC San Diego Policy on Integrity of Scholarship can be viewed at the [Senate web page](#). Examples of academic dishonesty in this class could be plagiarizing any aspect of a reflection paper or misstating reasons for missing a class.

Failure to honor the academic integrity code will be reported to the office of academic integrity. To review the campus policy, please visit: students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity. In addition to any penalties imposed by the Academic Integrity Review Board, we reserve the right to fail students found guilty of academic misconduct.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools is permitted with citation. AI tools may be used freely in this course provided their use is transparent and properly cited. All AI contributions must be credited just as any other source would be cited. Students are fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and quality of all submitted work. This expectation is in place to ensure that all submitted work reflects the student's own reflections, learning and skills. Suspected submission of AI-generated content without citation or presenting it as entirely one's own work will be reported to the Academic Integrity Office in accordance with university policy.

11 Academic Accommodations

Any student with documented disability in accordance with UC San Diego policy has the right to a special accommodation. Please contact the Economics Undergraduate Advisors with any questions about documentation. For this purpose, please send a "Question" to "Economics" using the Virtual Advising Center (VAC).

12 Non-discrimination and No Harassment

UC San Diego and the Economics Department are committed to creating an environment free from all forms of discrimination and harassment, in which all students are able to learn and openly express themselves.

13 Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) refers to the academic standards that a student must maintain to remain eligible for federal, state, and institutional financial aid. If you are receiving financial aid, please ensure you review the [SAP requirements and the appeals process](#). Attendance and submission of the initial reflection paper by April 10 will be used to certify whether students have commenced academic activity at the beginning of the quarter.

14 Food Support

If you are skipping and stretching meals, or having difficulties affording or accessing food, you may be eligible for [CalFresh](#), California's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, that can provide free money on a debit card to buy food. You may qualify for California's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that awards students in need with monthly grocery benefits, so you can supplement your food budget and buy food. Students can apply at benefitscal.com/r/ucsandiegocalfresh. The Hub Basic Needs Center empowers all students by connecting them to resources for food, stable housing and financial literacy. Visit their site at basicneeds.ucsd.edu.