

Who Addresses Diversity, Inclusion, and Gender Issues in Undergraduate Introductory Economics in 2020? Results from a Sixth National Quinquennial Survey

Cynthia Harter (Eastern Kentucky University), Rebecca G. Chambers (Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia) and Carlos J. Asarta (University of Delaware)

Thursday 2 September, 15:00-16:30 BST

The 2020 online administration of the sixth national quinquennial survey on teaching and assessment methods in economics shows that very little has changed over the past 25 years (Harter and Asarta, forthcoming; Asarta et al., 2021). Keeping in mind evidence that the profession and the population of student majors are lacking in diversity (e.g., Bayer and Rouse, 2016), the updated 2020 survey included separate questions about the use of lessons, activities, or references that address diversity, inclusion, and gender issues. More than 80% of respondents who teach introductory economics reported no use of these types of lessons and activities in their classrooms, and about 50% reported no use of these types of references in teaching undergraduate introductory economics. This paper investigates factors that affect instructor choice about using these teaching practices.

We provide descriptive statistics to compare the demographics of those economics instructors who do use these teaching practices with the demographic profile of the typical introductory economics instructor. This profile is predominantly a male, Caucasian, with a Ph.D., and has not changed over the past 25 years (Asarta et al., 2021). Table 1 shows demographic characteristics of those instructors who report using each of the more inclusive teaching practices and for the overall sample of introductory economics instructors. The average percentages of those who are using lessons or activities that specifically address diversity and inclusion issues and those who are using lessons or activities that specifically address gender issues that are in tenure-track jobs is lower (.63 and .65, respectively) than the overall average in tenure-track jobs (.69). The percentage of females using each of these teaching practices is higher than the percentage of females in the overall sample. The percentage of White respondents who report using lessons or activities about gender issues is lower than that of the overall sample. The percentages of those who use these teaching practices that are native English speakers is higher than that of the overall sample. There are no noticeable differences in the percentage of work time spent on teaching (as opposed to research, service, administration, etc.) for these groups. The groups that are using more inclusive teaching practices do have slightly less teaching experience than the overall sample, including experience teaching online.

Table 1 Mean Values of Demographic Characteristics
(Standard Deviation in parentheses and Number of Observations underneath)

Teaching Practice	Tenure Track	Female	Hispanic	White	Native English Speaker	Percent of Work Time Teaching	Years Teaching	Have Taught Online
Diversity & Inclusion Lessons	0.63 (0.49)	0.44 (0.50)	0.06 (0.24)	0.89 (0.32)	0.88 (0.33)	54.77 (22.32)	16.31 (11.93)	0.35 (0.48)
	99	99	98	97	99	96	94	108
Diversity & Inclusion	0.68 (0.47)	0.44 (0.50)	0.04 (0.20)	0.90 (0.31)	0.87 (0.34)	55.07 (23.12)	16.69 (11.70)	0.34 (0.47)
References	290	289	284	286	290	284	270	312
Gender Lessons	0.65 (0.48)	0.5 (0.50)	0.05 (0.21)	0.86 (0.35)	0.85 (0.36)	55.62 (21.85)	15.48 (11.51)	0.31 (0.47)
	86	86	85	85	86	85	84	93
Gender	0.70 (0.46)	0.43 (0.50)	0.05 (0.22)	0.89 (0.31)	0.85 (0.36)	55.16 (22.00)	17.05 (11.99)	0.33 (0.47)
References	293	294	287	290	294	288	280	316
Overall Sample	0.69 (0.46)	0.39 (0.49)	0.06 (0.23)	0.89 (0.31)	0.83 (0.37)	55.31 (23.34)	17.34 (12.17)	0.37 (0.48)
	601	599	588	588	599	594	565	649

Following procedures used by Harter, Becker, and Watts (1999) to investigate characteristics of instructors who use various teaching methods, we use binary probit analysis to investigate factors that affect instructor choice about using these inclusive teaching practices. We estimate four models where the dependent variable for each model is a binary variable equal to one if the respondent uses that specific teaching practice – activities or lessons about diversity and inclusion issues; references to diversity and inclusion issues; activities or lessons about gender issues; or, references to gender issues. Preliminary results suggest that instructor demographics such as gender and native language are important factors that affect instructors' choices about using these teaching practices in introductory economics.

References

Asarta CJ, Chambers RG, Harter C. Teaching Methods in Undergraduate Introductory Economics Courses: Results From a Sixth National Quinquennial Survey. *The American Economist*. 2021;66(1):18-28. doi:[10.1177/0569434520974658](https://doi.org/10.1177/0569434520974658)

Bayer A, Rouse CE. Diversity in the Economics Profession: A New Attack on an Old Problem. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 2016;30: 221–242.

Harter C, Asarta CJ. Teaching Methods in Undergraduate Intermediate Theory, Statistics and Econometrics, and Other Upper-Division Economics Courses: Results From a Sixth National Quinquennial Survey. *The American Economist*. forthcoming.

Harter C, Becker W, Watts M. Who Teaches with More than Chalk and Talk? *Eastern Economic Journal*. 1999;25(3): 343-356.