Have you ever found yourself in a seat on an airliner wondering what was going on behind the cockpit door? UC San Diego’s Ed Hutchins draws on more than 20 years of experience researching the cognition of airline flight crews to take us behind the locked door. Modern airliners are highly automated systems. There is no doubt that increasing automation has been accompanied by improvements in flight safety. But automation also brings new kinds of problems to the flight deck. What are the cognitive consequences of flight deck automation?

In this presentation, Ed Hutchins will describe a number of studies that illustrate ways to answer this question. He will describe his entry into the global community of pilots through the ethnographic methods and participant observation. He will discuss the challenges of designing and evaluating new cockpit displays, documenting what pilots know about the automation in their airplanes, how they go about learning what they know, and finally, how we can use state-of-the-art sensor technology and computational techniques to accelerate the analysis of flight crew behavior.

Bio: Professor Edwin Hutchins has devoted his career to studying cognition in real-world settings. These settings range from land litigation in Papua New Guinea to traditional long-distance navigation in Micronesia, navigation on large navy ships, and, for the past 22 years, the cognitive human factors of flight deck operations in commercial airlines worldwide. He is known for developing the theoretical framework called “distributed cognition” and the associated “cognitive ethnography” methods. Professor Hutchins was awarded a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation fellowship in 1985 and was named a fellow of the Cognitive Science Society in 2002. He is the author of Culture and Inference (1980, Harvard University Press) and Cognition in the Wild (1995, MIT Press).

Supper Club registration includes a wine reception, full dinner, and Faculty Club parking in addition to the lecture. To Register; please send $65/person (or $40/person if UCSD alumni) and the completed form below to: Social Sciences Supper Club, 9500 Gilman Drive, Mail Code 0502, La Jolla, California 92093-0502. Please make checks payable to UC Regents.

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Name(s) and Grad Year(s) if applicable ______________________________________________________
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Total Amount $ _______ if using a credit card, please circle one: MasterCard VISA American Express
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Reservations or additional information may be obtained by calling Marcie Marsh at 858-246-0372 or by emailing: marshall@ucsd.edu