

CAL POLY
Extended, Professional & Continuing Education

COLLABORATIVE PARTNER
SUMMER SPRINGBOARD

Experience Design

New student admissions for summer 2026 are open.

2-Week Course

This is a two-week program where you'll focus on one course for the entire duration.

Program Highlights

- Use design thinking to empathize, ideate and prototype experiences
- Learn and practice brainstorming techniques to facilitate with others
- Create user personas and experience journey maps
- Identify and design touchpoints and transitions
- Communicate ideas through narrative storyboards and other visuals
- Create your own business with unique experiences

2026 Dates

- Session 1: July 5 - July 17

Academic Program Overview

Does your creativity flow toward into making meaningful events, trips and experiences?

This class invites students to learn about human-centered, end-user focused, experience design. Students will learn how experiences are intentionally designed to shape emotions, behavior, choices, and create meaning and learning, in events, tourism, hospitality, recreation, and community settings. Students will learn to gather end-user qualitative data, create a user persona, and apply positive psychology principles, map, and create intentional experiences to engage diverse audiences for desired, positive outcomes. The readings and lectures draw from the Stanford. School/IDEO, Martin Seligman's positive psychology, the Heath Brother's Moments, Priya Parker's the Art of Gathering, and include hands-on empathy maps, customer journey maps, and creating touchpoint templates.

Excursions

Excursions will include visiting local business to better understand the guest journey and how it is imagined and implemented based on the desired experience.

Instructor

Dr. Keri Schwab

Dr. Schwab is a Professor in Cal Poly's Experience Industry Management Department, where she teaches and mentors undergraduate students in experience design, event planning and management (formerly recreation, parks, and tourism). Her research examines motivations, retention, and benefits associated with recreation participation, and has conducted research on youth engagement. More recently, she has explored physiological responses to nature in a study on physiological changes while crafting a 'selfie'. Her applied work has supported public agencies with recreation planning, visitor studies, and park trend analyses.

Course Structure

There are nine three-hour class sessions over the two-week course. During week one, students have class from 9 a.m.-noon, Monday - Friday. During week two, students have class from 9 a.m.-noon Monday through Thursday. Wednesday afternoons are dedicated to additional academic time (excursions, speakers).

Tuition Information:

Residential Students

- Includes: all meals, lodging, excursions, academic course, weekend excursions
- Excludes: optional airport pickup and drop-off service (available for an additional fee)
- Price: $5,398

Commuter Students

- Includes: lunch, academic course, excursions, programming from 9am to 5pm, Monday-Friday
- Excludes: lodging, breakfast, dinner, weekend excursions
  - Weekend excursions can be added on for $125 per day
- Price: $2,998

Supplements:

- Application fee: starting at $99 (mandatory, nonrefundable)
- Tuition Protection Plan: Allows for cancellation for any reason up until the day of the program. Click here for more info.

Typical Schedule

8AM	Breakfast
9AM	Academic Course / Commuter Student Arrival
12PM	Lunch
1:30PM	Academic Excursions or Recreational Activity
3:30PM	College Readiness Workshop or True You
5PM-6:30PM	Commuter Student Departure
6PM	Dinner
7PM	Clubs
10:30PM	Night Checks

More info on Airport Transfer

More Info on Unaccompanied Minor Service

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