



TRECC

TEACHING RESOURCES FOR ECONOMICS
AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

What is TRECC?

TRECC is an economics newsletter focused on teaching economics at the community college level. We seek to provide resources that will help instructors provide a dynamic and meaningful experience for their students. We also seek to unite instructors from across the country and open up lines of communication between us all.

TRECC goes to a list of over 1500 community college instructors. Help us reach everyone by adding others in your economics department. Send email addresses to: mmaier@glendale.edu

Helpful Resources

Click below to access each resource.

[Resources for Economics Educators--American Economic Association website](#)

[Starting Point--Teaching and Learning Economics](#)

[Economics at Community Colleges](#)

[Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta--Classroom Tools](#)

IN THIS ISSUE...

Upcoming Conferences

Click below to access information on each conference.

[EconED 2018](#)

October 12-13, 2018 Nashville, TN

[14th Annual Economics Teaching Conference \(NETA\)](#)

October 25-26, 2018 Phoenix, AZ

[16th Annual St. Louis FED Professors Conference--Diversity in the Economics Classroom and in the Discipline](#)

November 1-2, 2018 St. Louis, MO

[Beyond the Numbers: The Economic Data Ecosystem](#)

November 7-9, 2018 Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, MO

[2018 SEA \(Southern Economic Association\)](#)

November 18-20, 2018 Washington, D.C

Calling all Innovative Educators!

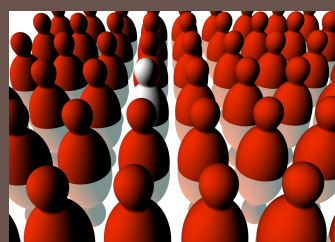
We would like to feature teaching ideas from our readership in each issue. Responses from the first issue were low so please consider sharing what you're doing in the classroom! Please send all ideas to Katie Lotz at klotz@lakelandcollege.edu



**INCREASING STUDENT
SUCCESS WITH
ACTIVE LEARNING**



**WHY
ECONOMICS?**



**A MORE INCLUSIVE
CLASSROOM**



**PODCASTS
IN THE
CLASSROOM**

Active Learning with Data

Written By Diego Mendez-Carbajo

You probably have heard about “active learning” as a strategy for teaching. [First defined almost three decades ago](#), active learning prioritizes student engagement over lecturing.

The STEM disciplines have developed multiple applications of active learning techniques and [found them effective at increasing student performance](#).

Moreover, Bayer endorses active learning in economics by [citing studies “showing that active learning can help encourage women and racial minority groups in fields where they are underrepresented.”](#)

The [Starting Point: Teaching and Learning Economics website](#) gives you free access to many examples of active learning activities.

The Case Study Method Classroom Experiments Just-in-Time Teaching Teaching with Data

In-class discussions and out-of-class assignments developed around the “teaching with data” pedagogy can easily be aligned with the [development of data-focused proficiencies among students of economics](#).



[FRED \(Federal Reserve Economic Data\)](#) is a versatile resource for active learning with data.

Lectures can be made interactive by adding [graph-building](#) and [graph-reading activities leading to class discussions](#).

[Playing the economic forecasting game FREDcast](#) allows instructors to develop experiential learning activities.

[Mapping data through GeoFRED](#) allows students to relate to abstract economic concepts and identify patterns.

Explore these resources from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis to learn more on how to bring active learning with FRED data into your course:

[Tools for Teaching with FRED](#): lesson plans and tutorials.

FRED in the Classroom newsletters ([subscribe here](#)) with “turn-key” in-class activities and out-of-class assignments:

[Gross Domestic Product](#)
[Inflation](#)
[Unemployment](#)
[Employment](#)

Don't miss the two upcoming learning opportunities hosted by the St. Louis Federal Reserve bank in the "Upcoming Conferences" section.

Why Economics?

What to do when students question the value of learning the dismal science.

Written By Lucy Malakar

Do your students wonder why they have to take economics or what they will learn? Do they ever ask you about majoring in economics? We built a Canvas module to help answer these exact student questions. It is a fun way to show them what economics is all about and why they might consider majoring in economics. The module is available in Canvas Commons (Search: Why economics?) or by emailing Lucy Malakar at lmalakar@lorainccc.edu or James Peyton at jpeyton@highline.edu for the Canvas file.

The module is also available for Blackboard by logging in and downloading or copying it from www.coursesites.com.

User Name: WhyEcon
Password: WhyEcon101

A website containing the same information and more is currently under development. Questions? Feel free to email Lucy Malakar or James Peyton.

Recommended Reading



Constructing a Learner Centered Syllabus: One Professor's Journey

Aaron S. Richmond • Metropolitan State University
of Denver



Equity and Inclusion Initiative in Economics at Community Colleges (EIIE@CC)

A new group has been formed to help instructors create a more inclusive learning environment for their students.

The Equity and Inclusion Initiative in Economics (EIIE) is designed to increase the number of women in the economics major at community colleges, as well as increase the representation of students from underrepresented populations. The EIIE@CC Task Force would like to increase awareness of the problem, and to invite our colleagues in economics departments from across the country to participate in this important initiative. The task force would also like to encourage and create space for our community of instructors to share pedagogical practices, course redesigns, and other instructional interventions that have proven effective in increasing equity and inclusion in the classroom, through our newsletter, regional meetings, presentations at conferences, creation of teaching materials, and publication in teaching journals.

If you are interested in participating in the Equity and Inclusion Initiative in Economics @ Community Colleges, please contact Clare Battista, Professor of Economics, Santa Monica College at battista_clare@smc.edu

Review of CoreEcon's Missing Women in Economics: A More Inclusive Classroom

Written By Clare Battista

A More Inclusive Classroom follows up on a previous article by [CoreEcon](#) that explained why an estimated 300,000 women were missing from undergraduate study in economics. The practical focus of this new article is on what economics faculty can do to make the discipline more relevant to, and inclusive of women undergraduates, while waiting for the longer run historical and cultural changes to kick in.

First, using the research findings that women undergraduates are interested in applied economics, CoreEcon suggests that instructors begin their introductory courses with real world issues and events, and sustain that focus throughout the course, rather than retreat back to theory after a few class meetings.



While female students are not averse to economic theory, CoreEcon suggests that economic theory with a purpose is much more appealing to female students. Further, providing a social and historical context for the material may in fact better prepare students for more rigorous theory.

Second, based on the conclusions that women undergraduates are also more interested in economics as a social science, CoreEcon calls on instructors to introduce social problems like economic inequality or climate change into their

courses. While these topics are built into principles textbooks, they are often trimmed out of the course due to lack of time. CoreEcon indicates that by excluding these topics from the course, instructors may inadvertently discourage potential female econ majors.

Third, if it is the case that women undergraduates have an interest in psychology and female economics majors have often considered majoring in psychology, then CoreEcon recommends incorporating aspects of behavioral and experimental economics into introductory courses as a strategy for recruiting women into the discipline.

CoreEcon also advises that faculty pay attention to their own behavior in the classroom and keep biasedness in check. They encourage instructors and departments to explore [best practices for inclusive teaching](#) on Amanda Bayer's Div.E.Q.

Finally, as expected, CoreEcon suggests that faculty pay attention to the achievements of female economists, including recent graduates. They cite Claudia Goldin's [proposed interventions](#) for undergraduate students, and also suggest that some of their own [economist-in-action videos](#) might be a good go-to resource for highlighting the achievements of female economists.

Looking for a way to highlight female economists in your classroom?

Check out the ["Women in Economics" Podcast series](#) from the St. Louis Federal Reserve. This series highlights the careers of women prominent in the field of economics.

Utilizing Podcasts in the Classroom



Written By Katie Lotz

As a whole, the field of economics has embraced the idea of using media in the classroom. Online resources are abundant and include specifically focused sites such as [Bazinganomics](#) and more general resources such as the [Economics Media Library](#). Adding podcasts to your arsenal of media sources can offer another layer of real world application for your students.

32 % of Americans ages 25-54 listen to podcasts each month with podcast listenership increasing 14 % among females from 2017 to 2018. 42 million Americans listen to podcasts on a weekly basis.

Inspired by the creation of "The Indicator," which debuted on NPR last December, I developed a database of useful podcasts, ranging from 2016-present to use in both in-person and online classrooms.

The results have been incredibly positive. Student discussion is much more intense and dynamic than if I simply read or assign an article. I have also seen an increase in students' critical thinking abilities as they attempt to make the jump from traditional economic theory to real-world application. For example, students seem to better understand the effects of tariffs after they listen to The Indicator's, "China, Tariffs, and the Hogs of War" or better appreciate the complexity of globalization after hearing Freakonomics, "Did China Eat America's Jobs?"

Do you listen to a podcast that could potentially be used in the classroom? If so, please contact Katie Lotz so that your information can be included in the database.

Economic Podcast Database (2016-July 2018)

Innovation in the Classroom

Innovation is defined as the introduction of something new. The following examples give us new ways of presenting some very old economic ideas.



International Trade Assignment--David Davenport, McLennan Community College

The primary goal of the trade project is to internationalize our students without leaving the classroom. The assignments use market baskets and Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) to help students understand how currencies fluctuate over time and is an excellent way to introduce students to economic research and the scientific method.

Economics Career Project--Elisa Queenan, Porterville College and Tanya Downing, Cuesta College

The purpose of this project is to research and analyze a career of interest through use of the economic concepts of marginal analysis and opportunity cost. Additionally, this assignment will familiarize participants with educational resources provided by the Federal Reserve, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and other sources of invaluable online data. The goals of this project are to show understanding of, and ability to utilize, the economic concepts of marginal analysis and opportunity cost; to think critically about the impacts of changing economic conditions such as rising college costs, and technology, on careers of choice; and, to accurately and clearly present acquired and analyzed data.