

ALISHER BATMANOV

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Graduate Coordinator:	Andrew Flores	aflores@ucsd.edu	(858) 534-1867

EDUCATION

2021–2027	University of California San Diego – Ph.D. Economics (expected)
2019–2021	Central European University , Austria – M.A. Economics, <i>summa cum laude</i>
2015–2019	Nazarbayev University , Kazakhstan – B.A. Economics, <i>magna cum laude</i>

RESEARCH FIELDS

Primary	Experimental Economics, Behavioral Economics
Secondary	Development Economics, Economic Theory

REFERENCES

Professor Emanuel Vespa (Co-chair)
UC San Diego, Department of Economics
3005 Voigt Dr., Brian C. Malk Hall, 488
La Jolla, CA, 92093-0508
evespa@ucsd.edu

Professor Isabel Treviño (Co-chair)
UC San Diego, Department of Economics
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Professor Denis Shishkin
UC San Diego, Department of Economics
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Professor Melissa Famulari
UC San Diego, Department of Economics
3005 Voigt Dr., Brian C. Malk Hall, 441
La Jolla, CA, 92093-0508
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RELEVANT POSITIONS

2025–present	Experimental Laboratory Manager at UC San Diego Economics Laboratory (EconLab)
2023–present	UC San Diego Undergraduate–Graduate Economic Research Lab Supervisor

JOB MARKET PAPER

“Fragile Learning From Others” [\[pdf\]](#) (*updated regularly*)

Behavioral biases in decision-making are widespread and often persist even in the presence of feedback diagnostic of optimal behavior. This paper examines whether exposure to others’ decisions can correct initial misconceptions and facilitate learning in an environment where departures from the theoretical benchmark arise from neglecting an informative signal in a worker hiring task. Using a laboratory experiment, I show that exposure to optimal behavior substantially improves decision quality. The analysis of the underlying mechanisms suggests that this improvement is not driven by mechanical imitation alone, as subjects respond asymmetrically to the quality of observed choices, nor entirely by the richer feedback environment that social exposure generates. I then evaluate the retention and transfer of these learning gains beyond the period of exposure and find that, for most subjects, the improvements are fragile. Comparing the effects of social exposure to those of explicit guidance further underscores the limits of observational learning as a policy tool. These findings highlight the dual role of social learning: while it can enhance decision-making, it can also generate imitation behavior that fails to generalize beyond the observed context.

PUBLISHED PAPERS

“Beliefs, Information Sharing, and Mental Health Care Use Among University Students” (2026) (with Idaliya Grigoryeva, Bruno Calderón, Roberto González and Alejandro Guardiola) [\[pdf\]](#)

Journal of Development Economics, 180, 103646.

This paper investigates the role of beliefs and stigma in shaping students’ use of professional mental health services at a large private university in Mexico, where supply-side barriers are minimal and services are readily accessible. In a survey experiment with 680 students, we find that nearly 50% of students in distress do not receive professional mental health support despite a high level of awareness and perceived effectiveness, constituting a substantial treatment gap. We document stigmatized beliefs and misconceptions correlated with the treatment gap. As three-quarters of students incorrectly believe that those in distress perform worse academically and that the majority of students going to therapy are in severe distress, we implement an information intervention to correct these beliefs. We find that it increases students’ sharing of on-campus mental health resources with peers and encourages them to recommend these resources when advising a friend in distress. Interestingly, we find that it lowers respondents’ willingness to pay for private therapy at the end of the intervention. Yet, this effect does not translate into a long-run reduction in self-reported therapy use six months after the experiment, with prior therapy users showing increased off-campus take-up.

“Reproducibility and Robustness of Economics and Political Science Research” (2026) (meta paper with Abel Brodeur, Derek Mikola, Nikolai Cook, et al.) [\[pdf\]](#)

Nature, 652(8108), 151–156.

WORK IN PROGRESS

“Learning to Ignore Irrelevant Contingencies: An Experiment” (*draft coming soon!*) (with Jeongbin Kim and Emanuel Vespa)

We study how individuals learn to make optimal decisions when doing so requires conditioning on payoff-relevant contingencies, as prescribed by theory. Using a laboratory experiment, we contrast learning across two environments: one in which irrelevant contingencies are excluded by design, and another in which they occur with positive probability but never affect outcomes. At baseline, 4 out of 5 subjects make a suboptimal choice. With experience and feedback, 71% of participants in the zero-probability environment switch to the optimal choice, compared to 49% in the setting where such contingencies remain present, indicating that engagement with payoff-irrelevant situations hinders learning. Participants in the zero-probability treatment are also more likely to report correct beliefs about the task environment and, conditional on holding accurate beliefs, are 15 percentage points more likely to make an optimal choice. These findings suggest that in many environments that necessitate reasoning through contingencies, not engaging with events that are irrelevant to the outcome can significantly ease learning and lead to optimal behavior.

“Experiment on Narratives and Information in Persuasion” (*draft coming soon!*) (with Bridget Galaty)

We experimentally study how the elements of cheap-talk communication and narrative persuasion interact in the same setting. In an inference task, receivers observe a dataset and make predictions after receiving a message from a sender who may have additional information and who communicates either through a simple recommendation or a narrative explanation. By varying the sender’s information and communication mode, we isolate the effects of new information versus new interpretation. We examine how the effects of these message types differ based on whether the sender and receiver have aligned or misaligned preferences, allowing us to test predictions from models of strategic information transmission and to assess when persuasion works through informational advantage versus framing. We find that receivers’ guesses land roughly midway between the true grade and the sender’s recommendation. Both informational advantage and narratives increase persuasive power, though information plays a much stronger role: a sender with an informational advantage moves guesses approximately 39% closer to their recommendation, while adding a narrative under equal information yields a smaller, statistically insignificant effect

of approximately 9%. This asymmetry holds across all levels of task complexity—varying the number of variables and conditional versus unconditional DGP structure. When preferences are aligned, both channels move guesses more strongly toward the recommendation, but information continues to matter more.

“Descriptive Simplicity in Strategyproof Matching Mechanisms” (*designing experiment*)

Although strategyproof matching mechanisms such as deferred acceptance (DA) and serial dictatorship (SD) guarantee that straightforward reporting is a dominant strategy, empirical evidence consistently documents widespread deviations from truthful behavior. This raises a fundamental question: are such deviations driven by strategic incentives, or by misunderstanding of the mechanism’s informational structure? In this project, I examine whether alternative descriptions of strategyproof mechanisms can reduce cognitive burden and improve straightforward reporting. Rather than altering the underlying mechanism, I focus on how it is explained to participants. Specifically, I study interventions that highlight counterfactual outcomes under alternative rank-order lists, allowing participants to observe for themselves that strategizing cannot improve their payoff. By making the logic of strategyproofness transparent through concrete examples, the intervention aims to improve participants’ understanding of dominant-strategy incentives and increase truthful reporting.

TEACHING AT UC SAN DIEGO

Course Instructor

Intermediate Econometrics (ECON-120B)	FA25
Student learning: 4.54/5 Course structure: 4.51/5 Class environment: 4.76/5	
Intermediate Microeconomics (ECON-100A)	SU25
Student learning: 4.6/5 Course structure: 4.6/5 Class environment: 4.65/5	
Intermediate Econometrics (ECON-120B)	SU24
Student learning: 4.24/5 Course structure: 4.36/5 Class environment: 4.64/5	

Teaching Assistant

Econometrics (ECON-220B, PhD level), for Prof. Ma	WI23
Overall rating: 4.90/5 Positive responses: 98%	
Intermediate Microeconomics (ECON-100A), for Prof. Grigoryan	SP26
Overall rating: 4.79/5 Positive responses: 98%	
Principles of Microeconomics (ECON-1), for Prof. Famulari	SU24, FA22
Overall rating: 4.78/5 Positive responses: 96%	
Game Theory (ECON-109), for Prof. Watson and Prof. Shishkin	SU26, WI24, FA23, SU23
Overall rating: 4.72/5 Positive responses: 95%	
Intermediate Microeconomics (ECON-100B), for Prof. Grigoryan	SP24, SU23
Overall rating: 4.63/5 Positive responses: 97%	
Experiments in Firms (MGT-160), for Profs. Sadoff, Samek, and Fragiadakis	FA24, WI25, SP25
Overall rating: 4.63/5 Positive responses: 95%	
Behavioral Economics (ECON-142), for Prof. Treviño	SP23
Overall rating: 4.50/5 Positive responses: 100%	

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

2026	Stanford Institute for Theoretical Economics (SITE-Experimental), <i>Stanford</i> Behavioral & Experimental Workshop in Theory-Based Experiments (CTESS), <i>Caltech</i> Economic Science Association (ESA) World Meetings, <i>Los Angeles CA</i>
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	Southwest Economic Theory Conference (SWET), <i>Loyola Marymount University</i>
2025	Behavioral Economics Annual Meeting (BEAM), <i>UC Berkeley</i> (participant)
	Economic Science Association (ESA) North American Meetings, <i>Tucson AZ</i>
	Los Angeles Experiments (LAX) Conference, <i>UCLA</i> (participant)
	Behavioral & Experimental Economics Student Conference, <i>UC Santa Barbara</i>
	Advances with Field Experiments (AFE) Conference, <i>University of Chicago</i>
	American Economic Association (AEA) CSQIEP Mentoring Conference, <i>Chicago IL</i>
2024	Economic Science Association (ESA) North American Meetings, <i>Columbus OH</i>
	Behavioral & Experimental Economics Student Conference, <i>Caltech</i>
	Los Angeles Experiments (LAX) Conference, <i>Caltech</i> (poster)
2023	Behavioral & Experimental Economics Student Conference, <i>Caltech</i>

SCHOOLS & WORKSHOPS

2026	Russell Sage Foundation (RSF) Summer Institute in Behavioral Economics, <i>Boston MA</i>
2025	Chicago School in Experimental Economics (CSEE), <i>University of Chicago</i>
2024	Learning, Computational and Bayesian Methods in Experimental Economics, <i>Purdue</i>
	Rady Spring School in Behavioral Economics, <i>UC San Diego</i>
2023	Summer Institute in Theory-Based Experiments (CTESS), <i>Caltech</i>

RESEARCH GRANTS

2023–2024	The Weiss Fund for Research in Development Economics
2024	UC-Mexico Alianza Short-Term Research Stay in Mexico
2024	Institute for Humane Studies – Conference Accelerator Grant
2021	Foundation of Budapest Research Grant, Central European University

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

2024	Diversity Research Fellowship, UC San Diego
2021–2022	Regents and Summer Research Fellowship, UC San Diego
2021	Peter Hangartner Prize and Fellowship, Central European University
2019	Outstanding Student in Economics Award, Nazarbayev University

REFEREEING

Games and Economic Behavior, Journal of Development Economics

LANGUAGES

Kazakh (native), English (fluent), Russian (fluent)

SOFTWARE SKILLS

Python, Stata, Matlab, Julia, oTree, JavaScript

Last updated on July 20, 2026