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About us

The Economics Network supports economics education in the UK and internationally.

We aim to enhance the quality of learning and teaching throughout the higher education economics community.

We provide publications, research, resources, training and other events to support economics teaching staff, students and practitioners.

We are supported by the Royal Economic Society, Scottish Economic Society and over fifty UK university economics departments.

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Further information on the Economics Network can be found on our website at:

www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk



Economics Network Newsletter

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Editorial

This teaching year has been unlike any other. With the arrival of the coronavirus pandemic, universities across the world have rushed to move their teaching and assessment online. We, at the Economics Network, have also sought to react to the changing teaching and learning environment by offering relevant resources and support to the economics community.

As a result, we ran a virtual symposium on online economics teaching throughout June (write up on page 12). In addition to

the live sessions of this event, we also created a range of new resources to help academics with the transition to online teaching. These are still available on our website (links are available on page 14).

The next theme of this symposium will address online assessment in economics and will launch in early September. Details can be found on page 13 and on our website at: www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/events/symposium2020.

We will also be supporting the HE economics community by moving our training workshops online this autumn (page 5). We will provide complete courses for graduate teaching assistants and early careers staff, but individual sessions will also be open to all staff. We will be adding additional details to our website in due course.

The deadline for submissions to the special issue of the International Review of Economics Education has also been extended to allow the inclusion of papers relevant to the move to online teaching that has occurred this year (details on page 10).

Alvin Birdi and Caroline Elliott (our Directors) also write about

the “new normal” for economics teaching and learning (page 6). They address some opportunities that may arise from this experience of distance teaching and learning, as well as other aspects that will likely resume once the pandemic has passed.

In addition, this newsletter contains updates on new case studies, IREE, resources for teaching the economics of Covid-19 and our new partnership to highlight the vital work of the Black Economists Network.

Lastly, we are pleased to announce that the next Developments in Economics Education conference will take place at Heriot-Watt University on 1-3 September 2021 (page 20). We hope that many of you will join us at the conference in person but we will also be sure to offer opportunities for online engagement.

We hope you have an enjoyable summer and that in these testing times, you and all your loved ones are keeping safe and well.

Ashley Lait (Economics Network)

Economics Network's new structure

As many of you will be aware, since its creation in 1999, the Economics Network has been run by a small team of staff in our Bristol office and assisted by our Associates in universities around the country. However, over the past 20 years, we have gone from strength to strength and expanded the activities and support we offer.

As a result, in September last year we began a restructure of the organisation that would allow us to build capacity and offer more opportunities for Associates to contribute to our work. Therefore, with the approval of our Management Board, the Senior Associates of the Network now make up an Executive Group, with responsibility for our work.

We have also formed five working groups, made up of Associates and members of the Executive Group to lead on our initiatives in each of the following areas:

- Training
- Publications
- Conferences and symposia
- Data analysis and research projects
- Website and communications

Lastly, we are thrilled to announce that Professor Caroline Elliott (University of Warwick) has taken up the role of Deputy Director of the Network. Caroline will work closely with the Network's Director Professor Alvin Birdi (University of Bristol) to oversee

strategic plans and pursue important objectives such as increasing diversity within the organisation and economics HE more broadly.



"I'm delighted to take up this role with the Economics Network. I've been working with the Network consistently since 2001 when it was still known as the Economics Learning and Teaching Support Network (Economics LTSN). It is fantastic to see how the work of the organisation has evolved, particularly recently with the support that it has been able to provide departments and colleagues as they have moved to online learning and teaching, in many cases very rapidly. I've also watched as the Economics Network has grown with a large and much valued group of contributing departments, and a growing number of brilliant pro-active Associates."

Caroline Elliott (Economics Network Deputy Director)

To find out more about our structure and roles of the Executive Group and Associates, visit the community pages on our website: www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/community

Training workshops

We are moving our training workshops for graduate teaching assistants and early careers teaching staff online!!

In September and October we will be providing comprehensive resources and online training sessions, which will cover the material previously presented in our in-person training. We will also provide advice and support with the transition to increased online teaching and assessment in the coming academic year.

There will be the opportunity to join full courses and receive certification or join individual sessions if there is a particular area of your teaching that you would like to "up-skill".

We will be offering significant discounts to staff from subscribing departments.

Further details will be added to our website and sent out via our mailing list in the coming weeks. Updates will be available at: www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/events



The new normal in economics teaching and learning

Alvin Birdi and Caroline Elliott, Economics Network

It is tempting, in the time of Covid-19, to claim that higher education is being irreversibly changed. But how profound are the rapid changes we are witnessing and what do they mean for the 'new normal' in economics teaching?

In the Economics Network we are used to encouraging new ideas and methods in economics instruction. But the dominant paradigm of active and research-based learning, in which new material is carefully 'scaffolded' onto what students have already learned, is hardly a revelation and its hold on educational delivery has been largely unshaken for decades. What has certainly changed considerably over the past few decades is the technological landscape within which economics is taught, and the nature of the content that is routinely covered within economics programmes.



Much of the Network's training over the past 20 years has centred around these changes in the content of programmes and in the use of technologies to support active learning. An example is the use of classroom games and experiments to take advantage of the increasing amount of economics content that is drawn from theories of strategic

behaviour and the asymmetry and scarcity of information. Other examples involve in-class polling and interaction technologies, the use of audio and video in teaching and assessment, lecture capture and, more recently, the use of 'flipping' as a new mode of structuring and sequencing teaching.



Many of these methods had already become embedded within many departments of economics before the onset of the current pandemic. The use of lecture capture recordings and online polling were commonplace. Lecturers were used to thinking more carefully about the resources they upload onto virtual learning environments with some staff even creating their own materials and short films, sometimes in the context of flipped classroom learning. The use of video-based student projects, data-based research projects and use of in-class or internet-based games and experiments was steadily increasing and there were many resources already available to support these developments (see for example: www.economicnetwork.ac.uk/themes/games).

Nevertheless, these technologies and pedagogies were in most

cases in support of a core face to face model of teaching, centred around lectures and classes. At the start of 2020 relatively few UK academic economists will have foreseen the rate with which they would be called upon to deliver a purely online education which, regardless of their prowess in developing and using technology based resources, was never a direction of travel most universities had envisaged.

As the UK went into lockdown in late March some university departments were able to breathe a sigh of relief because the term's teaching had already finished. Other departments almost overnight were obliged to move to purely online teaching delivery until the end of their terms. Three months later, and since the early announcements from the Universities of Manchester and Cambridge that all lectures would be delivered virtually in the forthcoming academic year, we are now expecting the majority of teaching and assessment to take place online in the autumn. We assess the nature and meaning of some of these developments below.

Teaching: Lectures

There has been much debate in recent years of the pros and cons of the use of lecture capture, its benefits as a revision aid, the additional support it offers to international students and

students with additional learning needs and the impacts on incentives to attend class. In most cases, lecture recordings are a simple transferral of a live lecture into video format. As such, these recordings replicate not just the substantive content but also the stutters and hesitations as well as the deliberate repetition lecturers use to emphasise the importance and significance of certain material. They are, in a real sense, secondary to the live session and were never intended to supplant it. Indeed, when student attendance started falling in many universities as a result of lecture capture, this was typically seen as an educational problem. Many universities state explicitly that lecture capture is for revision and clarification purposes and is not a substitute for the live session.

We are aware of some universities that have now taken the reverse stand as a response to Covid-19, in which previously recorded material (e.g. from previous years) is made available to students. We do not see this as a sustainable response to the pandemic because students will question the value of paying for material that was not expressly produced for their cohorts.

We have also seen two other responses to the loss of the live physical lecture. First is the use of lecture capture technology, or similar recording technologies, to produce deliberative primary video material for current students which is not derived from a live situation. In this case, the material has typically become shorter or, to use currently popular terminology, 'chunked'. This has arisen from the advice of many universities' digital education experts because there

is evidence that the optimal length of concentration on a passive medium such as video may be relatively short [see prezi.com/v/kqcysv1hc8kg/video-and-the-learning-journey-part-2/].

It is also because lecturers are finding that the recording medium, when treated as primary rather than secondary to a live situation, permits a faster delivery where repetition is unnecessary. Students can, after all, stop and rewind recordings and some lecturers are quickly developing the skills of editing out hesitations and passages where mistakes might be made. We conjecture that for the first time, many lecturers are routinely watching over the recorded material they are producing for students because the material is deliberately produced rather than the resulting by-product of a lecture.



The second response has been the general move to delivering lectures over technologies like Zoom, Collaborate or Microsoft Teams. The benefits of such online lectures is that students continue to enjoy a synchronous experience with staff and other students, albeit in online space. Most of these technologies also allow interaction either through chat or by students using the 'raise hand' function to make an audio intervention. Some tools even have polling and other interaction tools like breakout rooms available within them. Many economics staff have quickly become expert in the

delivery of the live synchronous lecture.

At the time of writing, we cannot say for certain which of these approaches to the lecture will dominate. As more staff begin to see the benefits of using lecture recording technologies to develop primary asynchronous material, the long debate over the place of the lecture in economics teaching may take a decisive turn. This is because the deep tension between the fundamentally asynchronous nature of recording technologies and the synchronous demands of the live session may become more apparent than ever. A similar case is that of theatre, in which the opportunity costs of attendance (as opposed to viewing a recording) must be outweighed by the singular quality of the live experience. We predict that the flipping model of teaching, in which synchronous experiences in education are reserved for those cases where recordings are either not possible or cannot provide a suitable substitute for the live experience, may become more mainstream in economics teaching.

Flipping as a Mode of Education

Many lecturers are sceptical that flipping constitutes a new approach. The general idea that students should engage with material before the lecture has been a standard expectation of teaching as long as most of us can remember. However, our discussions with lecturers in Economics Network events have led us to believe there may be a kind of time inconsistency problem created by some lecturers who routinely invalidate preparatory work by covering material in lectures even if students have

not prepared in advance. We understand the pressures that contribute to this, namely, the need to ensure that students are prepared for assessments by attending and mastering the substantive material of a module which is represented by the course of lectures. In such a setting, many students who are incentivised solely by performing well in assessments may feel that preparation in advance of lectures adds little tangible improvement to their final marks.

The difference permitted through modern methods of flipping is that new technologies have resulted in more accessible and engaging forms of pre-engagement, more creative ways of checking that students have actually engaged, and thereby a better and more transparent complementarity between the resources provided to students in advance and the live class. We are hopeful that one out-come of the rush to online teaching may be a more care- fully considered use of recording technologies to ensure that material provided in advance of synchronous meetings between staff and students is complementary to, and supportive of, the live experience.



Consequently, there may be grounds for us to look forward to the synchronous, live, online classes that we will teach in the autumn. In the best case scenario, students are likely to have better background knowledge and be better prepared. As such

there should be more scope for interaction and stimulating discussion. However, the difficulty for the lecturer is that in the live sessions they will have to juggle the demands of presenting live, reminding students when to mute/unmute and turn off video, keeping an eye on questions and comments that come in via the chat facility, dealing with any technological hiccups that may arise, and typically while not being able to see students' reactions to the content being delivered.

We are convinced that the new models of teaching will require a more collective approach to teaching because of these demands of synchronous online teaching. We can see the value of using graduate teaching assistants to support online synchronous sessions to keep track of chats for example, or to monitor and respond to asynchronous interaction, for example, in discussion boards such as Piazza in which we are observing increased interest. It is difficult to predict the pressures on departmental finances in the coming period, but the need for teaching assistants seems to us to be irreducible for providing a high quality teaching experience. It should be remembered that these opportunities also provide great training opportunities for the teaching assistants themselves.

Teaching: Small Group Classes

It is as yet unclear for many universities whether small group classes will be face-to-face, online or some combination of the two in the coming year. At least at the start of the academic year there are likely to be some students who are studying virtually, and in very different time zones,

making the scheduling of small group sessions more difficult. If classes do take place on campus larger rooms than usual are likely to be required because of social distancing guidelines, and it may be that rooms will need to be cleaned after each class.



In economics, small group classes are often where problem sets and interactive activities take place. We are observing universities taking different responses to these kinds of sessions. In some universities, there will be a strong reliance on asynchronous materials of high quality, produced in such a way that students can work together on the materials in their own time with help provided by tutors and peers. Such resources will need to be particularly clear so that students can progress through them with minimal support. In other places these sessions will be synchronous live sessions where the practice of screen-sharing may become commonplace so that students can share working and make presentations. It is easy to imagine that students will be comfortable with these technologies and the ways of interacting within them but this is not a given. Together with potential connection problems and internet issues, once again, the preparation of high quality asynchronous materials, which are less affected by such issues, may be a fitting response to the current situation.

The New Economics Lecturer

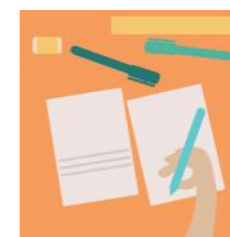
Economics lecturers are likely to increase their skills considerably in a number of domains by the new term this autumn. We expect

them to become consummate producers of online materials such as videos. We expect they will easily master the synchronous forms of online delivery through various tools such as Zoom, Collaborate and Teams. We expect they will engage in team teaching and become well-versed in the principles of learning design and the presentation and sequencing of material online.

But economics, like some STEM subjects, has particular needs in terms of the display of mathematical notation and graphs, both of which are not naturally suited to online environments. We have seen creative approaches to this problem such as the use of 'Hue' cameras as makeshift visualisers, electronic whiteboards such as Explain Everything and the use of graphics tablets such as those produced by Wacom. Many staff are equipping themselves with higher quality camera and audio equipment for live presentation and production of resources. Departments of economics will no doubt face demands to support staff with these production tools and equipment. The Economics Network has curated a website where we have collected advice on various technologies, methods and tools that the new economics lecturer will no doubt need: www.economicnetwork.ac.uk/themes/distance.

Assessment

The lockdown began on March 23rd just as most universities were getting ready for the run up to the summer assessment period. Assessments always need to be planned and approved in advance, so there was limited scope to rethink significantly the nature of final economics



assessments to be completed in summer 2020. Most economics departments changed their examinations to coursework-type assessments and some used 24 hour examinations where students would be expected to spend around 3 hours to complete an exam over the 24-hour period.

But remaining uncertainty for 20/21 suggests that there is low likelihood of a return to seating large numbers of students in exam rooms. Assessment may, like teaching delivery, become significantly affected by the pandemic. In a recent Economics Network symposium on online engagement, many lecturers were worried about the impacts on collusion and cheating in the new distanced assessment environment. But the evidence we have seen has suggested that assessments in the online environment have become 'open book', allowing students to consult books and other resources. The questions themselves have become more problem and research-based. And we have seen few reports thus far of any significant issues with cheating. To take a single example, students' assessment submissions were routinely put through Turnitin in the Economics Department at Nottingham Trent this summer, and instances of cheating were found to be extremely rare.

Nevertheless, we should now consider whether it is time to rely less on final exams, only partly because of the practical difficulties associated with arranging exams in the 20/21 academic year. We should think about developing

rigorous assessments in which students develop skills that will be valued by future employers. Students can be asked to write analyses/reports where students are assigned or choose to focus on different firms, industries, local or national economies. Similarly, students can be asked to complete quantitative assessments where they create, find or are assigned different data sets. Any collusion between students would be limited to how they are going to approach an assessment, materials and codes to use. It is debatable whether such collusion is problematic. The analysis and interpretation of results would have to be unique to each student or group of students in the case of group work. Thought can also be given as to whether work should be presented in the form of a report, for example to a CEO, CFO or Government Minister, a journal article, dissertation, a slide or film presentation etc.



Conclusions

From our vantage point of promoting active and technology-enhanced teaching in economics over a number of years, we see current moves towards carefully produced multimedia resources, flipping and authentic research-based assessments as an acceleration of a direction of travel that was set by technological improvements such as lecture capture years ago. We conjecture that the new normal in economics teaching will not be so much of an unexpected revolution in education as a case of the future coming sooner than we thought.

International Review of Economics Education

Update from Professor Ross Guest, Editor in Chief

Impact Factor and Cite Score

The journal's Impact Factor for 2019 was 0.867, which is the highest IREE has scored. This compares to Impact Factors of 0.545 and 0.618 in 2018 and 2017 respectively. This figure is a measure of the average number of citations received in a particular year by items published in the journal during the two preceding years. This Impact Factor continues to be within reach of that of the Journal of Economic Education (2019: 1.157, 2018: 0.653 and 2017: 0.643).



Similarly, the Cite Score for 2019 was 1.70 which again continues the trend of being close to that of the JEE. The Cite Score measures the average number of citations received in a particular year by all documents published in the journal during the three preceding years.

New Editor in Chief



As the current Editor in Chief of the IREE, I am pleased to announce that [Professor David McCausland](#) (University of Aberdeen) will take over as EIC of IREE from 1 January 2021 at the conclusion of my term.

As many of you know, David is a nationally and internationally recognised leader and scholar in economics education, with extensive experience as one of the editors of IREE and in other leadership roles in economics and business education. He is sure to bring new energy and ideas to IREE, leading the journal to further success and international recognition. I am sure you will join us in congratulating David and wishing him the very best for his Editorship.

 @IREE_Journal

Special issue on online teaching, learning and assessment in economics



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the systematic move to online teaching and assessment across the sector, the deadline for the IREE special issue on Online Teaching, Assessment and Learning has been changed to 11 January 2021.

We hope this will enable the special issue to include experiences of the shift to digital learning over 2020.

The editors will consider papers on any aspects of online, teaching, assessment and learning relevant to economics.

To submit a paper, please visit:
tinyurl.com/iree-onlinelearning

Symposium write-up

Fabio Arico, University of East Anglia & EN Associate

Facing the challenges of adapting to the new learning and teaching landscape generated by the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Economics Network surely was on top of the game. The EN Online Symposium organised in June 2020 was by far one of the best teaching development events I have ever attended. The medium was the message, as sessions were cleverly spread across weeks combining asynchronous readings and screencasts with discussion board debates and synchronous sessions, just happening as effective online teaching delivery should be organised.

The event was attended by a wide range of colleagues, within and outside the UK, and coming from different experiences, with an equal split between teaching and research contracts as well as teaching-only positions. Most of the participants felt that this period of rapid change is giving us a unique opportunity to innovate and experiment new practices. I could certainly feel the enthusiasm in the air and, as I am becoming more acquainted to the tools and the techniques of blended learning, my first impressions were: (i) that online training and collaboration allowed me to have more quality time to think and reflect on what I was learning, (ii) that I have never had so many frequent opportunities to talk and interact with my colleagues in the field of Economics Education in such a short span of time, and (iii) that we have a fantastic community of scholars willing to share resources, debate, and support each other. We should take pride in all this.

The first theme of the Symposium was on **Engaging Students and Academics with Online Learning**. Much of the introductory material discussed alternative platforms to produce videos, and communicate with students either in a live environment (such as Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate) or asynchronously (such as Piazza). I think this already posed an interesting point for discussion. There are plenty of resources we can employ, but we need to harness our enthusiasm

and guarantee some consistency in adoption at course-level, otherwise students will find themselves overwhelmed by having to become familiar with far too many different platforms. This reflection also highlighted the importance of clear signposting when operating in an online environment.

Another important take-home message for me was the importance of prompting student participation through online response systems (for synchronous sessions) as well as pro-actively curating and fostering debate on asynchronous

“We have a fantastic community of scholars willing to share resources, debate, and support each other. We should take pride in this”.

discussion boards. Platform functionality only makes for half of the story. Asking challenging and intriguing questions, which can spark a discussion, rather than a one-shot answer, is equally important. I think colleagues recognised that online engagement data will give us an invaluable opportunity to evaluate our teaching in real time. On the other hand, online teaching also sparked concerns about data protection whilst using third-party tools (e.g. operating outside our institutions' clouds), as well as accessibility and inclusivity of resources in a digital world that both teachers and students are learning to explore together.

Teaching with Data Online and **Teaching with Excel Online** were the themes of the second and third sessions of the Symposium. These offered a great platform for further exchanges on resources available, including hardware, software, techniques, and data. Participants in the room shared their struggles with teaching and explaining technical content online. Solutions spanned from home-made recording studios, built with mobile phones or flexible-arm cameras, to the

use of tablets and apps for digital handwriting and annotation. Demonstrations on the use of Excel in teaching Economics covered topics in

100% of attendees found the symposium either somewhat or very useful

Macroeconomics and Microeconomics, where the use of simulations can support student learning by unlocking theoretical challenges with a visualisation of how economic models work in practice. As it was prompted during these sections, I feel strongly that the true pedagogical power of using Excel, or other simulation and data processing software, can only be harnessed when students are driven to build their own visualisation, and when they take full ownership and full control of the process, rather than just the outcome.

The most valuable lesson I learnt from exchanges with colleagues is that good practice in online Applied Economics teaching is built on a good balance of two ingredients. Whilst screencasts are extremely helpful to break what I like to call 'buttonology', or the art of using Excel and other statistical packages in all their functions, the second important ingredient is the ability to formulate intriguing questions, pitched at the right-level of challenge, which can engage our students in a fruitful process of discovery.

The final theme of the Symposium, **Assessing Economics Online**, will be discussed in September. Nevertheless, conversations have already started, as the challenges posed by assessment and feedback practices could not but accompany the first three themes. Colleagues reflected on the meaning of the distinction between online exams and online coursework. Are these really different in an open-book environment? I felt that the consensus indicated that the only real distinction is whether we wish to set a tight time-constraint to online exams. Nevertheless, unless time-constraints are imposed to test students' abilities under pressure, we cannot prevent plagiarism without online proctoring tools, and not without risk of exposing our different student population to non-inclusive practices. The real challenge is reflecting on which skills we can assess in an

open-book environment, and which questions we should ask. I am sure that much more will be up for discussion in this final session of the Symposium.

As the Symposium was attended by so many technology-enhanced learning enthusiasts, I was really pleased to feel that we all had a shared view: no matter in which environment we operate, pedagogical underpinning should still be most important driver of effective curriculum design. I am looking forward to further exchanges as the Symposium continues.

Coming next....

EN Virtual Symposium Theme 4: Assessing Economics Online

This synchronous session will provide practical ideas on how to develop alternative adaptable assessments in economics degrees. This is an opportunity to reflect on how best to assess learning outcomes, including those linked to development of employability skills, and how to design different assessments so they can work in a world of teaching online, face to face or a mix of the two.

- 7 September 2020: Resources and discussion board online
- 16 September 2020 (3-4pm BST): Live seminar

In order to make this as relevant as possible, we are asking lecturers to share their reflections on assessments by filling out our survey. We would be grateful if you could also share this with any colleagues.

Link and QR code for survey:
tinyurl.com/symp-theme4



New resources to support online teaching and learning

Over the past few months, we have put together a range of resources and run a virtual symposium to support staff with the transition to online teaching and learning. Below we have highlighted some resources which we hope will be helpful as you plan ahead for the next academic year.

Where to start

On our [Distance and Online Learning page](#), we have provided some information on how to get started with moving to online teaching, including:

- advice on what equipment you may need and how to use it effectively
- tips for video recording, screen casting and audio recording
- recommendations for setting up a live webinar
- information on various platforms/software and their capabilities

URL: www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/themes/distance

How to engage students with online learning

The first theme of our symposium focused on ways to engage students and academics with online learning. The resources available offer support with:

- designing adaptable courses
- tools for recording teaching
- setting up discussion boards
- facilitating group work and establishing communities

In addition to the resources available, we have broken the video from the live session down into chapters that are also available on our website.

URL: www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/events/symposium2020/session1



Teaching with data online

We have also developed resources which are specifically designed to help with planning and delivering statistics and econometrics classes online. They focus on:

- creating online teaching resources
- using statistical and econometrics software
- how to motivate students

There is also a Piazza discussion board dedicated to this topic, where you can ask specific questions and share any tips of your own with the community. We have also made the recording of the live Q&A panel available.

URL: www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/events/symposium2020/theme2

Teaching with Excel online

The third theme of our symposium explored the significant and often unused potential of Excel in providing asynchronous resources for online economics teaching. The resources and live session addressed:

- the use of Excel as a simulation tool in teaching economic theory
- the benefits of using Excel to teach data-based subjects in comparison to more specialised tools such as Stata or R

The recordings, presentations and teaching case studies for this theme are all available.

URL: www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/events/symposium2020/theme3

What's next?

Theme four of our symposium will explore "Assessing Economics online". Resources will go online on 7 September and the live seminar will take place on 16 September. Find out more at: www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/events/symposium2020/theme4



Teaching the economics of Covid-19

We have created a page on our website, which lists useful resources for teaching the economics of the Coronavirus pandemic. We will keep this page updated as new resources become available.

URL: www.economicnetwork.ac.uk/links/covid19



Discover if economics is a subject for you...

Our sister project, Discover Economics, has set up a blog for current and prospective students.



Questions and answers about coronavirus and the UK economy

The Economics Observatory is a collective initiative that answers key questions from policy makers and the public.



THE SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL ECONOMISTS

The SPE has created a series of podcasts interview economists about the pandemic.



The ONS have a dedicated updates with data and analysis related to the virus and its impact on the economy and society.



The IFS has released a podcast exploring questions raised by the pandemic and analysing the government's policies to address it



Corononomics is a YouTube channel created by Econ Films featuring interviews with eminent economists.



CORE have released resources tailored to teaching economics during the Covid-19 pandemic.



The Economist have created a series of videos which analyse the pandemic and its economic impacts.



The data is available from the Covid symptom study, which is the world's largest community monitoring of the virus.

If you have other resources to share on this web page, we would be happy to list them. Please just get in touch via email (econ-network@bristol.ac.uk).

www.economicnetwork.ac.uk/links/covid19

New teaching case studies

Assessment in the time of pandemic: a panic-free guide

This case study by Tim Burnett and Stefania Paredes-Fuentes (University of Warwick) will help lecturers to rethink their assessment strategy, including from closed-book, time-limited examinations, to remote assessments. It presents alternative ideas for assessments and discusses their advantages and disadvantages, as well as adoption and organisational procedures.

View the case study at: www.economicnetwork.ac.uk/showcase/fuentes_assessment

Using self-guided data exploration in Excel

Tim Burnett (University of Warwick) considers how students learn, develop and improve their skills in this case study and applies these concepts to learning Excel. It presents ways to facilitate discovery, promote engagement, build skills, and break the cycle of student dependence.

View the case study at: www.economicnetwork.ac.uk/showcase/burnett_excel

Using Excel to design an online statistics/ econometrics assessment

This case study from Lory Barile (University of Warwick) relates to the implementation of a summative statistics/econometrics assessment and highlights the use of Excel in economics teaching.

View the case study at: www.economicnetwork.ac.uk/showcase/barile_excel

Engaging students in an online economics community

In their case study, Tom Allen, Edward Cartwright and Swati Virmani (De Montfort University) present ways to encourage an online community among students in an environment when traditional opportunities for such interaction have diminished.

View the case study at: www.economicnetwork.ac.uk/showcase/allen_online

Using classroom experiments for outreach activities: a public goods game example

This case study relates to implementation of classroom experiments for taster sessions for local school students to highlight economics as a discipline rather than to teach a specific topic or idea.

View the case study at: www.economicnetwork.ac.uk/showcase/harvey_game

The Black Economists Network



We are pleased to announce a new partnership with the Black Economists Network. T-BEN is an organisation dedicated to providing a platform through which professionals and students of African and Afro-Caribbean descent in economics can connect, collaborate, share ideas and support each other. They also seek

to challenge the lack of diversity within economics related fields by raising the profile of Black people in economics as well as by working alongside other organisations on their diversity strategies. Find out more about how you can get involved with T-BEN and contribute to their work by visiting: linktr.ee/tben.

“At TBEN, one of the things we’re most passionate about is educating our members by equipping current and aspiring professionals with knowledge on career options and the skills needed for progression. Enhancing the quality of learning in the higher education community is a value that is shared with The Economics Network. As such, we believe that it would be a great opportunity to collaborate. We have a unique pool of members that include lecturers and PhD students who are keen to be mentored, establish themselves in the field of academia and contribute to economic debates. What’s more, we have regular academic discussions which could help to provide a different perspective on topical issues. For example, the disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Black and minority ethnic community. Greater diversity is essential for institutions reaching their fullest potential!”

Joseph Oyegoke, Founding Member of T-BEN

“We are very excited to be partner with TBEN to bring their work with the Government Economic Service to the academic community. Together we will be in a great position to encourage, support, celebrate and extend the reach of the valuable contribution made by Black and minority ethnic communities to the economics profession. This partnership will form a pillar of the work that the Economics Network is doing around the broader issues of inclusivity and decolonisation of the curriculum and we look forward to working with T-BEN on these matters of critical importance”.

Professor Alvin Birdi, Director of the Economics Network

Find out more about T-BEN at: linktr.ee/tben

or on Twitter: [@TheBlackEcon](https://twitter.com/TheBlackEcon)

Developments in Economics Education Conference

1-3 September 2021 | Heriot-Watt University

The eleventh Developments in Economics Education conference will take place in Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, on 1-3 September 2021. While we hope that many people will be able to attend in person to join and strengthen the Economics Network, we shall maximise the possibility of online participation for those prevented from travelling by COVID19 (or any other cause).

The conference is a fantastic opportunity to showcase research, innovation and best practice in economics teaching. Sessions at the conference consist of two main types. First, there will be presentations of research and novel teaching methods. Second, there will be hands-on workshops for those who wish to expand their repertoire of teaching methods. Calls for both types of sessions will be announced towards the end of 2020.

Further information will be added to our website in due course:
www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/events

Blog opportunity for students

Opportunity to contribute to the UCL Tribune Blog

A week is a long time in the rapid world of politics and economics. To allow our readers to better engage with it, The Economic Tribune is proud to announce the Tribune Blog, a platform for university and high school students to write articles on topics they are passionate about. Any student, from school to PhD level, can contribute.

We accept submissions all through the year and look forward to seeing your articles! For submission guidelines and more details, please visit the website of the Economic Tribune:
www.econtribune.com/blog-submission

If you have any questions, do contact us by emailing:
economictribune@economistsociety.org

Econ Class Experiments

Ted Bergstrom (University of California-Santa Barbara), Marcus Giamattei (University of Passau and Bard College Berlin), Humberto Llavador (Pompeu Fabra University and Barcelona GSE) and John H. Miller (Carnegie Mellon University)

We have been using and promoting experiments in teaching economics for more than ten years, with very positive feedback from both students and instructors. We find that conducting economic experiments in the classroom, with discussions before, during and after, is an effective way of getting students to use economics to think about the world around them. Students have no problem grasping the rules for the experiments and love getting involved with markets and then figuring out what happened, rather than simply being lectured.

The experiments were first published by Ted Bergstrom and John H. Miller in their book “Experiments with Economic Principles”. Chapters from the book are now updated and presented in a free online book. The experiments have been adapted to be run with mobile devices in the classroom; they run very fast and are very easy to conduct, even if you have no prior experience. The software and the material is also designed to save the instructor a lot preparation and tedious book-keeping work.

For each experiment, we provide:

- an instructor’s manual with instructions to run the experiment and hints to conduct the discussion
- instructions for students and exercises for them to reflect on the experiment
- an online warm-up quiz
- Excel files that generate solutions to the exercises and collect participation, performance in the experiment and the warm-up quiz, automatically from the data file provided by classEx (the free software we use).

If you are involved in teaching economics courses, we hope you will consider trying it out. Each experiment is free-standing and everything is free, so it is easy to give it a trial run.



Access the experiments and find out more at:

www.econclassexperiments.com

Events 'round-up'

Aug 2020

24-27

European Economic Association & European Economic Society Conference

Virtual Conference

www.eeassoc.org/index.php?site=EEA2020



Sep-Oct

Throughout

Economics Network Training for Graduate Teaching Assistants & Early Careers Staff

Online

www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/events/



Jan 2021

3-5

American Economic Association Annual Meeting

Virtual Conference

www.aeaweb.org/conference/



Apr 2021

12-14

Scottish Economic Society Annual Conference

Glasgow, UK

www.scotecon.org/



June 2021

2-4

American Economic Association Conference on Teaching and Research in Economic Education

Portland, Oregon, USA

www.aeaweb.org/about-aea/committees/economic-education/ctree/2021



Sep 2021

1-3

Economics Network's Developments in Economics Education Conference

Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, UK

www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/events/

