Starting Point: Teaching and Learning Economics

A Pedagogic Portal for Economists

Mark Maier
Glendale Community College (CA)

KimMarie McGoldrick
University of Richmond (VA)

Scott Simkins
North Carolina A&T State University (NC)

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How did Starting Point get Started?

- Origins in earlier work by Simkins/Maier focused on adapting pedagogic innovations across disciplines

- Need for comprehensive, readily accessible, easy-to-use set of pedagogical resources for classroom teaching
What is Starting Point?

An economic pedagogic portal that seeks to:

- **Introduce economists** to innovative teaching strategies – within and beyond the disciplines
- **Provide tools** to integrate and assess research-based teaching strategies in classroom settings
- **Promote sharing** of teaching innovations and examples implementing these innovations
What is Starting Point?

Pedagogic Modules under development (16):

- Context-Rich Problems
- Teaching with Cases
- Cooperative Learning
- Documented Problem Solving
- Effective Use of Classroom Response Systems
- Experiments
- Interactive Lectures
- Interactive Lecture Demonstrations
- Interdisciplinary Approaches to Teaching
- Just-in-Time Teaching
- Quantitative Writing
- Service-Learning
- Spreadsheets Across the Curriculum
- Teaching with Computer Simulations
- Undergraduate Student Research
- Using Media to Enhance Teaching and Learning
**Why use Starting Point?**

- Central location for comprehensive set of pedagogical resources
- Promoting the concept of a “teaching commons”

**How can Instructors use Starting Point?**

- Learning about specific pedagogic techniques and their use in economics courses
- Browsing the teaching examples library
How can Instructors use Starting Point?

Contribute to the site by submitting activities

What’s Different about Starting Point?

- Central location for pedagogical resources
- Extensive pedagogic topic coverage
- Grounded in the learning sciences
- Intentionally adapting innovations across disciplines
- Developed in interdisciplinary teams
- Dynamic, growing library of examples
- Content management system framework (modular and shareable)
When we Build it, will (you) they Come?

- Web-survey (Paul Grimes, November 2009)

- Results
  - Distribution of reported “teaching styles” - leaning toward lecture
  - 20% “not satisfied” with current approach to teaching
  - 46% experimented “extensively” with teaching practices in last five years
  - Varying degrees of familiarity with Starting Point pedagogies
  - Disciplinary colleagues and workshops reported as best sources of pedagogical knowledge

- Summary: Significant potential for increasing pedagogical innovation through comprehensive web-based portal

Starting Point – An Example