

Starting Point: Pedagogical Resources for Teaching and Learning Economics The portal is being constructed for long-run success Based on a proven and stable model Well-funded through NSF Developed and organized by knowledgeable experts Thoughtfully designed and implemented plan Carefully crafted collaborations Attention to the details Built to grow, develop, and expand over time Demand for instructional reform in economics (?)

A Highly Selected Survey Sample

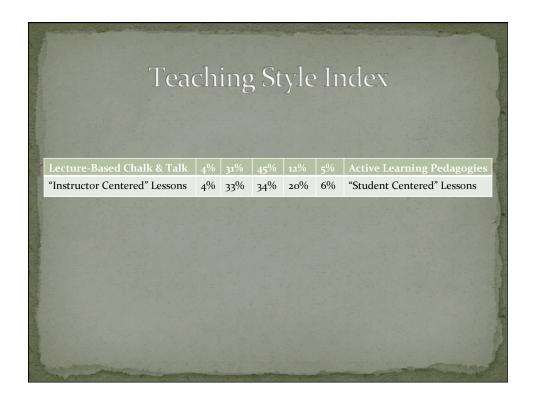
- 135 Respondents to a web-based survey conducted in mid-Fall 2009
- Economic educators belonging to electronic communities devoted to teaching
 - tchecon listserv
 - NAEEchat listserv
 - Economics for Teachers blog
 - Teaching Innovations Program (TIP) program participants mailing list

Respondents' Characteristics

- 61% Male
- 50% With 15 or more years teaching experience
 - 36% With 20 or more years
- 70% Teaching at a public institution
- Admission Standards
 - 2% Exclusive
 - 14% Highly Selective
 - 25% Selective
 - 26% Moderately Selective
 - 31% Open Admissions

Respondents' Characteristics

- 26% Frequently discuss teaching methods with departmental colleagues
- Teaching workshop attendance; past 10 years
 - 37% More than 5
 - 32% 3 to 5
 - 24% 1 or 2
- 44% Reported participation in AEA-sponsored TIP workshops
 - 30% Not aware of the program



Does Teaching Style Vary Across Courses?

Yes! Factors that seem important:

- Principles vs. Upper-division field courses
 - Some report use of more active learning techniques at Principles level while others report the reverse!
- Number of students in the class
- Physical environment and technological infrastructure of classroom
- Course content
- Target student audience

Satisfaction with Personal Teaching Style

- To what extent are you satisfied with your current overall approach to teaching under-graduate economics?
 - 13% Very Satisfied
 - 60% Satisfied
 - 5% Indifferent
 - 19% Not Satisfied
 - 1% Very Dissatisfied

Selected Comments on Dissatisfaction

- "I sometimes question if what I am doing is the best way."
- "Student indifference. Chalk and talk loses many more students than it enthralls."
- "Would like my classes to be more interactive."
- "The interest level of my students seems low. Ability of students to do analytical work is low."
- "My approach is OK, it is the outcomes that are unsatisfying."

Experimentation with Different Pedagogies

- To what extent have you experimented with different pedagogies in your undergraduate economics courses during the past 5 years?
 - 46% Extensively
 - 49% From time to time
 - 4% Once or twice
 - 1% Never

	 Familiar	Experimented	Adopted	Most Beneficial
Context Rich Problems	50%	33%	25%	9%
Just-In-Time Teaching	26%	10%	4%	1%
Quantitative Writing	20%	14%	11%	2%
Teaching with Cases	74%	40%	22%	12%
Cooperative Learning	73%	61%	47%	23%
Classroom Experiments	93%	77%	58%	34%
Computer Simulations	6o%	35%	14%	8%
Personal Response Systems	59%	21%	12%	11%
Guided Inquiry	27%	11%	6%	1%
Student Research	68%	50%	36%	14%
Service Learning	51%	11%	5%	2%
Spreadsheets Across Curriculum	11%	6%	2%	2%
Documented Problem Solving	14%	8%	5%	1%
Media-based Teaching	45%	34%	26%	14%
Interactive Lecturers	50%	34%	31%	14%
Interdisciplinary Approaches	45%	23%	17%	6%

Sources of Information on Alternative Teaching Methods Normal Most

	Normal Source	Most Beneficial
Colleagues in Discipline	67%	21%
Colleagues in Other Disciplines	49%	6%
Internet and Web-based Searches	39%	5%
Internet-based Discussion Groups	25%	1%
Disciplinary Workshops	62%	27%
Disciplinary Professional Conferences	51%	8%
Teaching and Education Conferences	33%	15%
Disciplinary Professional Journals	31%	2%
Interdisciplinary Teaching and Education Journals	21%	2%
Impossible to Say; Sources are Interconnected		7%
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Barriers to Teaching Reform

- Have you encountered or perceive that significant barriers exist for economists to integrate alternative pedagogies in their classrooms?
 - 39% Yes
 - 61% No

Frequently Cited Barriers

- Opportunity cost of time to learn and adopt
- Time costs relative to amount of material that must be covered during a course
- Opposition of colleagues and administrators
- Inertia and lack of incentives for change
- Textbook and materials not readily adaptable
- Physical classroom environments/infrastructure not conducive to alternative class formats
- Technical/mathematical nature of economics

Conclusions

- Yes, there is a demand for reforming teaching in economics!
 - 1 out of 5 survey respondents not satisfied with their current approach to teaching
 - Teaching innovation is part of the professional discussion
 - A vast majority of survey respondents have experimented with different classroom pedagogies
 - Respondents experiment with and use a wide variety of different classroom pedagogies
 - Chalk and Talk may not be the norm for many economists
 - 68% of survey respondents will "definitely visit" the Starting Point site and 27% desire to contribute.

Conclusions

- Yes, there are challenges!
 - Knowledge and use of specific pedagogical approaches vary widely
 - Currently, internet and web-based resources are not the primary source of information about alternative pedagogies for economists
 - Need to significantly reduce the opportunity cost of investing in new instructional approaches
 - Institutional barriers do exist for the adoption of new teaching techniques

