JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS TEACHING

Beyond the Textbook: Modernizing Money, Credit, and Banking Courses with Innovative Resources and Applied Learning

This article presents a redesign of a Money, Credit, and Banking course to provide viable alternatives and/or supplements to a traditional textbook. Open educational resources from the Federal Reserve (news articles, podcasts, and FRED economic data) and the Community Banking Case Study Competition were combined to more effectively engage students by connecting theory to current monetary policy issues and the unique challenges that local community banks are facing. Both innovations decreased student textbook costs, increased student engagement, and addressed course learning outcomes. Practical implementation steps and lessons learned are presented to guide other instructors who wish to revitalize their upper-level economics courses with these applied exercises.

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This article benefited from feedback received during a poster presentation at the 2023 ASSA Conference, organized by the AEA Committee on Economic Education. I am especially grateful to Scott Wolla, Assistant Vice President for Economic Education at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, for his insightful suggestions, and to Tim Geelan, former CEO of Guilford Savings Bank, for his partnership on the 2022 Community Banking Case Study.

1. Introduction

Money, Credit, and Banking is often a key component of an economics curriculum, meant not only to familiarize students with the topic of financial markets and institutions, but also to build important links between macroeconomic theory and the details of institutional implementation. Traditional textbooks dominate course content in Money, Credit, and Banking, as in most college-level economics classes, and while they provide coherent and pre-packaged curricula, they can also reinforce problems for students and teachers. They can be cost-prohibitive for the former, with limited content and adaptability for the latter, with a body of knowledge that too quickly becomes stale in a rapidly changing economy. Motivated by these issues and an interest in linking experiential learning with teaching, I redesigned my Money, Credit, and Banking course to include two innovations. The first was the replacement of the traditional commercial textbook with a combination of Federal Reserve open educational resources (OER), supplemental open-access readings, and instructor-developed materials. The Fed OER included podcasts, videos, in-depth research notes, full-length articles, interactive data tools, and graphical presentations that students could access online and at no cost. The second innovation was the application of content learned in class on the operations and business environment of local community banks, through participation in a project based on a national case study competition sponsored by the Conference of State Bank Supervisors, or CSBS. In these ways, the two course changes attempted to simultaneously: (1) remove the cost of a textbook from students' educational expenses, (2) connect the subject matter more directly with on-going policy debates and business practices, and (3) improve students' capabilities in research, written and oral communication, and applied analysis. Course learning outcomes were also directly aligned with these two innovations, with Federal Reserve OER integrated into course content on monetary policy and interest rate behavior, financial regulation and supervisory practices, and the Federal Reserve's role in economic stabilization. In addition, student participants in the community case project successfully connected this knowledge to real-world problems faced by financial institutions, reinforcing a required skill for course completion. This article briefly describes the design and use of these two content changes, provides an example of course structure, discusses student reactions, and outlines some difficulties with implementation. The intention is to provide fellow economics instructors with strategies for modernizing the content of upper-level money and banking courses in ways that improve both rigor and active learning.

2. Literature Review

Textbooks and other educational resources have become increasingly costly and may not reflect the latest information, leading economics instructors to explore new pedagogical approaches. Research on open educational resources (OER) finds they lead to student learning that is equal to or better than learning with commercial textbooks, all while significantly reducing economic burdens for students. Hilton (2016) presents consistent findings across a set of case studies finding no negative effect on student learning and generally positive attitudes from both students and instructors. A subsequent large-scale meta-analysis provided a more rigorous examination and reported statistically significant findings similar to prior studies. OER use led to performance at least as good as standard resources, with suggestive evidence of lower withdrawal rates (Clinton & Khan, 2019). Institution-wide OER adoption has been associated with higher grades and reduced DFW rates, especially for Pell-eligible and other underserved students (Colvard, Watson, & Park, 2018). Winitzky-Stephens and Pickavance (2017) found that courses using OER produced at least as good outcomes as similar courses using traditional materials across seven subjects, including introductory economics courses. These outcomes suggest that open materials are at least substitutable for more traditional textbooks.

Running parallel to this line of research on OER, much of the literature in economics pedagogy has called for curricula to modernize in content, prioritizing relevance and timeliness. Bowles and Carlin (2020) provide a comprehensive overview of traditional introductory economics curricula in the U.S. and argue that the standard course should be radically overhauled to be useful. Courses should be redesigned to address specific real-world problems, to be grounded in evidence, and to highlight institutional detail. Reviews of the economics core curriculum specifically have found that open-access resources for these courses increase engagement and lead students to connect course material to modern problems. Survey evidence finds that faculty are increasingly willing to use active learning and other applied methods, even as traditional lectures remain the most common pedagogical style in undergraduate economics classrooms (Watts & Schaur, 2011). This evidence suggests that OER are well-suited to update the content of courses such as Money, Credit, and Banking in which institutional structures and policy relevance play a particularly important role.

Beyond the specific content of economics curriculum, research also points to the importance of how economics concepts are taught. In a recent teaching letter, Goffe and Wolla (2024) make the case for a literacy-targeted approach to economics, focused on reducing the number of models taught so that evidence-based teaching strategies based on the learning sciences (retrieval practice, spacing, interleaving, etc.) can be used to increase understanding and retention. The evidence they compile also underscores complementarities between more streamlined content and active pedagogy more broadly, which is consistent with my argument that good course design requires not only the most current resources but also a mindful and structured approach to teaching. In a more advanced course like Money, Credit, and Banking, these principles make a strong case for careful scaffolding of assignments, strategic use of models, and regular formative feedback to increase student engagement and learning.

Similar benefits have been shown for experiential and applied learning approaches in economics education. Hawtrey (2007) details the benefits of experiential methods for economics courses, finding that these approaches which include simulations, role plays, and applied research projects promote greater engagement and higher-level thinking compared to more passive modes of instruction. Daraban (2011) reports that classroom experiments can be considered a type of experiential learning, and this approach can help students to see the real-world applicability of otherwise abstract theory. Moreover, the motivation of students can be improved by using experimental methods competitions, such as the College Fed Challenge, that directly engage students in policy debates and build both their analytical and presentation skills (Hoyt & McGoldrick, 2019). The Community Bank Case Study Competition is a similar applied learning experience run annually by the CSBS where a student team partners with a local community bank to research the bank's financial performance and strategic plans/challenges (based on current market conditions), then develops and delivers an evidence-based analysis. These programs showcase the professional relevance of applied case studies, highlighting their value in upper-level economics courses.

Much of the existing literature points to the utility of open educational resources and active learning in revamping upper-division economics courses. However, there is little literature providing guidance for how multiple facets of active learning can be pieced together on a course level to produce cohesive course design. Economics education literature has begun addressing the need for monetary–policy–relevant revisions to money and banking course content. Ihrig and Wolla (2020) detail outdated aspects of money and banking textbooks that no longer align with the Fed's operating procedures. Ihrig, Weinbach, and Wolla (2022) show that students hold many misconceptions about the relationship between banks, reserves, and monetary policy that persist despite coursework. Mendez-Carbajo (2020) highlights useful teaching practices that incorporate active-learning opportunities centered on data and tools

produced by the Federal Reserve, such as FRED.

This paper continues the conversation in the literature by focusing on application at the course level. Specifically, it shows how Federal Reserve OERs can be used alongside an applied community banking case study to replace and/or supplement a traditional textbook. It further illustrates how these resources can be curated, sequenced, and scaffolded to build students' knowledge of money and banking. Sharing course sequencing, learning objectives, student feedback, and implementation challenges can assist instructors in modernizing money and banking courses while maintaining strong content coverage.

3. Integrating the Federal Reserve's Resources

The first approach that I took when redesigning the Money, Credit, and Banking course was to integrate open educational resources offered by the Federal Reserve System. The Fed offers podcasts, short essays, research notes, and data tools authored by economists working at the Federal Reserve's district banks (examples can be found in Appendix A). These resources are freely available online, are regularly updated, and are written at a variety of levels for multiple audiences. They helped students avoid the cost of an expensive textbook and introduced them to current events and policy discussions in the field of monetary economics. For me as an instructor, these resources gave me the flexibility to design content that was aligned to course learning outcomes and current events in financial markets.

For instance, in the lesson on monetary policy tools, I substituted readings from the textbook with a St. Louis Fed Page One Economics article, "How Does the Fed Use Its Monetary Policy Tools to Influence the Economy?" . Students read the article, summarized its explanation of policy tools, and then used the FRED database to research recent trends in the federal funds rate and inflation. Every student created a graph and a short-written analysis describing how the Fed had adjusted its policy tools in the past two years, along with an assessment of the effectiveness and limitations. The assignment culminated in a brief in-class presentation, during which students shared their findings with their classmates (see Appendix B).

This assignment allowed me to address multiple objectives at once. It allowed me to review content. It required students to communicate policy analysis both on paper and orally. The students got practical experience working with real economic data. Students evaluated monetary policy actions and effectiveness as it relates to price stability and maximum employment, and interpreted macroeconomic conditions using quantitative data as evidence. Finally, I aligned the assignment to my learning objectives. I found this assignment to be very effective. Just from informal side-by-side analyses of semesters where students used a traditional textbook with publisher problem sets, students enrolled in this redesigned course have scored higher on questions that test the application of concepts to current policy, and they are more engaged in classroom discussions. The real-world context of the Fed's content appears to have made the course more interesting for students, and the combination of data analysis with policy evaluation may have also helped to reinforce quantitative reasoning.

4. Integrating the Community Banking Case Study

In addition to bringing in Federal Reserve materials, I wanted to provide students with opportunities to use course concepts in the analysis of actual institutions. The Community Banking Case Study competition sponsored by the Conference of State Bank Supervisors provided an excellent framework for this type of learning activity. Not every class had the number of students or level of commitment to participate in the national competition, in that instance I modified its format for a similar in-course project so that all students could benefit from this hands-on learning activity. In this way, the project became a permanent part of the

curriculum but replicated the professional rigor and the real-world application of the national competition. (Plans are for future student teams to compete nationally once again.)

One semester, students had the opportunity to directly participate in the national Community Banking Case Study competition. In other semesters, teams of students research a local community bank and contact a bank employee (preferably at the management/executive level). The students develop a profile of the bank's history, its role in the community, and its strategic position in the broader financial system. Next, they perform a financial analysis of the bank using publicly available call report data, including the bank's performance over the last several years. Each team is also asked to identify two major challenges the bank is currently facing (e.g., managing interest rate risk; adapting to regulatory changes; competition from fintech firms) and recommend strategies the bank could implement in response. The project is completed with a six-to-eight-page written report, as well as a ten-minute presentation (see Appendix C).

In this way, students were able to demonstrate their understanding of financial institution structure, apply monetary/interest rate theory to real balance sheet data, and practice their communication skills through written and oral presentation. In addition, the assignment called for teamwork, with students dividing the project into data analysis, writing, and presentation preparation. Mirroring the format of a professional competition gave students a sample of applied economic analysis outside the classroom.

The Community Banking Case Study requires students to develop foundational knowledge prior to completing the financial analysis component of the applied project. To prepare students for this work, scaffolded instruction on bank financial statements is completed before students begin independent case analysis. Using worked examples drawn from FDIC and Federal Reserve data, students review bank balance sheets and income statements. Instruction focuses on key performance metrics, including earnings performance, loan portfolio composition, asset growth, capital levels, liquidity, and comparisons with peer institutions. Short, structured exercises then guide students through constructing and interpreting five-year trends in these measures. Together, these activities allow students to gain familiarity with regulatory data sources and core banking concepts before analyzing their selected institution.

In execution, the Community Banking Case Study is intentionally designed as a multi-part project aligned with the course sequence rather than as a single stand-alone assignment. Early stages focus on bank selection and community context, followed by guided instruction on navigating FDIC data tools and analyzing balance sheet and income statement information. Subsequent phases incorporate peer comparisons, regulatory context, and the effects of interest rate changes on bank balance sheets and earnings, which are consistent with the case competition prompt. The final stage emphasizes synthesis and communication through student presentations. Appendix A provides a visual representation of this, illustrating how the case study is integrated with course topics.

5. Aligning Resources and Case Studies with Outcomes.

Course learning outcomes were used to assess the effectiveness of the redesign. Assignments of Federal Reserve resources as well as integration of the Community Banking Case Study project were directly tied to course learning outcomes. Table 1 provides evidence of how each element aligned with the learning outcomes. As shown, the OER content and the applied nature of the project complement each other to enhance student comprehension of monetary policy, financial institutions, and the Federal Reserve System.

Alignment of Learning Outcomes with Federal Reserve OER Assignments and Community Banking Case Study Project

Course Learning Outcome	Federal Reserve OER Assignments	Community Banking Case Study Project
LO1. Understand the types and features of financial markets and their role in the economy	Podcasts and short articles introduce financial markets in current contexts.	Teams analyzed how a local bank engages with regional markets and serves its community.
LO2. Evaluate monetary policy and its impact on financial stability and growth	Students used FRED data to examine policy tools, interest rate changes, and inflation outcomes.	Teams assessed how monetary policy decisions influenced lending, credit, and bank stability.
LO3. Determine the fundamentals of interest rates, including risk behavior and supply–demand models	Assignments required students to model interest rate behavior with real-time data.	Teams applied interest rate theory to call report data and balance sheet analysis.
LO4. Analyze macroeconomic problems and prescribe monetary policy solutions, including crisis responses	Readings such as *Page One Economics* pieces linked crises to policy actions.	Teams identified strategic challenges and developed evidence-based recommendations.
LO5. Explain the structure of the Federal Reserve System and its role in controlling money supply	Fed-authored content familiarized students with institutional design and policy tools.	Case study projects reinforced understanding of regulation and supervision.

6. Challenges and Lessons Learned

Adopting new instructional materials and techniques appeared to improve student learning, but it also came with new implementation issues. These challenges illustrate how new learning approaches need careful thought in their design and have the ability to correct course as problems arise.

The use of OER materials creates both an opportunity and a challenge. The Federal Reserve has made thousands of pages of open resources available, from high-level summaries to complex, detailed research documents. Choosing readings that were approachable without sacrificing rigor took time. Students might otherwise become frustrated with overly technical language or flounder without textbook structure. To address this, Federal Reserve resources were intentionally paired with supplemental open-access readings and targeted lectures to provide foundational background on core topics such as financial markets, interest rate determination, monetary theory, and institutional structure. This blended approach ensured that students first developed conceptual understanding through structured readings before engaging with applied Federal Reserve materials, helping to mitigate potential content gaps while preserving the benefits of OER-based instruction. I had to scaffold assignments and offer guiding questions to channel students' research. I also had to set aside class time to ensure that students understood key concepts. The upside is that students connected with materials and events directly related to the policy debate. The downside is the upfront investment in time for the instructor to build out course materials. At the time of course implementation, Federal Reserve open educational resources were incorporated into the university's Blackboard learning management system primarily through direct links to external content. Since then, recent

enhancements to Federal Reserve Education (FRE) platforms have enabled select resources to be integrated directly into common learning management systems via LTI modules, including Blackboard Ultra. This expanded functionality simplifies assignment creation and grading while reducing the administrative burden associated with curating external materials. As these tools continue to evolve, such integration offers additional opportunities for instructors to embed Federal Reserve content more seamlessly within existing course structures and supports scalable adoption of OER-based instructional designs.

The Community Banking Case Study project came with its own challenges. While students worked in teams, some groups had members who were more prepared than others, making it difficult for each member to take full ownership of the work. Obtaining and reviewing call report data and understanding key terms for financial statements required additional support that some students, particularly those without exposure to financial statements, were not able to obtain on their own. Moreover, not all banks had time or interest in engaging with students, and the process of negotiating communication from my end also took longer than expected. Despite these challenges, most student groups developed their own analyses of the case study and appreciated having the opportunity to talk with and learn from local bankers.

Faculty time was also an issue. Students should be able to learn from the assigned OER materials and successfully complete the case study project, but they often require more active facilitation by instructors than a traditional textbook-and-exam approach. Reviewing student-assembled data, checking in on team progress, and offering feedback on drafts of team presentations took time. However, this time investment paid off through high student engagement and quality of work.

Equity and access also presented challenges. All students were not equally comfortable using FRED to collect economic data,[1] and some students were more or less comfortable with oral presentations, which at times lowered the quality of class discussions. Building in low-stakes practice opportunities and ensuring that rubrics and expectations were transparent helped with these issues. Students reported greater comfort with FRED and confidence with their ideas after the semester.

Lessons from these challenges include the need for patience and adaptability. While innovative approaches come with clear benefits, they also take work and may need to be altered as problems are encountered. Finding the balance between rigor and approachability, structure and flexibility, instructor guidance, and student autonomy remains a process.

7. Student Reactions and Engagement

Students surveyed about the redesigned Money, Credit, and Banking course reported that the Federal Reserve resources and Community Banking Case Study assignment both helped them learn the content and stay engaged. Some students felt that the Fed's resources were timelier than a traditional textbook would be, because the websites and data covered "what is happening right now" regarding financial markets and monetary policy. Podcasts and short articles were also appreciated by students who prefer reading multiple types of media over one standard textbook. Class discussion was livelier, particularly when students would incorporate FRED data into conversations about policy effectiveness or inflation trends.

Similarly, the Community Banking project prompted strong responses from students. Many students wrote that collaborating with their classmates on a project that tied to real

[1] One way for educators to address this is by creating a dashboard with relevant data series https://www.federalreserveeducation.org/teaching-resources/economics/unemployment/fred-graphs-data-dashboard-for-educators

world scenarios allowed them to view course content from a more applied perspective. Several students specifically mentioned gaining confidence in the financial system; one student said that after completing the project, they felt comfortable helping a friend open a bank account and compare banking options. Other students noted that the banking case study allowed them to understand how banks function and how complicated the financial system can be. Having students present their bank analyses to their classmates also developed public speaking skills and professional confidence.

There were some struggles that students noted in their feedback. A small group of students found that the breadth of Federal Reserve resources was overwhelming and desired more direction as to which resources to view first. While working in groups, some students grew frustrated when uneven workloads arose. Though some students experienced challenges with the new resources and assignments, most students felt that the benefits of using OER and completing applied projects was worth the struggle.

8. Practical Recommendations for Instructors

The redesign of Money, Credit, and Banking provides an example of how open resources and applied projects can be incorporated into an upper-division economics course. While specific designs will vary based on institutional context and student population, several takeaways emerged from this process that could inform other instructors who may be considering a similar path. To support instructors seeking to adapt this approach, Appendix A provides a sample semester timeline illustrating the sequencing of course topics aligned with the Federal Reserve open educational resources.

1. Select OER purposefully.

The Fed has a wealth of high-quality resources to draw from, but if students are not directed as to what to read and why, it can be overwhelming. Shorter, focused resources like podcasts, Page One Economics articles, or short research notes were more successful than more involved reports. Asking students guiding questions or providing structured prompts before they read also helped them focus on what they were looking for and tied resources back to key course ideas.

2. Scaffold data work.

Activities that required students to use FRED and other Fed data tools to answer conceptual questions and to make graphs and tables were effective ways to build quantitative reasoning skills. However, students with little prior exposure to these tools struggled initially and needed more support. Providing low-stakes practice activities (short graphing assignments for students to complete at the beginning of the semester) helped prepare students to apply quantitative concepts to more involved policy evaluation and analysis later on in the term.

3. Prepare students for applied projects.

The Community Banking Case Study assignment required students to read financial data, interpret a bank's strategic position, and write policy recommendations. This kind of complex applied activity benefits from some scaffolding in the form of due dates or milestones. Breaking the work up into stages (e.g., bank profile, data analysis, challenges, and recommendations) rather than one large final product ensures that students make steady progress and receive instructor feedback in a timely manner. When students are in contact with bank employees to discuss specific questions or issues as part of this case study project, it is also important to discuss and model professionalism, including clear communication, preparedness, and respect

for the time and expertise of industry partners.

4. **Support teamwork intentionally.**

Group projects can be a valuable opportunity to practice team-building skills, but they can also suffer from uneven participation. Assigning roles to members of a group, encouraging the use of online platforms to collaborate, and providing a peer evaluation component all helped improve student accountability and balanced workloads.

5. **Connect assignments to learning outcomes.**

In addition to building onto the course content, both the OER reading and data assignments as well as the case study project mapped to specific course outcomes, from being able to evaluate monetary policy decisions to explaining the structure and role of financial institutions. Being explicit with students about this alignment reinforced the purpose of these activities and helped them see the skills they were building. It also helps with course/program level assessment.

6. **Anticipate additional faculty work.**

Relative to the design of a course built around a single textbook, incorporating OER and projects required more instructor preparation and hands-on support of students' work. Instructors who want to take this path should plan accordingly, potentially starting with a single redesigned module and building up to a complete course. Instructors can use these guidelines to modify open resources and applied learning projects to suit their institution's unique requirements.

9. Conclusion

Revamping the Money, Credit, and Banking course to focus on OER and applied projects was an opportunity to refresh the course and meet students' needs head-on. Shifting from the traditional textbook with materials created by the Federal Reserve, I was able to reduce student costs and expose them to modern debates surrounding monetary policy and banking. The Community Banking Case Study gave students the opportunity to see how theory plays out at real-world institutions in a structured manner while building their research, data analysis, and written communication skills. Both strategies aligned with course learning objectives while opening the door for students to make connections between what they learn in class and the financial system outside of the classroom. There are certainly challenges to both of these approaches. Building a course out of OER requires an investment of time up front spent searching, selecting, and scaffolding your material. The case study project required constant intervention to ensure student teams work together effectively and divide up responsibilities so that each student's contribution was meaningful. However, both students and instructors benefited from these changes. Student engagement increased once the course was no longer centered around reading one textbook and turned into a more discussion- and research-based learning environment. Students reported in evaluations and conversations that they were more interested in the topic of monetary policy and banking after taking the course. This approach also provides students with marketable skills in research and data analysis that they can use in other courses and highlight on their resume. For instructors, this experiment in open and applied learning highlighted the possibilities these methods can bring to upper-division economics courses. Translating to another institution or instructor's course will require some tailoring. The key takeaway, however, is that economics instructors can create a more affordable, relevant, and engaging course experience by rethinking the role of the traditional textbook and integrating open educational resources and applied projects.

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Appendix A

Sample Semester Plan with Aligned Federal Reserve Open Educational Resources (as of 1/2026)

Week	Topic	Federal Reserve Resource Link/Type/Source	Bank Case Study Content
1	Introductions: Why Study Money, Banking, and Financial Markets?	—	—
2	Overview of the Financial System and Financial Intermediaries	Nonbank Financial Institutions Website - Federal Reserve Bank of New York	
3	What Is Money? Definitions, Functions, and Monetary Measurement	Island Money Economic Commentary - Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland	Case introduction; bank selection and community connection
4	Interest Rates and the Yield Curve	Staying Ahead of the Yield Curve Dialogue with the Fed (Transcript/Video) - Federal Reserve Bank of Saint Louis	Macroeconomic environment relevant to bank operations
5	Financial Markets and Stock Market Expectations	Are Stocks Pricing in Recession Risks? Evidence from Dividend Futures FEDS Notes - Federal Reserve Board	
6	Management of Financial Institutions and Bank Balance Sheets	—	FDIC website navigation; balance sheet and loan portfolio analysis

7	Banking Structure, Competition, and Market Concentration	"We Have Formed Really Good Relationships with Our Member Banks": A Conversation about Banking Economy Matters Podcast – Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta	Peer institution identification and comparative analysis
8	Exam 1	—	—
9	Financial Regulation and Stress Testing	2025 Stress Test Scenarios Federal Reserve Board Publication	Regulatory considerations for case bank
10	The Federal Reserve System: History, Structure, and Governance	The First 100 Years: A Chapter in the History of Central Banking Article – Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia	
11	Monetary Policy Framework and Policy Tools	Teaching the New Tools of Monetary Policy Page One Economics – Federal Reserve Bank of Saint Louis	Interest rate risk and macroeconomic impacts on bank performance
12	Financial Crises and Central Bank Responses	Teaching About the COVID-19 Recession Page One Economics – Federal Reserve Bank of Saint Louis	Stress scenarios and crises response discussion
13	Empirical Models and Macroeconomic Data Analysis	What is FRED? Website – Federal Reserve Bank of Saint Louis	Trend analysis and data visualization

14	Cryptocurrency, Financial Innovation, and Emerging Issues	Beyond the Hype: An Introduction to Crypto Assets Page One Economics – Federal Reserve Bank of Saint Louis	Strategic considerations and innovations
15	Student Presentations/Community Banking Case Study	—	—
16	Exam 2	—	—

Note: Weeks without listed Federal Reserve resources use instructor-developed materials and supplemental open-access readings.

Appendix B

Sample Assignment and Rubric from a Federal Reserve OER Module

Assignment Component	Description	Points (%)
Summary of Article	Provide a concise overview of *The Fed's New Monetary Policy Tools* (Page One Economics). Identify the tools introduced and describe how the article explains their purpose and function. Focus on accuracy and clarity, without personal opinion. (Approx. 200–250 words)	25%
Graph using FRED data	Construct a graph of the federal funds rate and bank reserves using FRED. Ensure correct labels, units, and professional formatting.	25%
Written analysis	Critically evaluate the tools by discussing their effectiveness, limitations, and implications for monetary policy. Incorporate your FRED graph and connect to course concepts or recent events. (Approx. 250–300 words)	30%
In-class presentation	Deliver a two- to three-minute oral explanation of your graph and analysis, emphasizing the connection between the Fed's tools and broader macroeconomic conditions.	20%

Appendix C

Sample Assignment and Rubric from Community Banking Case Study Project

Assignment Component	Description	Points (%)
Bank profile and community role	Overview of the bank's history, size, services, and significance in the local economy.	15%
Financial analysis	Evaluation of balance sheet and call report data, including profitability, risk, and recent trends.	30%
Strategic challenges	Identification and explanation of two major challenges the bank is facing.	20%
Recommendations	Evidence-based strategies to address challenges, supported by economic reasoning.	20%
Presentation	10-minute team presentation; clarity, organization, and professionalism.	15%

Note: Adapted from the CSBS Community Banking Case Study Competition format.