



# 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.

## 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](#)

## Upcoming Conferences

Click below to access information on each conference.

[2018 MEA \(Midwest Economics Association\)](#)

March 23-25, 2018 Evanston, Illinois

[2018 Annual AEA Conference on Teaching and Research in Economic Education \(CTREE\)](#)

May 30-June 1, 2018 San Antonio, Texas

[31st Summer Economic Institute for Teachers](#)

[Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research \(SIEPR\)](#)

July 9-13, 2018 Stanford, California

[2018 AAEA \(Agriculture & Applied Economics Association\)](#)

August 5-7, 2018 Washington, D.C.

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

November 18-20, 2018 Washington, D.C.

## Calling all Innovative Educators!

We would like to feature one teaching idea from our readership in each issue. These can be big or small! If you have an idea that you would like to share, please forward to Katie Lotz at [klotz@lakelandcollege.edu](mailto:klotz@lakelandcollege.edu). Check out page four for two great examples.

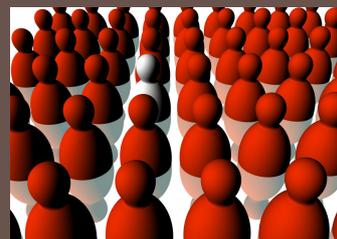
## IN THIS ISSUE...



**TEXTBOOK  
ALTERNATIVES**



**UTILIZING FRED IN  
THE CLASSROOM**



**GENDER BIAS IN  
ECON**

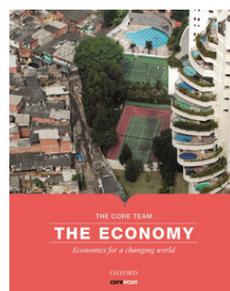


**UPPING YOUR  
ONLINE GAME**

# Alternatives to Traditional Text

Many of us are under pressure to offer no-cost textbooks in our economics courses. Options include OpenStax and The Economy by CORE. Click on the logos to the right to explore each text.

If you are currently using one of these texts, or would like to consider adopting one, please join a listserv by writing Mark Maier at [mmaier@glendale.edu](mailto:mmaier@glendale.edu). These textbooks have great potential—in addition to their unbeatable price—but each needs support. We'll share what works, what doesn't, and guide one another to supplementary content and teaching materials.



The Economy by CORE

## FRED in the Classroom



FRED—the Federal Reserve Economic Database—is not just the discipline's go-to site for economic data. The staff at the St. Louis Fed has also created [excellent instructional materials](#).

Also consider signing up for their [newsletter!](#)

This year community college economics education advocates organized three workshops on using FRED materials that took place in Cleveland, New York and Los Angeles. Look for new workshops at the conferences listed in this newsletter, or contact the [St. Louis Fed education staff](#).

## Examples of FRED Activities for Your Students!

Click below to access specific FRED activities.

[FRED in the Classroom: Debt and Deficit](#)

[Analyzing the Elements of Real GDP in FRED Using Stacking](#)

[Everything Including the Kitchen Sink - Progressive Reforms and Economic Wealth in the 1920s](#)

[FRED in the Classroom: Employment and the Labor Force](#)

[FRED in the Classroom: Measures of Inflation Lifetime Inflation Activity](#)

# Gender Bias in Economics

Written By Clare Battista

This is an invitation to join a dialogue on gender bias in the economics profession, sharing discussions that are occurring across our departments and campuses. Contact Clare Battista, Ph.D. Santa Monica College [cbattist@gmail.com](mailto:cbattist@gmail.com) to be part of the campaign.

At the 2018 American Economic Association meetings women economists presented ["new research that revealed a systemic bias in economics and presaged a move by the field's leaders to promise to address some of those issues."](#)

However, systematic bias in economics is not a new problem. Consider the evidence.

## [The Unequal Distribution of Economic Education](#)

Bayer and Wilcox show that even though women now comprise a majority of college graduates, the percentage of female economics majors has remained at around 30% for the past forty years. This is well below the percentage of females in other social sciences, in business, in the humanities, and is also below the percentage of females in STEM fields. While some might make the stereotypical claim that women do not have the technical skills or math competency to succeed in economics, this is simply not the case. In 2015, women comprised 45% of all math majors, yet only 28% of majors in economics.

## [Diversity in the Economics Profession: A New Attack on an Old Problem](#)

Bayer and Rouse show that male and female economists differ on policy issues such as inequality and the role of government. Thus, the underrepresentation of women in economics distorts policy recommendations.

## [Gender Bias by the Numbers](#)

More inclusive economic education has proven difficult for many reasons, including that women are missing from the textbooks. Stevenson and Zlotnick found that economic textbooks underrepresent women in examples, with 77% of the examples being male, 18% female, and 5% gender neutral. Further, when women are mentioned, the examples usually relate to food, fashion, or household tasks, reinforcing traditional gender stereotypes.

Given that women represent 57% of the community college population, and that many students are attending community colleges and transferring to four year schools, we need strategies to encourage more participation of women in community college economics courses.

**Do you have female students majoring in economics? If so, please let them know about a chance to discuss issues and opportunities in the field.**

## [Women in Economics Symposium](#)

Thursday, Feb. 22, 2018

3:30 to 7:45 p.m.

Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis

In addition to time to network and discuss career options over hors d'oeuvres, the event will feature a review of the research and data on women in economics, a panel featuring women from various career fields who majored in economics, and unique perspectives from leaders in the field.

# Upping Your Online Game

Starting in spring of 2018, there will be a new listserv developed specifically for economics faculty who teach in the distance education format. It will be useful to those who teach both fully online as well as those who teach in the blended environment. The list will provide a location where educators are able to discuss issues related to distance education and share ideas and resources for teaching in the online learning environment and for our distance education students. The list will also be archived so that past postings can be searched and viewed. If you are interested in joining the list, please click below and follow the directions to subscribe:

[SERC Distance Education Listserv](#)

If you have general questions about the list, contact Amber Casolari at [Amber.Casolari@rcc.edu](mailto:Amber.Casolari@rcc.edu).

# 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.

[Paper Airplanes and Paper Fans—Developing a PPF \(Jamie Wagner, University of Nebraska\)](#)

This in-class exercise has students create a classroom PPF by producing paper airplanes and paper fans. This activity is simple to implement in about 15-20 minutes but has lasting impacts and applications.

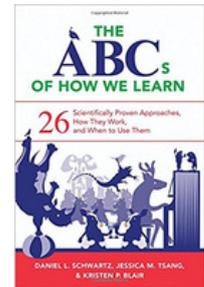
[Paper Airplanes Production—Illustrating the Law of Diminishing Marginal Product \(Tisha Emerson, Baylor University—based off of an activity from Experiments with Economic Principles by Bergstrom and Miller\)](#)

In this experiment, students engage in the production of paper airplanes using some fixed inputs of production. In successive rounds of production, additional units of labor are added to the fixed inputs. Students record output levels at the various levels of labor input. This data can then be used to calculate average and marginal products of labor. This exercise clearly illustrates the law of diminishing marginal product.

Edited by Katie Lotz ([klotz@lakelandcollege.edu](mailto:klotz@lakelandcollege.edu)) and Brian Lynch ([blynch@lakelandcollege.edu](mailto:blynch@lakelandcollege.edu))

# Recommended Reading

**ABCs of How We Learn: 26 scientifically proved approaches, how they work, and when to use them**



Daniel L. Schwartz, Jessica M. Tsang and Kristen P. Blair.

This book contains insights from learning science on how to improve student learning in our courses.

[Reforming the American Community College: Promising Changes and Their Challenges](#)

Kevin Dougherty, Hana Lahr, & Vanessa Morest  
This paper discusses the roles and organization of community colleges in the United States, their main social contributions, and the challenges they face. It also describes and evaluates policy proposals made to address these challenges.

[Experiences of Earned Success: Community College Students' Shifts in College Confidence](#)

Susan Bickerstaff Teachers College, Columbia University  
Melissa Barragan University of California, Irvine  
Zawadi Rucks-Ahidiana University of California, Berkeley

The following economic blogs are also good for a regular dose of inspiration.

[Economics for Teachers Blog](#)

[James Tierney Blog](#)