



The Economics Network Newsletter

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ECONOMICS NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Editorial

In this Issue

Editorial	3
Patrons	4
Partnerships	6
National Teaching Fellowship	8
GES-BoE Conference Report	9
Student Survey Results	11
Curriculum Change in Economics	12
Survey & Award Win	13
Conference Write-ups	14
Student Challenge	15
Workshops & Events	16

Since becoming independent from the Higher Education Academy, the Economics Network has continued with its programme of activities.

We have expanded the resources on our three main websites: The Economics Network site, [Why Study Economics](#) and [Studying Economics](#). We constantly update these sites to make sure that they reflect the latest developments in learning and teaching in economics.

We have also had a full programme of workshops. These are run in departments, but lecturers from outside the departments are welcome to come. You can find a list of upcoming workshops on page 16 below. Details of our events and how to book are at www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/news.

A major event this year was the one-day conference at the Bank of England. This looked at the future of economics teaching in the light of the financial crisis – both curricula and the employability of economics graduates. A working party has been set up to take forward the various proposals at the conference. A report on the conference is given on page 9 below and, in

the light of the conference, which she chaired, Diane Coyle has written an article on curriculum change in economics, which you can find on page 12.

This year we have held our biennial student survey. This is a much richer survey than the NSS and is open to all years, both undergraduate and taught postgraduate. You will find an overview of the results on page 11 below.

We are also in the process of conducting an employers' survey. If you know or work with employers of economics graduates we would highly appreciate if you can ask them to complete the survey via the link at www.survey.bris.ac.uk/ltsn/employers.

We thank the many people across the Network who have given us so much support this year in challenging financial circumstances. We hope to be able to continue supporting economics teaching into the future.

John Sloman

Patrons of the Economics Network

We are delighted to announce that the following individuals have become patrons of the Economics Network.

All our patrons share the Economics Network's values and support our work within the economics education community. We are grateful for the generous commitment they have made to promote the education of economics and to contribute to Network events and publications.



Charlie Bean, Deputy Governor, Bank of England

Charlie Bean became Deputy Governor on 1 July 2008. Prior to that, he was Executive Director and Chief Economist from 1 October 2000. In addition to his membership of the Monetary Policy Committee and Financial Policy Committee, he has specific responsibility within the Bank for Monetary Policy, including monetary analysis and market operations. Charlie has also held positions at HM Treasury, the London School of Economics and

Stanford University.

In addition, he has published widely, in both professional journals and more popular media, on European unemployment, on European Monetary Union, and on macroeconomics generally.

"I am very pleased to become patron of the Economics Network. By providing additional support to lecturers and students alike, it plays an invaluable role in furthering the university study of economics."

Charlie Bean

Diane Coyle (OBE), Director, Enlightenment Economics

Diane runs the consultancy Enlightenment Economics. She is also Vice Chair of the BBC Trust, a member of the Migration Advisory Committee and visiting professor at the University of Manchester. Diane specialises in competition policy, network markets, the economics of new technologies and globalisation, including extensive work on the impacts of mobile telephony in developing countries.

She is also the author of several bestselling books on economics, the latest of which is *The Economics of Enough*, which was published in March 2011.



"Inspirational teaching opened my eyes to the way economics can illuminate what's happening in the world, to its special insights and intellectual discipline. So I'm delighted to have the opportunity of supporting the work The Economics Network is doing to inspire future generations of economists."

Diane Coyle



Tim Harford, Senior Columnist, The Financial Times

Tim Harford is a senior columnist for the Financial Times. His column, *The Undercover Economist*, reveals the economic ideas behind everyday experiences. Tim is also the author of *The Undercover Economist*, *The Logic of Life*, *Dear Undercover Economist* and *Adapt*. He presents the BBC radio series *More or Less* on Radio 4 and on the World Service. He is a frequent contributor to other radio and TV programs and has been published by the leading magazines and newspapers on both sides of the Atlantic.

"The Economics Network provides a vital bridge between employers and lecturers in economics by focusing on the quality and adaptability of economics graduates."

Tim Harford

John Kay, Columnist, the Financial Times

John Kay is one of Britain's leading economists. His interests focus on the relationships between economics and business. John is currently chairing the Review of UK Equity Markets and Long-Term Decision-Making which will report to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills in July 2012. He is a visiting Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics, a Fellow of St John's College, Oxford. He is a Fellow of the British Academy, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. He is a director of several public companies and contributes a weekly column to the *Financial Times*.



"The Economics Network provides resources to enable economics education to become relevant and effective. Recent events have made the need for such work all the more urgent and important. I am glad to support the Economics Network."

John Kay



Paul Ormerod, Managing Partner of Volterra

Paul is a Partner of Volterra, an economic consultancy that provides creative solutions across a range of sectors, from business viability to social policy effectiveness. He is also a best-selling and award winning author. His latest book, *Positive Linking*, is due out in July 2012. In the 1980s, he was one of the founders of the Henley Centre for Forecasting, and pioneered the then-innovative application of modern econometric techniques and electronic data to analyse price elasticities and identify the competitive sets of consumer brands. In 2006, Paul was elected a Fellow of the British Academy of Social Sciences and in 2009 he was awarded a DSc honoris causa for the 'distinction of your contribution to economics'.

"Economics needs to evolve in the light of the financial crisis, and the Network is an effective way for communicating new ideas."

Paul Ormerod

Introducing Our Partners!

The Government Economic Service (GES)



The GES is part of the UK Civil Service and provides highly trained economics to government in order to support policy development and implementation. The work of Government economists, which affects the daily lives of millions of people, ranges from providing data to help alleviate child poverty to appraising new transport schemes.

GES and the Economics Network

Through their partnership, the GES and the Economics Network hope to demonstrate their commitment to supporting the development of highly skilled economics graduates who are well-equipped to work in and develop the UK economy.

The Economics Network is tremendously important for the health of economics in the UK, and so the Government Economic Service had no hesitation in accepting an invitation to partner with the Network. I applaud the organisations now supporting the Economics Network and hope to see other economists and their organisations rally round to grow this wonderful resource.

**Andy Ross, Deputy Director,
Government Economic Service**

Educational Innovations in Economics and Business (EDiNEB)



EDiNEB is a Europe-wide network, based in the Netherlands, that represents professionals in educational institutions and corporate learning centres, who strive for educational innovation in business and economics. It offers specialist support to members and member institutions who wish to adapt their curriculum to highly innovative programmes with effective instruction methods, including problem-based learning, skills training and technological development.

EDiNEB and the Economics Network

The Economics Network and EDiNEB support economics education across the UK and Europe and, as partners, we hope to share ideas and best practice from the teaching community in order to promote and encourage innovation and curriculum development.

The Educational Innovations in Economics and Business (EDiNEB) is happy to announce our partnership with Economics Network UK. By combining the strong UK presence of the Economics Network with a more internationally focused EDiNEB, we hope to further strengthen and disseminate state-of-the-art innovation and best-practice in economics and business education.

Bart Rienties, Chair, EDiNEB

The American Economic Association – Committee on Economic Education (AEA–CEE)



The Committee on Economic Education is a standing committee of the AEA whose aim is to improve the quality of economics education at all levels, including school, university and general adult education. The CEE sponsors regular paper sessions and workshops, as well as running an annual conference on teaching economics and research into economics education.

The AEA–CEE and the Economics Network

The AEA–CEE and the Network both work to improve, inform and facilitate research on economics education. While the two organisations do not have a formal partnership in place, there is close collaboration between them and a desire to further the sharing of ideas across the Atlantic.

Given our mutual interest in economic education, the Economics Network and the AEA–CEE have agreed to work to promote the efficient flow of information about activities of the two groups, and to explore avenues of cooperation for specific projects that may arise.

Sam Allgood, Chair, AEA–CEE

The Association of Corporate Treasurers (ACT)



The ACT is the leading professional body for international treasury, which supports and represents professionals working in treasury, risk and corporate finance, as well as providing the widest scope of benchmark qualifications in these sectors. It defines standards, promotes best practice and supports continuing professional development.

ACT and the Economics Network

Through the partnership, the ACT and the Economics Network hope to both raise awareness of the careers available in this sector and to promote the development of highly skilled economics graduates, who are not only knowledgeable about their subject but are also ready for the workplace.

The ACT is delighted to be working with The Economics Network. Economists understand the environment in which the treasurer works, they appreciate the bigger picture that surrounds what treasurers do on a day-to-day basis. In these challenging times, corporate treasury offers exciting, forward looking, rewarding careers for economics graduates. This collaboration is another example of the ACT reaching out positively to the higher education sector to grow awareness of treasury as a discipline, and as a profession, early in people's careers.

James Lockyer, Development Director, ACT

The Association of European Economics Education (AEEE)



The AEEE is a European association that brings together professionals in economics and business education. Its members are committed to economics education at all levels and offer support throughout the teaching community.

The AEEE and the Economics Network

The AEEE and the Economics Network share common aims around promoting and developing economics education. Similarly to the AEEE, the Network supports and distributes new and innovative research on economics teaching, including course content and teaching tools and methods. As partners, the Network and the AEEE hope to expand the community they can reach and inform.

The AEEE is looking forward to working with the Economics Network in our aim to circulate more information between all levels of economics education. Every two years, the AEEE holds conference in a different country, giving members and partners, such as the Economics Network, opportunities to share ideas about classroom practice and observe a wide range of current developments.

Thijs de Gaaij, Secretary General, AEEE

The Economics Network is delighted to be partnered with these organisations, all of whom will extend the reach of the Network and add to our work on promoting and supporting innovations and effective practice in economics education. For further information on the Network's activities, please visit our website: www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk.

National Teaching Fellowship for Jon Guest

Raising the profile of teaching and learning

Jon Guest,
Principal
Lecturer in
Economics
at Coventry
University,



has been awarded a National Teaching Fellowship Award from The Higher Education Academy. The National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) is a competition which aims to raise the profile of learning and teaching, recognise and celebrate individuals who make an outstanding impact on the student learning experience, and provides a national focus for institutional teaching excellence schemes. The award is open to all higher education institutions in England, Northern Ireland and Wales

and is funded by the Higher Education Funding Council.

Jon was one of 55 winners chosen from over 200 nominations and will receive an award of £10,000 which he can use for professional development in teaching and learning. He is only the 5th economist to win the award since the scheme began ten years ago.

His nomination focused on the various teaching methods that he has used to promote a more active learning environment in the classroom with a particular focus on the use of games and experiments. For more details see:

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/contacts/detail/ntfs/2011/GuestJonprofileNTFS2011>

On receiving the award Jon said: *"I would like to thank the **Economics Network** for all the support they have given me over the last 10 years. The staff encouraged me to apply for the award and supported me throughout the application process. Participation at numerous conferences, meetings and workshops organised by the Network introduced me to a range of innovative new approaches to teaching and learning which I have tried to introduce into the classroom. I have always valued the opportunity it provides for the sharing of ideas and experiences with colleagues who have the same interest in teaching economics."*

The screenshot shows the Economics Network website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'About us', 'Help', and a search box. Below this is a main menu with categories like 'Home', 'Lecturer resources', 'Learning materials', 'Awards & funding', 'News', 'Events', 'Topics', and 'Sub-disciplines'. The main content area is titled 'Classroom Experiments & Games' and includes a 'Contents' list with items like 'Experiments and Games in Context', 'Individual Games', 'Presenting Assessment as a Game', 'Computerised Games', and 'Events'. There are also sections for 'Experiments and Games in Context', 'Economic Classroom Experiments', 'Simulations, Games and Role-Play', and 'Classroom Experiments, Games and Role-Play'. A sidebar on the left contains a 'Quickjump to:' dropdown menu and a 'Monthly Email Updates' form. At the bottom right, there is a small 'A top' link.

Visit <http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/themes/games> for information on classroom experiments and games, as well as advice on how to integrate them into your teaching.

What post-crisis changes does the economics discipline need? Are graduate economists fit for purpose?

A report from the Government Economic Service – Bank of England Conference, Ashley Lait



On the 7 February, the Government Economic Service and the Bank of England hosted an event which explored economics teaching and learning in UK universities in the wake of the financial crisis. In particular, the discussion focused on the challenges faced by higher education institutions and the changes they need to implement in order to produce economics graduates who are fit for purpose. This article will lay out some of the conclusions from the panels and subsequent discussions.

Firstly, the lessons that need to be learnt from the crisis were addressed. The importance of basic principles was emphasised and it was felt that despite their centrality to the discipline, they have at times been overlooked. This risks students being unaware of the core of their subject upon which more specialised modules build. It was therefore agreed that these basic principles must be implicit in the teaching of economics throughout students' degree programmes.

The question of the development of macroeconomics as a discipline and of macroeconomics curricula was discussed by a number of speakers. There was consensus that the macroeconomics curriculum needs to integrate economics and finance more closely and

include the impact of the development of financial instruments and the role of balance sheets. Existing macro models typically assumed well functioning markets and too little attention had been paid to leverage, global imbalances, the lack of macro prudential policies and the instability of the system as a whole. There was debate as to whether DSGE models could be adapted in the undergraduate curricula to take account of the functioning of financial markets and the behaviour market participants, whether new models should be incorporated or whether students should be presented with a range of models that could be tested against the evidence.

“With an understanding of how the discipline has changed, students are more likely to question current assumptions”

Furthermore, in the light of the financial crisis, there is a sense that economics graduates would benefit if economic history and the development of economic thought were returned to the curriculum. This would help students not only to learn from the mistakes of the past, but also to see the

development of theories over time. With an understanding of how the discipline has changed, students are more likely to question current assumptions and learn to accept the limitations of accepted models, which in turn will lead to more innovative thinking.

A number of the other lessons that must be learnt if universities hope to produce graduates who are prepared for the work place are perhaps not directly related to the financial crisis, but with growing competition for jobs, they are increasingly important. Employers are asking for graduates who are not only knowledgeable about their subject, but also have the more general skills required to be effective employees. These include strong communication skills, IT literacy and the ability to analyse and explain complex ideas to non-economists, a skill that is vital for economics graduates, especially as many will go into careers which require them to have a wider skill set beyond mathematical and econometric competence.

It is important to note that the financial crisis coincided with other drastic global changes, which courses in UK universities must also take into account. Perhaps most important of these is the opening of financial borders and the expansion of networks across the globe. The conference highlighted the

need for techniques, understanding and models that are adapted to the international nature of twenty-first century financial systems. In addition, the rise of economic powers such as India and China have changed the shape of the global economy and thus their impact, including on the UK, must be explored in undergraduate teaching. And lastly, the development and expansion of the use of social media and the Internet has had a profound impact on society and how we research and learn, and universities must catch up with this as they teach new generations of economists.

Each of these changes is indicative of a world that is opening up, and the economists present at the conference felt that the discipline of economics needed to do the same. The 'LSE 100' course at the London School of Economics is an interesting example to consider. This is a compulsory course for all LSE students and it tackles the big questions of the twenty-first century, including the financial crisis, climate change, culture and poverty. It is designed to improve students' skills set and their ability to analyse critically and develop reasoned conclusions. One of the innovative aspects of this course is that it is taught by a range of specialists and

therefore adopts a general social science approach, allowing students to learn from the theories, methodologies, research and skills of a range of disciplines. It was widely agreed that at present the economics discipline is too compartmentalised and needs to learn from other subject areas. Furthermore, if students are exposed to other social science approaches, they will be better able to think critically about their own subject and therefore develop new and innovative thinking.

“Universities must catch up as they teach new generations of economists”

Whilst much of the discussion focused on areas of improvement for the discipline and the lessons that economics departments must learn, it was agreed that there have been benefits to the subject from the financial crisis. Above all, there is huge interest in economics among young people as they attempt to understand the issues that are in the news daily and have even been the subject of Hollywood films. Although it is negative press, it is important that educators seize the opportunity to encourage a new generation to study

economics. This has great potential for the discipline too as, in the light of the crisis and in an increasingly globalised world, this generation will look at economic problems through a new lens and will be ready to reject assumptions and innovate. As a result, it is vital that courses are up to date, relevant and exciting and above all relate to what is going on in the outside world.

The important question now is how to implement these changes and suggestions into economics courses across the country. This represents a significant challenge for universities; it is easy to list what should be integrated into course, but much harder to decide what should be left out. There were suggestions for a mixed market of courses, where some could have a greater focus on mathematical economics, while others would concentrate more on political economy. It was agreed that a network was needed to serve as a forum for discussion on these issues and to disseminate the results and ideas. Above all, this network and the economists who engage in teaching need to be innovative and inspiring in order to carry the discipline forward and to produce high quality and work-ready graduates.

For more reflections on teaching and curriculum content, please visit our case studies page online:

<http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/showcase/content>

The screenshot shows the Economics Network website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, Lecturer resources, Learning materials, Awards & funding, News, Events, Topics, and Sub-disciplines. A search bar is located on the right. The main content area is titled 'Curriculum and Content' and features a list of case studies. On the left side, there is a sidebar with various utility links such as Handbook, Teaching Case Studies, RSS Journal, CHEER Journal, UK Economics Degree, External Examiners, Skills Tips, and Surveys. Below these links are sections for 'QuickJump to:' (search), 'Monthly Email Updates' (with a form for email address), 'Your user page', and 'Log out'. The main list of case studies includes:

- Teaching economics using proverbs from around the world** by Charisio Giara, London Metropolitan University (Case Study 9 Oct 2011)
- Economic Naturalist Writing Assignment** by Wayne Coelling, LaTrobe University (Case Study 24 Jun 2011)
- Developing a web-based teaching and learning resource for cost benefit analysis: CBA Builder** by Carol Whalley, Nottingham Trent University (Case Study 23 Jun 2011)
- The Global Climate Change Game** by James Coppotale and Tom Blun, University of Bath (Case Study 10 Sep 2010)
- Teaching international economics and finance during (and beyond) the global financial crisis** by Margaret Giles, Edith Cowan University, Western Australia (Case Study 26 Jun 2010)
- Trial of the Exeter Economic Experiments** by Jürgen Busch, Department of Economics, University of Aberdeen (Case Study 12 Jun 2010)
- Applying Economics Threshold Concepts** by Oliver Morser, Department of Economics, Finance and Accounting, Coventry University (Case Study 8 Jun 2010)

On the right side, there is a 'Recent case studies' section with a list of articles and a 'Popular case studies' section at the bottom.

Student Survey Results 2012

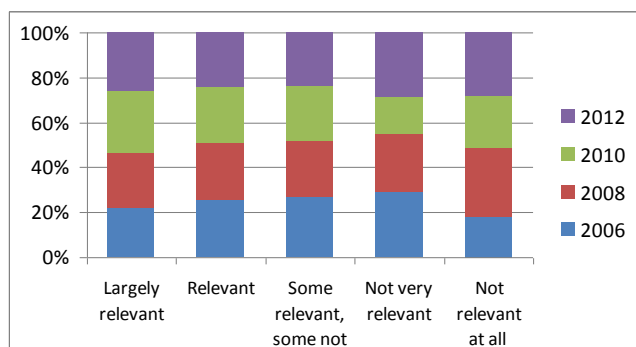
“There should be more emphasis placed on real-world examples”

Dr Inna Pomorina

Students were not represented at the conference at the Bank of England, but more than 1400 Economics students recently took part in the 6th biennial survey run by the Economics Network. The survey aimed to provide valuable information on students' perceptions of studying economics, including identifying strengths and weaknesses in the learning and teaching of economics. Topics included: how their course differed from their expectations, the best aspects of the course, what skills they developed by studying for their degree, and how the course changed them. We are currently preparing the full report on the results, but believe that a few representative quotes from the survey will help to illustrate the points raised at the conference.

One question asked how relevant course content was to the real world. Although the majority of the students were positive and found the course relevant, the figures indicate that fewer students feel this way than in previous years.

There was also a difference in the replies by the year of the respondent: its relatedness decreased during the undergraduate years from 78.0% in year one to 70.9% in year two, then to 60.0% in year three and to 54.1% in year four, but this increased to 69.5% among postgraduate students. The



following replies were among those who raised concerns:

“The focus was mostly from an academic, research-based standpoint. During the entire economics course, we didn't really focus on the Financial Crisis, which would seem to be one of the most important economic events in history!? Much emphasis was placed on old, outdated theories that defy common sense.”

“There should be much more emphasis placed on real-world examples. I would have liked to have learned more about the financial crisis through an economic lens. They should really think why people are taking the subject. I for one am not taking econ to be an academic. I would like to have a fairly comprehensive idea of how an economy works and is influenced by political and other factors.”

Students were also asked about the best aspects of their course:

“Application of economic theory to capital markets and real-life situations. I enjoyed learning models and ideas from people that combined the strengths that economics brings in terms of its approach to simplifying real-life along with some really intelligent ideas and theories using the latest economic knowledge, i.e. people that realise markets are not 'perfect' and find really intuitive ways to build these imperfections into models. I really enjoyed the essays, particularly when they related to current world events. For example, applying foreign exchange models to movements in the Yen following the Japanese earthquake and subsequent tsunami.”

Questioned about the skills that their degree helps them to develop, students mentioned:

“I have gained the skills of analysing financial data and gained a better understanding of economic principles which helped me excel in my summer internship and further helped me with managing my own finances.”

The full report on the survey results will be added to our website, <http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/projects/surveys> in the summer.

Curriculum change in economics

A response to student priorities

Diane Coyle, Enlightenment Economics



On pages 9 and 10 of this edition Ashley Lait has reported on a conference on teaching economics hosted by the Bank of England and Government Economic Service, *What post-crisis changes does the economics discipline need? Are graduate economists fit for purpose?* Although the process of self-selection meant the audience consisted of employers and academics already broadly sympathetic to the need for some reform of the curriculum, I think there is no doubt that the financial crisis and continuing weakness of the advanced economies has created a sense of greater urgency. This is all the more true because of the growing numbers of students taking economics at A-level and interested in applying to study the subject at university. The level of interest on the part of young people in the economic events they see around them should not be under-estimated, and it would be dispiriting if their enthusiasm were to be drained by courses that are not fit for purpose.

The conference identified several areas where change is desirable. Many of the

employers present emphasised better communication skills, as one of the key tasks of a professional economist is to communicate technical ideas to non-specialists. More economic history, perhaps including some history of thought, was a popular suggestion. There was discussion among the academics taking part about the narrowness of the curriculum and the approaches to economics that are taught; some believe it has become too technical for the kind of jobs most students will move on to, too focussed on the undergraduate degree merely as a pathway to graduate study and a research career.

‘The level of interest on the part of young people in the economic events they see around them should not be under-estimated’

Given the level of enthusiasm on the day, it was obviously going to be important to maintain the momentum for reform. One follow-up will be a conference volume, combining

the pre-conference essays submitted by leading academics, mainly from outside the UK, and the conference presentations. This is due to be published in September. In addition, and thanks to the organisational contribution of the Government Economic Service, a steering group including employers, academics and the subject’s main organisations – the Royal Economic Society, CHUDE, Society of Business Economists and of course the Economics Network – will be formed. It is hoped that at an initial meeting this spring steering group members will be able to identify the main tasks and agree on a series of practical steps to make some changes in the curriculum.

This is going to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary change. There are some critics of mainstream economics who would rather tear up and start again. The conference did not reach such a radical conclusion, although there was a range of views represented about how much the subject itself needs to change. However, I hope that later this year there will be some progress on reform to report.

Economics Network Employers' Survey

The Economics Network is undertaking its third Employers' survey with the aim of improving understanding of the skills economics graduates need in the workplace.

This survey is part of an ongoing research project into the effectiveness of learning and teaching in Economics HE. It is partially funded by the Higher Education Academy. The results of the survey will be available on our site <http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/projects/surveys.htm>.

If you know or work with employers of economics graduates we would greatly appreciate if you could ask them to complete the survey, which can be found at: <http://www.survey.bris.ac.uk/ltsn/employers>.

Award win for DEE Conference Presenter

Recognition of research on innovative teaching

Daniel Blackshields, an Economics lecturer from University College Cork, has won the university's President's Award for Research on Innovative Forms of Teaching and Learning for the work he presented at the latest Economics Network DEE Conference.

Every two years the Developments in Economics Education (DEE) Conference facilitates the sharing and presentation of the latest developments in economics higher education.

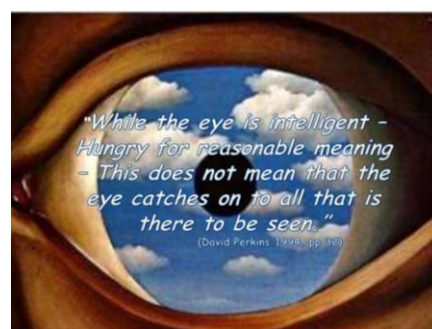
Daniel's presentation at DEE, entitled 'Scaffolding Minds Less Ordinary: Transforming Economics Thinking by Intelligent Looking' focuses on encouraging personal creativity and entrepreneurial mindsets, in particular through transformational learning. This form of learning emphasises the importance of reflection and evaluation.

Daniel was chosen as the recipient of the President's Award as a result of this work and for his contribution to good and innovative teaching within University College Cork. In addition to the award, Daniel

has received a small research grant to continue his work into transforming economics thinking.

Upon informing the Economics Network of the award, Daniel said: 'Thanks to the team at DEE for getting me to focus my mind on the task at hand, which I have no doubt helped shape my thoughts'.

The DEE presentation can be found on the Economics Network website, via the following link: <http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/dee2011>.



Conference Write-ups

Conference of the Scottish Economic Society 16-18 April 2012



Margarida Dolan

The Economics Network was invited to run sessions at the Scottish Economic Society 2012 Annual Conference in Perth and presentations were given by Jonathan Leape (LSE), 'The LSE 100 compulsory course: a model for Scotland and other countries?' and Margarida Dolan, 'Supporting International Students of Economics in Scotland.'

LSE100 is an innovative new course that introduces first year undergraduates to the fundamental elements of thinking like a social scientist, by exploring some of the great intellectual debates of our time from the perspectives of different disciplines. Focusing on questions such as 'How should we manage climate change?', 'Does culture matter?' and 'Why are great events so difficult to predict?' LSE100 students explore the different approaches to evidence, explanation and theory that are used in the different social sciences.

Margarida discussed Scotland's initiatives for internationalisation of Higher Education, and the rise of international student numbers in Scottish Universities. She then focused on the University of Aberdeen Business School and shared three examples of its good practice. These were:

1. Active development of oral, written and feedback skills of undergraduate international students, who prepare and deliver presentations to peers and staff; analyse how their presentations can develop into essays; and practice how to provide and respond to feedback;
2. Setting up novel academic-industrial collaborations in response to the employability aspirations of international students of the MSc in International Business, Energy and Petroleum;
3. Training and mentoring, both in-house and through the Economics Network workshops for postgraduate teaching assistants, specifically including teaching international students.

The Welsh Economics Colloquium 9-10 May 2012



Martin Poulter

In early May, the Welsh Economics Colloquium at Gregynog Hall gave a warm welcome to the Economics Network, as John Sloman chaired a session on teaching economics.

Steve Cook reported on his development of a project-based module in econometrics at Swansea University. The course emphasises "learning by doing" as well as "assessment by doing" and has been demanding and rewarding both for students and for Cook himself. The development of the course was made possible by funding from the Economics Network, and materials including an example assignment are available online at http://economicsnetwork.ac.uk/projects/mini/cook_econometrics.

Martin Poulter of the Network talked about Open Educational Resources, starting with examples of lecturers whose online material has been viewed hundreds of thousands of times. He urged online sharing as a way for lecturers to highlight the distinctiveness of their teaching, whether driven by the individual's background, interests or own research. The Economics Network hosts showcases for open resources across a number of different modules.

<http://economicsnetwork.ac.uk/projects/oer>

The Economics Network's Student Challenge

Please encourage your students to enter!
You can email out this page or use it as a poster!

The challenge?

Answer the following question:

"How would you use economics to solve one of these issues: poverty; climate change; or structural unemployment?"

Students can:

Write an essay



Sing a song



Write a poem

Make a film



Draw a cartoon

The format?

The prizes?

Students have the chance to win up to **£400!**

There will also be smaller prizes for runners-up.

Submissions to the competition should be sent to: econ-network@bristol.ac.uk

Please include 'Student Challenge' in the subject of the email.

How to submit?

Economics Network Workshops and Events

The Economics Network has the following events planned. For further details and if you wish to attend any of these events, please **visit our website:** www.economics.ac.uk/news.

Please note, the Higher Education Academy offers **funding for travel and accommodation** for any of the Network's workshops. See the [HEA website](#) for details.

House prices: Answers the house buyer would like to have, University College London – 30 May 2012, 6.15pm

In this lecture, Dean Garrett from Nottingham Trent University will discuss what economics can tell us about house prices and the housing market both in the UK and overseas. This event is a collaboration between the Economics Network and the CPD Foundation.

Technology in Teaching Workshop at Coventry University – 31 May 2012, 2pm

The workshop will involve a demonstration session focused such as Echo360 (lecture capture), Wikis, Audience Response Systems (clickers) and podcasts.

Games and Experiments in Teaching Workshop, Loughborough University – 8 June 2012, (time, TBC)

This workshop will introduce a number of games, experiments and simulations that can be integrated into economics modules to help students to contextualise and understand the concepts learnt in lectures.

Developing Your Economics Teaching Workshop at the University of Bristol – 15 June 2012, 10am

This one-day workshop for early careers economics lecturers will focus on sharing experiences and exploring best practice in all areas of teaching, including lectures, seminars and assessment and feedback.

Using Case Studies in Teaching Workshop, University of Westminster – 25 June 2012, 2.30pm

This workshop will look at how teaching staff can integrate case studies and practical learning into their courses. The use of case studies not only motivates and engages students but also helps them to develop skills that will be essential in the workplace.

Free Resources for Teaching Statistics Workshop for Social Scientists

These half-day workshops will explore DeSTRESS open educational resources and how they can be used in teaching, as well as examining and discussing how participants might share their own teaching materials.

Venues and dates:

Cardiff Metropolitan University, 8 June 2012, 1.30pm

University of Bristol, 14 June 2012, 2pm

Queen Mary, University of London, 14 June 2012, 1.30pm

Brunel University, 19 June 2012, 10.30am

Nottingham Trent University, 28 June 2012, 10am

Please contact Ashley Lait (Ashley.lait@bristol.ac.uk) for any **further information** on these workshops or if you wish to run an event within your department.