

Innovation 360 – Fall 2026

Session 1 – Workshop Kick-off: The Innovation Journey - (THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2026)

Subject: The opening session features two senior faculty members who have decades of experience transitioning technology from academia to industry, both through startups and multinational corporations. This session will explore the innovation process from ideation to product.

Session 2 – Industry (THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2026)

Subject: Industry views early-stage technology and research very differently from academia. To attract commercial interest for your innovation, there is often key data or prototyping needed to demonstrate potential value and attract commercial interest that differs from data critical to academic publication. This session explores how to effectively and efficiently communicate your research and innovation to key decision makers from outside academia (who are not always subject matter experts) to create advocates for your work.

SESSION ACTIVITY: Participants will develop a compelling “elevator pitch” to generate industry interest, using a sample technology.

Session 3 – Product Market Fit (THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2026)

Subject: Innovators need to actively identify and engage potential customers/users to understand whether an innovation addresses a significant pain point that will attract broad engagement and deployment, and to identify what commercial applications may be the closest fit/most attractive for the technology.

SESSION ACTIVITY: Participants will work together to identify key segments of customers, users, decision makers and influencers for a case technology, and develop an interview approach designed to elicit pain points and market intelligence.

Session 4 – Pivoting (THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2026)

Subject: The first market application thought of rarely ends up being the final or best one. As an innovation is developed and customer discovery deepens, new potential applications, products or services are discovered where the innovation can make an even deeper impact.

SESSION ACTIVITY: Participants will review technology case studies to identify multiple potential markets and use cases for each one.

Session 5 – Intellectual property – a practicum. (THURSDAY, October 29, 2026)

Subject: Explore what is actually patentable, what is needed to make a patent valuable and attractive intellectual property, copyright principles and how the decision to open-source software can enhance (if software-based research projects are represented), or detract, future development and commercial adoption. For open access model deployment, this session will describe how IP protection can be used to assure quality standards are met even when innovations are deployed openly.

SESSION ACTIVITY: Participants will analyze technology case studies and develop a comprehensive intellectual property protection strategy.

Session 6 – Competitive Landscape Analysis (THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2026)

Subject: Basic issues to consider from a market perspective. What is the size of the addressable market, really, and is that market big enough to incentivize commercialization? Is it superior enough to current solutions to justify investment? To encourage consumers to adopt? Are there obligations to research sponsors or multiple owners that may chill commercial interest? What is the best comparable product in the marketplace? Why is this better?

SESSION ACTIVITIES: Participants will analyze the size of potential market for technology case studies to determine which, if any, provide a strong opportunity for commercial success.

Session 7 – Regulation (THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2026)

Subject: The regulatory landscape that a particular technology is critical to understand at the beginning. Regulations can create obstacles to technology deployment if not factored into product development, but also open up unique market opportunities. This session will explore how the regulatory landscape can enhance, or hamper, commercial adoptions.

SESSION ACTIVITY: Participants will explore the regulatory landscape for technology case studies to identify their potential effect on the anticipated market

Session 8 – Design to Scale (THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2026)

Subject: Basic, practical technical issues to consider when you believe you may be onto something with potential commercial importance or broad deployment, such as how easy is it to scale up? Does it use existing processes/equipment? Is it superior enough to current solutions to justify investment?

SESSION ACTIVITY: Participants review technology case studies to diagnose potential product development challenges – from material availability, scalability, cost to manufacture, and other points addressed in this session.

Session 9– UNIVERSITY RESOURCES AND FINAL PRESENTATIONS - (THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2026)

Subject: A short presentation be given on resources available at UCSB and beyond to help researchers develop technology within the university landscape, including funding opportunities.

SESSION ACTIVITY: The workshop culminates with each person making a final presentation on their “take aways” from this course.