

We Look Like Economists¹: A First Day of Class Lesson Plan

Elif B. Dilden²

Kelsi G. Hobbs³

Abstract. This paper presents a novel and easy-to-use lesson plan for the first day of class. Designed for small to large introductory-level economics courses, the lesson plan describes two primary activities: asking students about their understanding of economics within an active learning framework and having them work in groups to research current economists. This lesson plan offers an efficient way for undergraduate students to gain a better understanding of potential topics of study within economics on the first day and connect with their classmates. This brief intervention may help improve diversity in economics by informing students about the field of economics, showcasing a variety of role models, and giving students the opportunity to begin to make connections with their instructors and classmates on the first day.

Keywords: Economic education, innovations in pedagogy, in-class activity

JEL Classification: A11, A12, A20, A22

¹ In 2015, a movement on X (formerly Twitter) began with the hashtag #ILookLikeanEconomist. Inspired by a similar movement in engineering, this hashtag aimed to highlight the diversity of economists. Our paper title is inspired by this movement. We *all* look like economists.

² Department of Economics and Finance, College of Business and Technology, Rockhurst University.

Email: elif.dilden@rockhurst.edu

³ School of Economics, College of Earth, Life, and Health Sciences, University of Maine.

Email: kelsi.hobbs@maine.edu

Introduction

The economics profession is known for its lack of diversity. Recent data from the American Economic Association (AEA) highlights the stalled or complete lack of progress in gender and racial and ethnic diversity in the field. Only about one-third of economics majors, one-quarter of assistant professors of economics, and one-tenth of tenured faculty in economics identify as female (CSMGEP, 2022). The situation is even worse for minority students, as underrepresented minorities received only 9.8 percent of the Economics Ph.D.'s awarded in the 2020-2021 school year (CSMGEP, 2022). Recent research suggests that economics also lacks socioeconomic diversity. PhD economists are less likely to be first-generation college students than PhD recipients in other fields (Stansbury and Schultz, 2023). Due to the focus of the prior literature, we know little about the experiences of economists that are diverse in other aspects like age, non-binary gender, physical abilities, and LGBTQ+ status (Al-Bahrani, 2022).

The continued lack of diversity in economics affects the questions studied by economists and the policy recommendations they make. Research shows that female economists are not evenly represented across all fields with women being more likely to specialize in public and labor and less likely to specialize in macro and finance (Lundberg and Stearns, 2019). Additionally, research suggests that female and male economists have differing opinions on economic policies (Bayer and Rouse, 2016). Research shows that ethnic and cultural diversity in groups improves group outcomes (Bayer and Rouse, 2016; Bayer et al., 2020). However, underrepresented minorities are more likely to not apply for, take, or leave employment to avoid negative experiences (Allgood et al., 2019; Bayer et al., 2020). This lack of diversity in economics means that individuals with valuable backgrounds, experiences, and insights that could improve the discipline are not included.

One way to improve this situation is through our undergraduate classrooms (Bayer and Rouse, 2016; Bayer et al., 2020; Stock, 2023). Our introductory-level economics courses are where students are first exposed to our discipline and therefore are where we are first able to recruit students to the field (Allgood, et al., 2015). As a result, these courses can play an important role in attracting students from diverse backgrounds. Recent studies indicate that, in addition to labor market outcomes, such as post-graduation salaries, students select their fields of study based on their interests and abilities (Altonji et al., 2016). These individual characteristics determine how much students enjoy their coursework and how much time and effort they invest toward their degree. For a detailed exploration of this topic, please refer to the works of Altonji (1993); Arcidiacono, Hotz, and Kang (2012); Montmarquette, Cannings, and Mahseredjian (2002); and Wiswall and Zafar (2016).

Additionally, students may not be informed about the economics major. If students enter college with limited information about the breadth of economics as a discipline, potential career options, and expected earnings, then it is important to share this information with students. Making efforts to educate students about the relevance of economics early in their education could increase diversity and inclusion and hence their choice of majoring in economics (Al-Bahrani, 2022). According to Siegfried et al. (1992), there is a general agreement on the main objective of the economics major: “to think like an economist”. This consensus outlines the broad requirements for the economics major (Marshall et al., 2024). Over the years, survey-based

assessments of the discipline have confirmed the foundational, breadth, depth, and capstone requirements, which include topical electives that cover a range of subjects and upper-level electives that provide deeper insight into specific areas of economics (Siegfried and Bidani, 1992; Bosshardt, Watts, and Becker, 2013; Siegfried and Walstad, 2014; McGoldrick, 2008). Fricke et al. (2018) found that writing a paper in economics increases the likelihood of majoring in economics by 2.7 percentage points, and this effect is driven by exposure to topics outside the public's typical perception of economics. The study also contributes to the understanding of how exposure to non-traditional subfields can expand students' appreciation of a discipline's breadth, influencing their academic and career trajectories. In addition to exposure, performance in economics is an important determinant of persistence in the major (Bosshardt and Watts, 2008; Mumford and Ohland, 2011). Early exposure to and accurate information about economics can significantly influence students' decisions to major in the field, promoting diversity and informing career choices.

To support these efforts, the AEA provides guidance on best practices for economists working with students (AEA, 2023). By developing and implementing classroom activities in accordance with these guidelines, we can increase the diversity, inclusivity, and productivity of our field (AEA, 2023).

This paper presents a novel and easy-to-use lesson plan for the first day of class that is aligned with the AEA's best practices for economists working with students. The lesson plan describes two primary activities: asking students about their understanding of economics within an active learning framework and having them work in groups to research current economists. This lesson plan offers a way to inform undergraduate students taking principles of economics courses about the field of economics, showcase a variety of role models to those students, and give those students the opportunity to begin to make connections with their professors and classmates on the first day.

Our lesson plan may increase diversity in economics due to its alignment with the literature and the AEA's best practices for economists working with students. First, our lesson plan ensures that students taking our principles of economics courses are informed about the field of economics from the first day of class. The AEA suggests that "When faculty proactively offer information about the breadth of the field of economics, more students from underrepresented groups study economics" (AEA, 2023; Bayer et al. 2019; Al-Bahrani, 2022). In response to this suggestion, in the first part of our lesson plan, students are asked about their understanding of economics. We find that many students are misinformed about the field of economics. As a result, the second part of the lesson plan allows students to learn about the diversity of the field of economics by researching current economists. We target the first day of class, because it forms lasting impressions of instructors, as well as economics as a major and career (Lang, 2019).

Second, our lesson provides content that is relevant to the diverse set of students that take our principles of economics courses. In the second part of our lesson plan, students research current economists and present their findings to the class. Through their research and presentations, students see and learn about a diverse set of economists: scholars who may have the same race, ethnicity, background, and/or interests as them. As a result, students may see themselves in these

economists (Jardina et al., 2023; Kelly et al., 2021) and may learn that economics is relevant to their lives and interests (Lopez and Wandschneider, 2024).

Third, our lesson plan incorporates effective and inclusive classroom techniques: active-learning and team-based learning (TBL). Research outlines that using active learning techniques promotes mastery of the content and is superior to lectures (Bonwell, 1991). Since it requires students to be active participants in the classroom via Think, Pair, Share; online polls; and group activities, it promotes student engagement with the material and positively impacts their performance in class (Becker, 1997; Becker and Watts, 2001; Dickie, 2006). Although students do not feel that they are learning as much in active learning classrooms, their grades are higher on average than students in a traditional lecture course (Freeman et al., 2014; Deslauriers et al., 2019). As neuroscience suggests, allowing student interaction is important since we tend to pay less attention to topics we find unengaging (Barreto, 2015). By encouraging students to engage with course content collaboratively, our proposed assignment aims to create opportunities for peer-to-peer interactions, which can contribute to the development of a learning community. While group work alone does not guarantee positive relational experiences among peers or with instructors, it provides a structured framework that facilitates meaningful engagement, which can foster these connections under supportive conditions (Cagliesi and Ghanei, 2022). We know from the literature on business and innovation that diverse groups provide better outcomes and are more innovative (Horowitz, 2023). According to studies by Cagliesi and Ghanei (2022), Prince (2004), and Dacass and Dilden (2023), TBL can promote equality and inclusiveness in the classroom and enhance academic achievement as well as student retention.

Finally, our lesson plan builds on the literature focused on the effectiveness of brief interventions aimed at improving diversity and a sense of belonging. Brief interventions can be effective. Walton and Cohen (2011) found that a one-hour intervention about belonging improved African American college students' GPAs and health, even three years after the intervention. Porter and Serra (2020) found that short exposure to female alumnae role models in introductory classes increased the likelihood that women would major in economics, while men's likelihood was not affected. Pugatch and Schroeder (2021a) found that a light-touch intervention increased the proportion of first-generation and URM students majoring in economics. Finally, Avilova and Goldin (2024) found that a number of different interventions focused on increasing the fraction of female undergraduates who majored in economics relative to men were effective in liberal arts colleges.

It is important to note that the literature finds that brief interventions can have unexpected consequences. For example, Pugatch and Schroeder (2021b) found that the same light-touch intervention that increased the proportion of first-generation and URM students majoring in economics was not effective for female students. They suggest that the messaging of the intervention is important. We attempt to overcome the potential consequences of brief interventions by carefully choosing all aspects of the lesson plan based on the prior literature and the AEA's best practices for economists working with students. We showcase a diverse set of economists who study a variety of topics, which allows us to highlight the racial, ethnic, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age, training, employment, and research diversity that is currently a part of our field. Being intentional about showcasing diversity in lots of aspects may help decrease the potential for unintended consequences.

We believe this lesson plan provides a small, but effective step towards addressing issues of diversity in economics starting on the first day of class. Through our activities, we convey that there is no single “right” way to be an economist, and anyone who wants to be an economist can be. The key message of our lesson plan is that regardless of your identity and/or interests, you can pursue a career in economics. That is, we *all* look like economists.

Lesson Plan and Notes for Instructors

In this section, we present a lesson plan for the first day of class in an undergraduate introductory-level economics course (microeconomics, macroeconomics, or introductory courses that cover both) and provide implementation tips for instructors. This lesson plan can be adapted for other courses in economics. This lesson plan was designed for and implemented in small to large in-person classes (15-100 students). However, the lesson plan can be adapted for hybrid, online, or extra-large (more than 100 students) classes. This lesson plan is designed for a 50-minute class period. However, it can be extended across additional class periods, if needed.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of this lesson, students should be able to

1. Define economics.
2. Identify different topics economists study.
3. Discuss the diverse backgrounds, jobs, and research of current economists.

Materials, Technologies, Equipment

The materials needed for instructors to execute the lesson plan are an introductory slideshow, a list of student groups, and a list of current economists. All of these should be created prior to class. The technologies needed are an iClicker, Mentimeter, or PollEverywhere account, and an internet connection.

The equipment needed for students to participate in the lesson is a laptop or cellphone and an internet connection. Because students will work in groups for one of the activities, a lack of a laptop or a cellphone will not hinder a student’s overall participation in the lesson. If instructors would prefer students to complete the assignment by hand, the students will also need paper and a writing utensil.

Part 1: Introduction (10 minutes)

The instructor should begin by introducing themselves to the class. We suggest that the instructor describes their background, their education, and their reason for working at their current institution. We also suggest that the instructor discusses their research interests and their “not-related-to-economics” hobbies. By sharing a bit about themselves at the start of the semester, instructors can begin to build community in their classrooms (Lang, 2019). After the self-introduction, instructors should briefly discuss the format and expectations of the course.

Part 2: What is Economics? (10 minutes)

Next, the instructor should use iClicker, Mentimeter, or PollEverywhere to pose the question, “*What is economics?*” to their students. Any of these platforms will allow students to anonymously answer the question using their laptop or cellphone. The class will begin to see their answers appearing on the screen as a list or word cloud. Appendix A presents a random sample of ten student responses to this question.⁴

As shown in Appendix A, many students will describe economics as having to do with money. Although that answer does fit within the scope of topics economists study, it provides a limited view of the subject. Take this opportunity to discuss with students that economics is the study of choice under conditions of scarcity (or the instructor can share their own definition of economics). Under this definition of economics, the topics economists study become more diverse.

Part 3: We Look Like Economists (30 minutes)

Next, the instructor should divide students into the groups they prepared in advance. Assign each group a current economist using a list prepared in advance. Give the students 10-15 minutes to research their economists within their groups. Each group should find their economist’s workplace, their educational background, their specialty, and the title of their most interesting research project. As not all economists publish journal articles, students should feel free to use blogs or newspaper articles as sources for interesting titles. Tell the students to be prepared to present their research to their classmates.

Once each group has completed their research, the instructor can use the last 10-15 minutes to have each group present their research to the rest of the class. The instructor can have students send a representative to the front of the classroom or present from their group’s location in the classroom. We suggest that this activity be ungraded. As a result, the instructor should remind the students that this activity is not for a grade, so it is okay if they miss information.

An advantage of this part of the lesson is that the instructor can bring this information back into the classroom throughout the semester. For example, we have offered bonus questions on tests that ask students to name one current economist they learned about in this course.

If the instructor would prefer to have the students turn in a formal worksheet, please refer to Appendix B for an example. The instructor can collect the completed worksheets and use them to create a slideshow showcasing the economists the students researched. If created during the semester, this slideshow can be posted for students to access throughout the semester. While this approach has not been implemented in our prior classes, we would like to incorporate it going forward.

⁴ The responses presented in Appendix A were judged exempt from further review under Category 4 by University of Maine’s IRB.

For hybrid or synchronous online classes, we recommend that instructors lead the activity using Zoom or a similar platform. Students can be assigned to breakout rooms to work together virtually, then brought back to the main room to present.

Assigning Groups

The instructor should arrange their groups in advance of the first day of class. They can use a random number generator to assign students to groups or a more systematic way to assign students to groups such as using the first letter of their last names. Following Davis (2009), we recommend creating groups with four to five students each. Research shows that when group sizes increase, individual members tend to communicate less frequently, which leads to a reduction in the amount of information utilized arriving at a decision (Johnson et al., 2008).

Assigning Economists

The instructor should determine which economists they will assign to each group in advance of the first day of class. The choice of economists presented is important as this activity is meant to increase interest in the field of economics, as well as to showcase the diverse individuals who are economists. As a result, we believe it is important to select a diverse group of economists based on some of the following criteria:

- (i) **Race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age and/or training**
 - a. Role models are important (Jardina et al., 2023; Kelly et al., 2021). We know that students are more likely to continue in a field if they see people who look like them or share similar life experiences to them are also in the field. As a result, it is important to highlight the diversity of economists currently in the profession, so that students know that people like them are economists.
- (ii) **Research interests**
 - a. Economics is often referred to as the dismal science. However, economists study a variety of topics that can have a significant impact on society, sparking interest from policy makers and driving political debates. Highlighting economists who study climate change, gender disparities, and/or global inequality can showcase where economists are contributing to broader societal issues. Additionally, highlight economists who study artificial intelligence, online dating, or sports can pique the interest of students in their late teens to early twenties. This will allow students to gain a broader perspective on the work of economists.
- (iii) **Job placement**
 - a. Economists can work in lots of different positions. Highlighting economists who work in different fields such as academia, government, industry and/or nonprofit showcases that economists can contribute in many ways. As a result, students may see economists as doing much more than they originally thought.
- (iv) **Colleagues from graduate school and/or the instructor's field**

- a. Students appreciate hearing about topics that instructors are passionate about. As a result, showcasing economists that the instructor knows personally or because of their research program can give the instructor the opportunity to elaborate on what the students discover about those economists.
- (v) **Textbook writers**
 - a. Having students research textbook authors helps them to engage with the people who have authored the content being used in the class.
- (vi) **Colleagues from the instructor's department**
 - a. This showcases the different types of individuals who work for the instructor's department and may get the students excited to take other courses in the department. It also suggests that there are other people studying things the student may be interested in that are different from the course they are currently in.

Reflection of the Authors on the Lesson Plan

We designed this lesson plan for and implemented it in small to large in-person classes. However, the lesson can be adapted for hybrid or online classes, as well as extra-large class settings. As mentioned previously, for hybrid or synchronous online classes, we recommend that instructors lead the activity using Zoom or any similar online platform. For asynchronous online classes, we recommend that instructors utilize discussion boards. Students can summarize their findings with their group members on their discussion board. For extra-large class settings, we recommend that instructors utilize discussion boards or spread the presentations across the entire semester. Instructors can consistently use the first 5 minutes of class for group presents throughout the course. This method gives the students the opportunity to learn about different economists each class period.

We have implemented this lesson plan at two predominantly white institutions. When we develop our lists of economists, we consider all the demographic characteristics that are present and not present at our institutions. We purposely choose the majority of our economists to be from a different racial, ethnic, or cultural background than most of our students. We do this because we have students from all races, ethnicities, and nationalities at our predominantly white institutions. We want all students to see successful economists who physically resemble them, as well as successful economists who do not physically resemble them. Additionally, at our institutions, introductory-level economics courses are required for a wide range of majors, from engineering to environmental science. As a result, we purposely choose economists who study different issues that may be of interest to a wide range of students.

This lesson is not without implementation challenges. For example, there is the potential for students to submit unexpected responses to the question, "What is economics?" via iClicker, Mentimeter, or PollEverywhere. We have not had this experience in our classrooms, but we are prepared for it if it occurs. Although each of these platforms allows students to answer the question anonymously, iClicker allows the instructor to still be able to see who submitted each answer. PollEverywhere also allows this option, if the students sign-in using their real names. We tell our students this in advance of starting the activity to try to minimize unexpected

responses. If a student does submit an unexpected response, we are able to identify that student and follow-up with them individually after class. We encourage instructors to be prepared to deal with unexpected answers, as this is a risk that we face anytime we ask the students to respond to a question in class.

Additionally, it does take time to develop a diverse list of economists for the students to research. It requires instructors to have a general understanding of the demographics of the students who are attending their college or university, as well as those taking economics courses. Further, it may require instructors to spend some time researching economists themselves. We believe that the success of this activity relies on the thoughtful creation of a diverse set of economists. As a result, we encourage instructors to invest time in preparing their lists.

This activity requires students to work in groups, which may lead to some students not fully participating in the activity. We have tried to mitigate this issue by walking around our classroom, engaging with different groups, and staying alert to all the groups in our class. Even so, we cannot guarantee that students will participate in the activity, nor that they will have a positive experience in their group. We see this issue as being particularly challenging when scaling this activity up to an extra-large, hybrid, or online class.

We did not collect formal feedback from our students about this lesson plan, but we plan to do this in the future. We encourage other faculty to do the same. Collecting feedback allows instructors to make necessary adjustments, measure the efficacy of the lesson plan, and adjust their lesson plans accordingly. We are hopeful that this lesson plan provides an opportunity for students to learn about the field of economics, see a variety of role models, and build meaningful connections, but we cannot be sure of its efficacy until we evaluate it.

Finally, we do not know whether this activity increases diversity in the field or not. We hope that it can increase diversity in economics due to the thoughtful creation of the activity in response to AEA guidance and previous literature. However, future research still needs to evaluate the effectiveness of this activity in increasing diversity in the field. It will be important to understand whether this activity operates effectively or has unintended consequences.

Conclusion

This paper provides a first day of class activity that exposes students to the discipline of economics and current economists. Students begin by positing what economics is, which allows instructors to take stock of students' preconceptions of the discipline. Instructors are then able to discuss with students what economics is. Next, students work in groups to research current economists. This activity gives students the time to see that economists look like them and study topics that are interesting to them.

Economics faces a diversity challenge. Our main goal is to increase the relevance of economics to real life and introduce it to students from day one. The more we can expose students to the field, the more that we can begin to combat this diversity problem. It is important for the economics profession to engage diverse groups of students so that we can continue to provide relevant insights into policy. If we can engage students on the first day of school, we will be able

to have a more diverse group of students who find economics interesting and find themselves as economists.

As faculty members of this profession, we understand that a one-day lesson plan may not be enough to change students' preconceptions or traditional teaching methods in economics classrooms. However, as shown by Walton and Cohen (2011), brief interventions that shore up belonging can promote performance and well-being even long after delivery. It may be that one hour of interaction in the economics classroom using this lesson plan has a big impact on students. Including these activities into a creative first-day-of-class lesson plan provides us the opportunity to contribute to the transformation of economics education.

References

- Al-Bahrani, A. (2022). Classroom management and student interaction interventions: Fostering diversity, inclusion, and belonging in the undergraduate economics classroom. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 53(3), 259-272.
- Allgood, S., Walstad, W. B., & Siegfried, J. J. (2015). Research on teaching economics to undergraduates. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 53(2), 285-325
- Allgood, S., Badgett, L., Bayer, A., Bertrand, M., Black, S. E., Bloom, N., & Cook, L. D. (2019). *AEA Professional Climate Survey: Final Report*. American Economic Association.
- Altonji, J.G. (1993). The Demand for and Return to Education When Education Outcomes are Uncertain. *Journal of Labor Economics* 11, 48–83.
- American Economic Association (AEA) Task Force on Best Practices for Professional Conduct in Economics (2023, November). Best Practices for Economists: Building a More Diverse, Inclusive, and Productive Profession. www.aeaweb.org/resources/bestpractices.
- Arcidiacono, P., Hotz, V.J., Kang, S. (2012). Modeling college major choices using elicited measures of expectations and counterfactuals. *Journal of Econometrics*, 166, 3–16.
- Avilova, T. and Goldin, C. (2024). Seeking the “missing women” of economics with the Undergraduate Women in Economics Challenge. *Journal of Economics Perspectives*, 38(3): 137-162.
- Bayer, A., & Rouse, C. E. (2016). Diversity in the economics profession: A new attack on an old problem. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 30(4), 221-242.
- Bayer, A., Bhanot, S. P., and Lozano, F. (2019). Does simple information provision lead to more diverse classrooms? Evidence from a field experiment on undergraduate economics. *AEA Papers and Proceedings 2019*, 109: 110-114.
- Bayer, A., Hoover, G. A., & Washington, E. (2020). How you can work to increase the presence and improve the experience of Black, Latinx, and Native American people in the economics profession. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 34(3), 193-219.
- Barreto, H. (2015). Why excel?. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 46(3), 300-309.
- Becker, W. E., & Watts, M. (2001). Teaching economics at the start of the 21st century: Still chalk and talk. *American Economic Review*, 91(2), 446-451.

- Becker, W. E. (1997). Teaching economics to undergraduates. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 35(3), 1347-1373.
- Bonwell, C. C., & Eison, J. A. (1991). *Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom. 1991 ASHE-ERIC higher education reports*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, The George Washington University, One Dupont Circle, Suite 630, Washington, DC 20036-1183.
- Bosshardt, W., Watts, M., & Becker, W. E. (2013). Course requirements for bachelor's degrees in economics. *American Economic Review*, 103(3): 643-47.
- Bosshardt, W., and W. Walstad. (2016). Economics and business coursework by undergraduate students: Findings from baccalaureate and beyond transcripts. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 48 (1): 51–60.
- Cagliesi, G., & Ghanei, M. (2022). Team-based learning in economics: Promoting group collaboration, diversity and inclusion. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 53(1), 11-30.
- CSMGEP. (2022, December). Report of the Committee on the Status of Minority Groups in the Economics Profession (CSMGEP). Accessed on October 1, 2023, <https://www.aeaweb.org/content/file?id=18308>.
- Deslauriers, L., McCarty, L. S., Miller, K., Callaghan, K., & Kestin, G. (2019). Measuring actual learning versus feeling of learning in response to being actively engaged in the classroom. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(39), 19251-19257.
- Dacass, T., & Dilden, E. B. (2023). Teaching Price and Income Elasticities of Demand Using EXCEL and Federal Reserve Economic Data. *Journal for Economic Educators*, 23(1), 43-60.
- Davis, B. G. (2009). *Tools for Teaching* (2nd edition). Jossey-Bass.
- Dickie, M. (2006). Do classroom experiments increase learning in introductory microeconomics? *The Journal of Economic Education*, 37(3), 267-288.
- Emerson, T. L., & McGoldrick, K. (2019). Switching majors—into and out of economics. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 50(3), 321-332.
- Freeman, S., Eddy, S. L., McDonough, M., Smith, M. K., Okoroafor, N., Jordt, H., & Wenderoth, M. P. (2014). Active learning increases student performance in science, engineering, and mathematics. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 111(23), 8410-8415.

- Fricke, H., Grogger, J., & Steinmayr, A. (2018). Exposure to academic fields and college major choice. *Economics of Education Review*, 64, 199-213.
- Horowitz, B. (2023). One nation under stress: A cooperative learning exercise to promote diversity and inclusion in introductory macroeconomics. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 54(4), 398-406.
- Jardina, A., Blair, P. Q., Heck, J., & Debroy, P. (2023). The Limits of Educational Attainment in Mitigating Occupational Segregation Between Black and White Workers (No. w31641). *National Bureau of Economic Research*.
- Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Smith, K. A. (2006). Active learning: Cooperation in the university classroom. *Interaction*.
- Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Smith, K. A. (2008). Cooperative learning. *Minneapolis, MN*, 88.
- Kelly, B. T., Raines, A., Brown, R., French, A., & Stone, J. (2021). Critical validation: Black women's retention at predominantly White institutions. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 23(2), 434-456.
- Lang, J. M. (2019). How to teach a good first day of class. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 701.
- Lopez, M., & Wandschneider, K. (2024). How to belong: Inclusive pedagogical practices for beginning instructors of economics. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 55(1), 41-53.
- Lundberg, S. and Stearns, J. (2019). Women in Economics: Stalled progress. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 33(1): 3-22.
- Marshall, E. C., Underwood, A., & Hyde, A. (2024). Requirements of the undergraduate economics major: An update and comparison. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 1-8.
- Montmarquette, C., Cannings, K., Mahseredjian, S. (2002). How do young people choose college majors? *Economics of Education Review*, 21, 543–556.
- Mumford, K., and M. Ohland. (2011). Student performance in undergraduate economics courses. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 42 (3): 275–82.
- Prince, M. (2004). Does active learning work? A review of the research. *Journal of Engineering Education* 93(3), 223-231.
- Porter, C., and Serra, D. (2020). Gender differences in the choice of major: the importance of female role models. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 12(3): 226-254.

- Pugatch, T. & Schroeder, E. (2021a). A simple nudge increases socioeconomic diversity in undergraduate economics. IZA DP No. 14418.
- Pugatch, T. & Schroeder, E. (2021b). Promoting female interests in economics: Limits to nudges. *AEA Papers and Proceedings 2021*, 111: 123-127.
- Siegfried, J. J. (2022). Trends in undergraduate economics degrees, 2001–2021. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 53(3), 273-276.
- Siegfried, J. J., & Bidani, B. (1992). Differences between economics programs located in liberal arts colleges and in business schools. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 23(2): 181-188.
- Stansbury, A. and Schultz, R. (2023). The economics profession’s socioeconomic diversity problem. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 37(4): 207-230.
- Stock, W. A. (2023). Who does (and does not) take introductory economics? *The Journal of Economic Education*, 1-18.
- Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2011). A brief social-belonging intervention improves academic and health outcomes of minority students. *Science*, 331(6023), 1447-1451.
- Wiswall, M., Zafar, B. (2015). Determinants of College Major Choice: Identification using an Information Experiment. *Review of Economic Studies*, 82, 791–824.

Positionality Statement

At the time this paper was drafted, one author identified as a white Turkish woman, while the other author identified as a white American woman.

APPENDIX A: Random Sample of iClicker Responses from Principles of Microeconomics, Spring 2023 to the question “What is Economics”

Economics is the study of how funds, goods, services, and other things move in the market and how they affect each other.
The study of how money flows and what ways that flow can be affected
Economics is the study of how money and people's interactions with money affects the mass of people.
Economics is the study of and examination of how policy and spending from groups and individuals work together.
The systems of money in societies and how it functions
Economics is the study of markets and how they change / interact.
The study of the intersection between money and society
How different markets interact with each other.
The study of the movement of money
Study of the economy

APPENDIX B: Student Handout

In Class Activity #1: What is “economics?”

In this activity, you will be introduced to the field of economics, current economists, and current research.

Please see the list of economists assigned to each group.

Group 1: Economist #1

Group 2: Economist #2

Group 3: Economist #3

Group 4: Economist #4

Group 5: Economist #5

Tasks to complete as a group:

1. For the economist assigned to your group, please answer the following questions (*Hint: Google Scholar is a good place to start*):

- What is the specialty of the economist?

- Where did they receive their degree?

- What is their current job?

- What is the title of their most interesting paper?

2. As a group, please share your answers with the class.