



Achieving first-generation student success in higher education: Best practices for economics instructors

First-generation students (FGS) constitute a substantial share of the college population, yet often face challenges in analytical courses such as economics. We analyze key obstacles that may inhibit student success, including financial barriers, time constraints, deficiencies in math and graphing, and a lack of understanding of college cultural norms. These challenges persist despite the economics major's appeal to FGS, which offers clear pathways to lucrative careers. Combining insights from our experience as economics instructors, survey data, and the literature, this paper discusses strategies and best practices for mitigating the obstacles faced by FGS while also providing positive spillovers to non-FGS.

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1. Introduction

First-generation students (FGS) comprise a large and rapidly growing segment of students in higher education, accounting for 54% of all undergraduate students in U.S. institutions of higher learning (FirstGen Forward, 2025). FGS are commonly defined as students who do not have a parent who is pursuing or has completed a college degree. Often, these are students who come from lower-income households or whose parents are immigrants seeking a better life for their children. As a result, many FGS face obstacles such as work and family obligations, language barriers, and a lack of peer support, creating challenges to achieving a college degree.

This paper focuses on students enrolled in principles of economics courses (microeconomics and macroeconomics), a core requirement for most business majors that has gained popularity alongside other STEM disciplines. We address the challenges and concerns of FGS in general, while also focusing on issues specific to the study of economics, such as the math and graphical tools used in economics courses. Since heterogeneity exists within FGS, not all problems can be solved using the same strategy. Our goal is to present a set of strategies that instructors can use to promote achievement among all students, but with particular emphasis on the needs of FGS.

The strategies discussed in this paper are informed by an integrated approach that combines three sources of insight: the authors' experiences as economics instructors at both two-year and four-year degree-granting institutions, empirical insights observed from survey data, and findings from the broader literature on FGS in higher education. The authors regularly teach at both two-year and four-year degree-granting institutions with large populations of FGS, offering unique insights that can be translated into best practices. Moreover, we collected survey data from 2,044 students (in accordance with Institutional Review Board protocol) at the five public institutions of higher learning where the authors teach, allowing us to compare the realities faced by FGS with those of non-FGS.

While not every teaching strategy maps directly to a single issue or experience, the recommendations serve as a guide to mitigate obstacles and improve academic outcomes for FGS. Moreover, the strategies can be applied independently of one another, making it easier for economics instructors to make marginal changes to their courses. By making economics courses more accessible to FGS, economics programs can increase enrollment and majors among an increasingly visible FGS population.

2. Background Literature

Although a substantial body of literature exists on the challenges facing FGS in higher education (see Spiegler and Bednarek, 2013), to our knowledge, no paper has focused on the challenges facing FGS in economics courses. Two facts highlight the importance of focusing on economics: 1) economics is a discipline that requires technical and analytical skills that can create obstacles for FGS compared to their non-FGS peers, and 2) FGS often view business and economics degrees as a practical pathway toward a lucrative career.

Common characteristics among FGS include lower socioeconomic backgrounds and incomes (Inman and Mayes, 1999; Mehta et al., 2011). Therefore, FGS are more likely to rely on financial aid and face student loan burdens (Furquim et al., 2017). Moreover, the ambitions of FGS tend to focus on helping their families financially after completing their degrees (Bui, 2002). Trejo (2016) finds that first-generation status significantly affects one's field of study; specifically, FGS are more likely to select majors with a clearly defined career path.

Several studies have focused on specific challenges faced by FGS and strategies to overcome them. Balemian and Feng (2013) find a greater proportion of FGS work while in school and live at home, characteristics that may hinder the college experience. Próspero and Vohra-Gupta (2007) argue that academic integration (the assimilation of students into academic life) is a key determinant of college success among FGS, more so than extrinsic motivation factors such as the desire to complete a college degree for financial success. Pascarella et al. (2004) similarly argued that “access” to college means more than just academic access, but providing the whole college experience, including extracurricular activities.

Another issue facing FGS is overcoming financial obstacles in the long run, after their college experience. A study by Fry (2021) reveals that first-generation college graduates continue to lag economically compared to their non-first-generation counterparts, suggesting that the challenges facing FGS extend beyond achieving college success. One reason provided by Hirudayaraj (2011) is that first-generation college graduates often lack the social and cultural capital typically acquired through their family upbringing, which may hinder their employability in a knowledge-based economy.

A key conclusion from existing research is that addressing the primary obstacles facing FGS and providing the necessary resources and support can yield outcomes that are not empirically distinguishable from those of non-FGS (Terenzini et al., 1996). Moreover, after leveling the playing field, FGS can achieve better outcomes due to their determination and focus on lucrative career choices. York-Anderson and Bowman (1991) show that a strong support system for FGS can provide greater opportunities for student success and future earnings.

3. Instructor Experiences and Survey Data

One of the purposes of this paper is to share insights from the authors’ unique teaching backgrounds. While all three authors primarily teach introductory economics courses at public institutions of higher learning, two of the authors teach simultaneously at two-year degree-granting colleges (as adjunct instructors), and at four-year degree-granting universities (as full-time professors). Moreover, the colleges and universities where the authors teach have very diverse and large FGS populations. Many examples presented in the following section draw on decades of experience working with FGS, bridging the gap between the challenges faced by FGS and the potentially lucrative careers an economics degree can offer.

Following our instructor experiences and the established literature, we also surveyed 2,044 students (in accordance with Institutional Review Board protocols) during the Fall 2023 semester. This survey aims to provide deeper insights into the challenges FGS face in higher education compared to their non-first-generation peers in the economics discipline. Among our sample, 756 students (37% of the sample) self-identified as FGS based on the survey question “Are you the first person in your immediate family to pursue a college degree?”. We classified FGS as students who selected either the affirmative response or indicated that only siblings (and not parents) have completed or are pursuing a college degree.

Participation in the survey was optional; however, given the minimal time required to complete it online in Canvas, the response rate exceeded 80%. Moreover, the survey was anonymous, as Canvas recorded survey completions without attaching names to the data. Additionally, the survey was administered approximately one week after the first exam, allowing students to evaluate their experiences in the course after completing the first set of chapters and the first exam. No performance data (e.g., grades) nor demographic data (e.g., gender, race, class standing) were collected. The complete set of survey questions is provided in the Appendix.

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics comparing FGS and non-FGS, including the percentage who work full-time, work part-time, have previously taken a college-level or AP economics course, reported a concern with the math skills required to succeed in the course, reported a concern with the graphical skills required to succeed in the course, have a high level of interest in the course, and are majoring (or plan to major) in an economics or business field.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics: First-Generation vs. Non-First-Generation Students

Variable	Total Mean (2 year/4 year)	First-Gen Mean (2 year/4 year)	Non-First-Gen Mean (2 year/4 year)
Work full-time	20.1% (41.8%/19.5%)	30.0% (42.9%/29.4%)	16.8% (41.2%/16.2%)
Work part-time	45.7% (45.5%/45.8%)	43.0% (52.4%/42.6%)	46.7% (41.2%/46.9%)
Previous economics	46.0% (52.7%/45.8%)	46.5% (42.9%/46.7%)	45.9% (58.8%/45.6%)
Math concern	38.9% (29.1%/39.2%)	41.8% (38.1%/42.0%)	37.9% (23.5%/38.2%)
Graphing concern	50.2% (32.7%/50.7%)	53.7% (38.1%/54.4%)	49.0% (29.4%/49.5%)
Level of interest	50.1% (63.6%/49.8%)	59.3% (76.2%/58.6%)	47.1% (55.9%/46.9%)
Economics or business major	81.5% (76.4%/81.6%)	82.1% (57.1%/83.2%)	81.3% (88.2%/81.1%)
Observations	2,044	756	1,288

(Level of Interest = 1 if very interested or interested in course content; 0 if neutral or not interested)

Survey results in Table 1 exhibit several key differences between FGS and non-FGS, some of which are expected (e.g., time constraints), while others provide insight into how economics programs might be an attractive field of study for FGS. Regarding time constraints, 30% of the FGS sampled worked full-time, nearly twice the percentage of non-FGS (16.8%). This difference is larger among students at four-year institutions, where non-FGS are less likely to work than at two-year institutions. Moreover, we find that FGS reported greater concern about the math and graphing tools common to economics courses, suggesting that a key to promoting success in economics is helping students achieve adequate proficiency in math, either through prerequisite courses or by providing tutorials within economics courses.

Another interesting finding from Table 1 is the level of interest in the economics course where FGS reported greater interest in economics than non-FGS. Moreover, a marginally higher percentage of FGS students chose or planned to major in economics or a business field. These

findings suggest that although FGS may struggle with economics courses, they find these courses are practical and can lead to career opportunities that their parents did not have access to. Since business careers are often viewed as well-paying, it makes sense that FGS favor business majors, despite the obstacles faced.

4. Strategies for Supporting First-Generation College Students in Economics

When institutions of higher education engage in strategies to support FGS, the potential rewards in terms of enrollment and majors can be substantial. Our survey findings show FGS favor academic majors with a clearly defined career path. Yet, many students do not know what it means to be an “economist”, since that is not a job title most economics majors eventually attain. By emphasizing that economics uses critical reasoning and analysis to solve problems, students can appreciate how economics provides a foundation for many lucrative careers.

This section provides a discussion of best practices in supporting all students (FGS and non-FGS), but with an emphasis on ameliorating challenges in economics courses that FGS are more likely to face, such as time constraints. Since these practices benefit all students, their implementation does not single out any student. This allows FGS to be gently guided, rather than explicitly targeted, to achieve positive gains from these interventions. Framing these strategies as universal classroom enhancements promotes equity, fosters a sense of belonging, and avoids unintended marginalization.

In the following, we summarize six themed recommendations and explain how they can enhance the success of FGS. With each recommendation, we also present a concise box outlining specific best practices and strategies, accompanied by either economics-specific examples or general implementation ideas, allowing instructors to reflect on how they might make modest changes to their classes.

A. Take a Compassionate and Inclusive Approach

Teaching to FGS effectively necessitates a keen awareness of potential personal biases and an empathetic approach. Educators can enhance their teaching practices to create a supportive learning environment by challenging their own assumptions, increasing transparency and empathy. This self-awareness can lead to course design and policies that boost students’ confidence and encourage them to explore various academic pathways.

Our survey data show that many FGS in economics courses are concerned about prerequisite knowledge, particularly in math and graphing, which are critical tools even in introductory economics courses. These findings suggest that compassion and flexibility from instructors are not only beneficial but necessary in helping students manage competing demands while building confidence in technical subjects. For example, instructors can emphasize the connection between economics and the choices we make each day. Moreover, emphasizing that economics provides a foundation for many career paths, including business, law, and public administration, can alleviate anxiety about the job market, a concern among FGS.

Best practices and strategies

1. Review assignment design, participation expectations, and class policies to identify hidden biases.
2. Make assumptions explicit to students, creating a dialogue that clarifies expectations and encourages feedback about their comfort level with course content.
3. Communicate with students regularly to assess their academic progress, providing individualized feedback to help navigate challenges effectively.
4. Collaborate with college and university offices that support FGS and integrate these resources into instructional practices.

Implementation examples:

1. When introducing the demand curve, take a moment to convey that demand measures what different individuals are willing and able to pay for something, a value that changes depending on the circumstances (e.g., "I'm willing to pay more for ice cream when it's hot."). Collect willingness-to-pay data from students and plot the points to show how demand is derived from real individuals. This allows students to appreciate the importance of demand before proceeding to more technical aspects and graphical analysis.
2. Dedicate class time toward collaborative learning and other forms of active learning, where students have opportunities to work with other students. In doing so, students gain confidence in communicating their concerns and develop study habits by observing others. In these pedagogical activities, the instructor's role becomes more of a "coach", allowing greater opportunities to connect with students.

B. Unveil the Hidden Curriculum

FGS often enter higher education without the benefit of familial guidance or prior exposure to academic customs and practices. The lack of understanding of college culture can make the transition to college overwhelming, leading to confusion and feelings of intimidation (Davis, 2012). A commonly raised concern in the literature about FGS is the presence of a "hidden curriculum" in higher education (Chatelain, 2018). The hidden curriculum refers to the unwritten expectations and practices in higher education that may be unfamiliar to FGS. This hidden curriculum can place FGS at a disadvantage, as non-FGS students often have support systems to help them decode these unspoken rules and customs.

In our teaching experience, we've observed that FGS are less likely to be familiar with terms like "office hours," less likely to know where to seek help, and more hesitant to use available academic support services. These observations underscore the importance of making these structures more transparent. Rather than assuming students are familiar with college jargon, find opportunities to explain what practices will be used in each course, how they will be used, and the benefits students will receive when using these resources. Making the hidden curriculum more apparent can promote equitable instruction for FGS.

Best practices and strategies

1. Create a syllabus that clearly outlines expectations, assignments, grading criteria, and due dates. Provide detailed explanations of course policies and academic resources.
2. Schedule office hours at times convenient for all students and in multiple formats (e.g., in person and virtual) to accommodate different learning styles and schedules. Explain and provide examples of what office hours can be used for.
3. Promote the use of tutoring services offered by departments or the university by explaining their benefits. Encourage FGS to seek additional support when needed.
4. Highlight resources available at the career center, including resume-building workshops, job fairs, and internship opportunities.
5. Offer guidance on effective study techniques, time management, and organization.

Implementation examples:

1. Use alternative terms for office hours. For example, in the first two weeks, call them “meet-and-greet sessions”, where students are invited to stop by and say hello, with no other expectations. Before each exam, call them “review sessions” to eliminate the stigma of visiting the instructor. At other times, call them “coffee chats” to encourage debate and dialogue. When FGS view moments of contact with an instructor as an opportunity, it eases the anxiety of communicating when more difficult struggles arise.
2. Record tutorials using screen capture tools such as Clipchamp or Zoom, with the instructor demonstrating the required course tools (e.g., LMS system, courseware, proctoring software), allowing students to see exactly the steps needed.

C. Address Psychological Factors

FGS often face unique psychological challenges impacting their academic success and overall well-being. These include the imposter syndrome, limited help-seeking behaviors, and a fixed mindset, factors that have been well-documented in the literature (Stebbleton et al., 2014). Imposter syndrome is a common psychological challenge for first-generation high-achieving students (Davis, 2012). They may attribute their success to external factors rather than their own abilities. This perception can negatively affect their academic performance, social integration, and emotional health (Galina, 2016; Ewing et al., 1996).

The distinction between a fixed and a growth mindset plays a critical role in academic success. Encouraging a growth mindset can enhance a student’s willingness to learn and persist through challenges (Bowman and Levto, 2020).

Best practices and strategies to address imposter syndrome

1. Provide regular feedback and positive reinforcement to boost self-confidence.
2. Offer mentorship programs to connect students with experienced peers or faculty.
3. Promote self-reflection to help students recognize their accomplishments and capabilities.

Best practices and strategies to promote a growth mindset

1. Emphasize the importance of effort and perseverance in the learning process.
2. Highlight stories of successful individuals who overcame obstacles through learning.
3. Encourage students to view challenges as opportunities for growth and development.

Implementation examples:

1. Highlight milestones achieved during the course, such as celebrating the halfway point or the completion of major chapters, to encourage momentum for the remainder of the course.
2. Provide “Wise” feedback (Cohen and Steele, 2002) on each exam, which entails pointing out what students did well and where they can improve, highlighting their progress from exam to exam, and then providing suggestions on how they should proceed based on their performance and the course structure.

FGS often hesitate to seek academic assistance, believing it reflects inadequacy. Educators can help students overcome this barrier by creating a supportive learning environment where asking questions and seeking help are encouraged and represent a commitment to success. These objectives can be further facilitated by providing academic support resources, including tutoring, study groups, and office hours. These strategies contribute to academic success and the overall well-being of FGS as they navigate the challenges of higher education.

D. Craft an Inclusive Course Structure with Flexibility

Time constraints are a significant barrier to success for many FGS. The survey results indicate that nearly three-quarters work full- or part-time while enrolled, about 10% more than non-FGS. These external demands can hinder prioritizing studying and effectively paced learning throughout the semester. Providing a clear course structure with weekly deadlines and low-stakes grading, as well as recognizing and addressing obstacles FGS may face, are teaching practices that create a supportive course structure while providing flexibility, ultimately benefiting all students, particularly FGS (USC Center for Teaching Excellence, 2023).

A flexible course structure and teaching clarity play a pivotal role in motivating students, increasing student persistence, and improving their academic performance. The Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education emphasizes the importance of these elements, particularly in supporting FGS (Wang et al., 2015). In addition to structure and increased clarity, recognizing external challenges that FGS face and offering accommodations where appropriate can be an effective strategy.

Best practices and strategies

1. Communicate learning objectives and instructional methods clearly, and reinforce the relevance of each activity, assignment, and assessment to the broader course goals.
2. Discuss how specific skills and knowledge acquired will aid students in their academic and personal growth.
3. Prevent students from falling behind by establishing clear, consistent deadlines for assignments, readings, and activities. Dividing the course into manageable weekly segments and providing frequent reminders can help students pace their learning.
4. Break assignments and activities into smaller steps with frequent review.
5. Allow for extensions or other accommodations on assessments when students face unexpected challenges or different learning styles.

Implementation examples:

1. Begin each class with a brief review or activity that reinforces the most recent content. A polling game (e.g., Kahoot!) may encourage additional preparation before class and help students maintain a consistent pace of study throughout the course.
2. Introduce a process writing assignment, which breaks down the writing task into small, manageable steps, providing structure, guidance, and feedback after each submission.

E. Provide Transparent Assignments and Evaluation

FGS often enter college without the advantages of prior exposure to higher education norms, making it difficult to interpret unwritten expectations around coursework and grading. Our survey results show that more than half of FGS have never taken a previous economics course. While this is only slightly different from non-FGS, when paired with higher reported levels of concern around math and graphing tools, it can signal a lack of academic preparedness in foundational skills critical to economics. This combination of unfamiliarity and apprehension can lead to uncertainty and reduced confidence in their ability to succeed.

Transparent assignments with clearly articulated instructions, rubrics, and examples help demystify expectations and enable FGS to better plan, execute, and evaluate their work. These practices not only reduce stress but also promote equity by leveling the academic playing field. Winkelmes (2016) shows FGS benefit from enhanced clarity in assignments and evaluation practices. Utilizing rubrics and providing sample assignment submissions are some practices that ensure transparency in learning objectives and assessment criteria (Stevens and Levi, 2005).

Best practices and strategies

1. Provide detailed criteria for assessments and help students understand the criteria and standards, making expectations transparent.
2. Illustrate the expected quality and depth of work and offer a consistent framework for evaluating student work.
3. Empower students to self-assess and improve their work.
4. Facilitate constructive and fair grading by using clear rubrics, offering timely and actionable feedback, and ensuring consistency across assignments. This reduces uncertainty and helps students build trust in the evaluation process.

Implementation examples:

1. Use embedded rubrics in the LMS for discussions, projects, and writing assignments. Students benefit from seeing the rubric attached to the assignment, which explains how they will be evaluated. It's also convenient for the instructor because the LMS automatically calculates the points.
2. Provide students with progress reports at key points in the course, such as before the final drop date, so they can stay informed about their current performance and the chances of reaching their goal.

F. Leverage Economics Concepts through Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally responsive teaching in economics involves recognizing and embracing the characteristics and experiences of FGS to create an engaging and inclusive learning environment. Economists can easily apply culturally responsive teaching to FGS because economics is a subject that inherently deals with real-world issues and practical decision-making. Since economics focuses on how individuals and societies make choices to allocate resources, which directly affect the daily lives of FGS, the subject matter becomes immediately relevant to their experiences.

Culturally responsive teaching in economics can be compelling when it draws in FGS through examples that reflect their lived experiences. This can be done in a way that calls students in, creating opportunities for engagement without placing them in the spotlight. The goal is to normalize and validate everyday experiences among FGS by embedding them into the course content, rather than highlighting individuals or implying deficit-based narratives. This approach avoids 'othering' students, a concern widely documented in educational equity and inclusion literature. The survey results reflect many of the FGS characteristics found in the literature, including limited access to social capital, increased financial constraints, deficient math skills, greater difficulty achieving a work-education-life balance, increased resilience and determination, varied family and community influences, and career aspirations.

Best practices and strategies

1. Offer a detailed math review (such as an online tutorial) for each course. Since FGS show challenges with math relative to their non-first-generation peers, including a math review could be beneficial in addressing educational gaps and building confidence.
2. Connect economic concepts to students' everyday life experiences as they pursue a college degree and plan for their future careers.

Implementing culturally responsive examples in economics:

1. Explore the concept of opportunity cost by considering the tradeoffs FGS might face, such as the effect of working on their ability to focus on coursework.
2. Explore the concept of externalities by discussing how the educational attainment of one family member can generate positive spillovers to other family members and the community.
3. Incorporate discussions about public policies to engage FGS in topics related to social and economic equity, which often align with their experiences and values.
4. Examine labor market trends and the challenges in balancing work and education. Discuss the impact of part-time jobs or work-study programs on their earning potential and career opportunities.
5. Emphasize the value of human capital and the return on investment in education. Discuss how educational choices affect career options and earning potential, and showcase stories of individuals who overcame challenges through determination and education.
6. Explore topics that focus on income inequality and economic mobility. FGS are often motivated by a desire to improve their socioeconomic status, and economics can help them understand the dynamics at play in this context.
7. Discuss the importance of financial literacy and its role in making informed decisions about budgeting, savings, investments, and retirement planning. Use practical examples related to personal finance and investments that resonate with FGS.

These examples are chosen not to identify or isolate FGS, but to ensure that course materials reflect a range of realities, including those often underrepresented in traditional curricula. When these scenarios are presented as part of broader economic principles applicable to everyone, they allow FGS to see themselves in the material without being singled out. By incorporating these characteristics of FGS into economics concepts, instructors can make the material more relevant and engaging. This approach helps FGS see the direct applicability of economic principles to their lives, making subject matter more relatable and motivating.

5. Student Attrition and Diversity in Economics

Student retention serves as a crucial indicator of student success and achievement. Several challenges faced by FGS are associated with higher rates of student attrition. Among the general factors contributing to attrition, insufficient student support is a prominent concern. Our survey data reflect many factors identified in the literature as contributing to attrition, such as financial strain, academic unpreparedness in math and economics, and limited prior exposure to college-level content. These insights reinforce the need for targeted strategies that not only support FGS persistence but also affirm their interest and potential in economics, as evidenced by their higher reported interest in the subject. Moreover, the survey highlights that FGS are more likely to work full-time, emphasizing the importance of flexible course structures and tailored academic support. These findings help justify the teaching strategies presented and underscore the relevance of classroom-level interventions in supporting FGS success.

Educators can increase student retention by recognizing the strengths of FGS, fostering an inclusive learning environment, providing personalized support, and addressing the obstacles that contribute to attrition. Implementing best teaching practices tailored to the needs of FGS not only benefits this student population but also contributes to a more successful higher education environment for all. The survey results indicate that FGS report a higher level of interest in economics than non-FGS. We already have their attention. With greater attention to the needs of FGS, retention of these underrepresented groups can be increased.

Economic discussion benefits from broad perspectives. When FGS are actively involved in economics programs, they bring unique viewpoints, experiences, and insights that enrich classroom discussions, research, and policy analysis. Encouraging different perspectives can lead to more comprehensive and well-informed economic solutions. Therefore, representation matters. Highlighting diverse scholars in the field, including references and materials by first-generation economists, or inviting guest speakers from various backgrounds, can inspire FGS and others from similar backgrounds to pursue the field. Positive representation is crucial in encouraging students from underrepresented groups to persist in economics. This emphasis on representation can lead to a more diverse cohort of economics professionals, ultimately enriching the field and its impact on society.

6. Conclusion

This paper presents strategies and best practices for economics instructors to support FGS in their classes. We used several key findings from a survey of over 2,000 college students, of whom 37% identified as FGS. The biggest challenges facing FGS involve time constraints, which often result from work commitments and family responsibilities that usually take priority over one's studies. Other challenges facing FGS include deficiencies in prerequisite knowledge (such as quantitative skills) that are integral to the economics curriculum. Structuring courses to address these concerns can open doors for a large segment of the college student population.

Economics can play a valuable role in connecting the goals and aspirations of FGS, who disproportionately favor majors in business fields that are viewed as more closely correlated with high-paying careers. Therefore, elevating the value of an economics curriculum to FGS can lead to numerous outcomes, including enhancing diversity in the economics discipline, promoting financial literacy, improving decision-making skills by conveying the broad value of economic applications, and expanding career opportunities, ultimately reducing income inequality and wage gaps. FGS offer a wealth of practical knowledge and experiences that enhance learning for all students. Therefore, by harnessing these experiences in the

classroom, instructors can provide effective learning paths that drive student success while boosting enrollments and majors.

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Appendix: Survey Questions

1. (Select all that apply): Have you previously completed a college or an AP economics course?

- ☐ No, this is my first college-level economics course.
- ☐ Yes, I have previously completed an economics course in college.
- ☐ Yes, I have previously completed an AP economics course in high school.

2. Which of the following statements best describes how this course fits into your degree requirements?

- ☐ This is a required course for my major or intended major.
- ☐ This course was selected from a list of courses that satisfy a degree requirement.
- ☐ This is an elective course.

3. (Select all that apply): What concerns, if any, did you have about this course at the start of the term?

- ☐ This course would be very math-intensive
- ☐ This course would be very graph-intensive
- ☐ This course would have difficult exams
- ☐ This course would be uninteresting
- ☐ I had other concerns not listed above
- ☐ I did not have any concerns

4. How interesting have you found this course to be so far?

- ☐ Extremely interesting
- ☐ Very interesting
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not very interesting
- ☐ Not at all interesting

5. Which of the following best describes your primary academic major (or intended major if not yet declared)?

- ☐ Economics
- ☐ Business major other than economics
- ☐ Non-business major
- ☐ Undecided

6. Which of the following best describes the job or career you hope to pursue?

- ☐ Private sector business career
- ☐ Public sector (government) business career
- ☐ Self-employment or entrepreneur
- ☐ Academic career (teacher)
- ☐ Other business career
- ☐ Non-business career
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ No answer

7. (Select all that apply): Are you the first person in your immediate family to pursue a college degree?

- ☐ Yes, I am the first in my immediate family to pursue a college degree.
- ☐ No, at least one parent is currently enrolled in college or has completed a college degree.
- ☐ No, at least one sibling is currently enrolled in college or has completed a college degree.
- ☐ No answer

8. Do you currently work?

- ☐ I work full-time.
- ☐ I work part-time.
- ☐ I currently do not work.
- ☐ No answer