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FOCUS Introduction: Economics Seminar Dynamics Revisited

If you are like me, you are excited to return to an in-person environment at the 2023 Allied Social Science Association (ASSA) Annual Meetings after two-plus years of Zoom conferences and seminars. I view the 2020 ASSAs with a bit of nostalgia, as they were the last in-person conference that I attended before the world shut down due to COVID. For me, one of the highlights of those meetings was the CSWEP session that included a presentation of the results of the work of the Seminar Dynamics Collective. That project undertook an ambitious effort to systematically document the climate of economics seminars. The results, which two of our contributors summarize in this issue, show what many of our readers have experienced—that economics seminars can be a hostile environment, and that the environment can be particularly hostile to members of underrepresented groups. As an example of what the seminar environment in economics can be like, one of our readers submitted the following story. Some details have been redacted to preserve anonymity:

I presented a paper to a top economics department. The room was filled with almost all men, and the only two women in the room were young visiting faculty. When I showed the first slide containing the title and mentioned that the paper tested a Nobel-laureate's theory of discrimination and competition, the men asked me how I could even consider questioning the work of a Nobel prize winner. After 15 minutes of critiques of the cover slide, I moved on to the main presentation. The entire seminar time was filled with interruptions and critiques. I had never experienced such a hostile environment in an economics department before. That paper has since gotten over 200 citations. Although the work has been validated, in the seminar I felt attacked and belittled. It was awful.

For this issue of the CSWEP News we return to the topic of seminar dynamics, not to repeat information that has been presented elsewhere, but rather to look forward to apply what we have learned from research and experiences like the one described above to our conferences and seminars in the post-COVID world. In our first article, Alicia Sasser Modestino discusses the results of the research of the Seminar Dynamics Collective and provides advice to readers for implementing the lessons learned from this study in their own departments. Perhaps the piece of advice I find most salient is the importance of having a strong senior member of a department serving as the moderator, to enforce rules about when participants may begin asking questions and facilitate early interventions if required.

Our second contributor, Silvia Vannutelli, provides an inside look from the perspective of a (then-) graduate student member of the Seminar Dynamics Collective. One of Silvia's key insights is that interruptions during seminars are disruptive not only to the speaker, but to the listeners as well. Thus, before we ask a question, we would do well to consider not only its effect on the speaker

continues on page 4

IN THIS ISSUE

FOCUS: Economics Seminar Dynamics Revisited

Features

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From the Chair

As 2022 draws to a close, we eagerly look forward to an in-person meeting in New Orleans after two years of virtual conferences during the pandemic. CSWEP has many important offerings on the program that I will highlight below. But first, the culture in economics seminars is the subject of the fourth issue of our Focus section in this newsletter.

We are immensely grateful to Kate Silz-Carson for putting together a collection of articles that originated from a CSWEP online webinar on seminar culture that also showcased the work of the Seminar Dynamics Collective. We would also like to thank Kate for her heroic tenure as the oversight editor of CSWEP *News* over the last six years. Kate has worked tirelessly to help deliver superb content on topical issues to help advance the careers of women in economics, demystify the hidden curriculum in economics, and allowed the newsletter to go from strength to strength. A very heartfelt thank you to Kate for her service, and we are sad to see her term end. At the same time, we are delighted to introduce Gina Pieters from the University of Chicago, who is taking over from Kate and has been working closely to ensure a seamless transition. Gina has some exciting initiatives in the works—stay tuned for more!

Seminars represent a vital component of disseminating our work and receiving feedback. Sadly, evidence documenting the hostile culture in economics seminars has mounted. The research on seminar culture finds that the differential treatment and experiences of women suggest implicit or explicit bias that may impede women in economics. The discouraging experiences women and minorities encounter in their efforts to communicate their research have prompted many organizations and departments to adopt codes of appropriate conduct. The articles in this issue focus on lessons learned and suggestions for moving forward to improve the culture in economics seminars to create a welcoming environment conducive to productive discourse and advancing science. What is clear is that while changing deeply ingrained attitudes is difficult, it is not impossible and requires a purposeful and deliberate resetting of group norms to be more inclusive and promote diversity, as I suggest here.

Alicia Sasser Modestino draws upon her research as part of the Seminar Dynamics Collective to provide concrete measures departments can implement to improve seminar culture. Silvia Vannutelli describes her experiences from the perspective of a graduate student who collected data on behalf of the Seminar Dynamics Collective. Finally, Jose Fernandez outlines steps to diversify seminar speaker series so that voices from all parts of the profession may be heard. I learned a great deal from these articles, and I hope our readers will too. We also provide a list of references for further reading.

Given the tumultuous year for women with the Dobbs ruling and the continuing climate issues with disturbing, prevalent accounts of sexual harassment in the economics profession, the AEA and CSWEP are jointly organizing two events. The first is a paper session on "The Economic Impact of Access to Reproductive Health Services," and the second is a panel discussion on "Sexual Harassment in the Economics Profession: Lessons Learned and the Way Forward." We hope you can attend and be part of the conversation.

This issue also contains some important information about CSWEP-sponsored sessions at the upcoming ASSA meetings. As announced previously, all CSWEP paper sessions will be livestreamed in the interests of equity and access for those unable to travel to the meetings. We have sessions on gender and the economy, gender in the economics profession, AI, big data and their applications, and the economics of education. I am grateful to Francisca Antman, Kasey Buckles, Ina Ganguli, Jillian Grennan, Olga Shurchkov, Rebecca Thornton, and Laura Veldkamp for serving on

From the Chair

the paper selection committees that put these sessions together.

The announcements section also has information about our business meeting and award ceremony, where we will present the Carolyn Shaw Bell award and the Elaine Bennett Research prize to Martha Bailey (UCLA) and Rebecca Diamond (Stanford). We hope you can register and join us to celebrate them. Marionette Holmes (CSWEP board member and Chair of the Economics Department at Spelman College) has organized a joint CSWEP/CSQIEP panel discussion on "Solutions/Innovative Ideas for Addressing DEI Issues." In addition, please see information about our junior and mid-career mentoring breakfasts, CeMENT reunions, and the CSWEP reception. We look forward to meeting in New Orleans.

Please also see calls for submissions to CSWEP-organized sessions at the Western Economic Association meetings and for Summer Economics Fellows applications. On an inspiring and hopeful note, please see information on a podcast from Statistics Canada honoring Canada's first and only female Chief Statistician and the first female Chief Economist of the OECD, Sylvia Ostry.

Please check our website and @aeacswep on Twitter for up-to-date information about upcoming events and opportunities. To sign up for our mailing list or volunteer as a mentor or CSWEP liaison, please email info@cswep.org. As always, we invite feedback and ideas for new initiatives. ■

About CSWEP

A standing committee of the American Economic Association, the Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP) is charged with serving professional women economists by promoting their careers and monitoring their progress. CSWEP sponsors mentoring programs, surveys economics departments and freely disseminates information on professional opportunities, career development and how the profession works, both on the web and via free digital subscriptions to the CSWEP *News*.

From the Incoming Oversight Editor

Gina Pieters

Hello everyone!

I first became aware of CSWEP's resources as a graduate student and have frequently turned to its Newsletters as a source of information, finding it especially useful first as a graduate student on the job market, and then again as young Assistant Professor trying to navigate the tenure-track process. I look forward to working with the CSWEP board as we continue to make the CSWEP Newsletter a valuable source of insights and information for all readers.

My professional trajectory allows me a unique understanding of the various academic environments economists find themselves in. Originally from South Africa, with a brief stint in New Zealand, I finished up high school in California. I completed my undergraduate degrees in Economics and Physics at UC Santa Cruz and, after a less-than-a-year stint in Wall Street continued on to get my Ph.D. in Economics at the University of Minnesota. While there, I was the instructor-of-record for 150–400 student macro-principles-class (and lead instructor coordinating all the sections). I then experienced the constraints of juggling research while teaching small undergraduate classes in a tenure-track position at a liberal arts institution in Texas, and now I am a non-tenure-track Lecturer in the Economics Department at the University of Chicago where I teach large principles lectures, the intermediate sequence, undergraduate topics courses, and MA courses while advising both undergraduate and MA thesis papers. Oh, and I continue to engage in some fun research projects on the side!

For this upcoming year, the CSWEP Newsletter will multitask by simultaneously observing its 50th year anniversary and honoring the 1-year COVID timeskip everyone just lived through (as it's technically the 51st year since the CSWEP Newsletter was launched). For the first few years after its initial publication in December 1972, the Newsletter primarily publicized job openings, foreshadowing CSWEP's role in creating JOE. Interestingly, salary information was provided quite freely in ads then which allows for some eye-opening comparisons (don't adjust the $13–$14K for a 1-year visiting position in Southern California for inflation)! The Newsletters also served to circulate calls for conference papers (or sometimes just directly asked for a report on a specific topic for publication), and to communicate changes in AEA policies. It settled in its current format of including informative articles by the mid-80s. For those of you who are curious to see these past articles, you can see the full archive of CSWEP Newsletters, along with a searchable excel sheet containing article titles and authors starting in 1996, here.

The four upcoming issues in 2023 will reflect how the topics covered and the advice provided in the Newsletter have evolved (or not) in the time since publication began. Hopefully, readers will be reassured by evidence of how much certain aspects of the profession have improved, even as we recognize that there is always more to be done. It will also serve as helpful reminder that even when judged by the standards of their time (a quarter- to a half-century ago) certain aspects were considered in poor taste but needed to be tolerated given the prevailing power dynamics.

Finally: I am both very excited to take over as Newsletter Oversight Editor as Kate Silz-Carson ends her term at the helm, and very intimidated by the task of approximating the standard to which Kate was able to perform in her role over the past 6 years. It has been quite an experience shadowing her the past few months, and I am very grateful to have seen all the work that goes into the Newsletter before starting the position. I wish to encourage all readers who have enjoyed her work as Newsletter Editor over her tenure to send an email to give recognition and appreciation for all her hard work—we all know how much a "thank you" email, no matter how brief the email, matters. ■

Alicia Sasser Modestino

How Can We Change the Seminar Culture in Economics?

FOCUS Introduction continued from page 1

and the flow of information, but also on our colleagues, and perhaps most importantly, our students.

Finally, Jose Fernandez discusses proactive efforts that departments can take to diversify their seminar series. He provides data in the form of a word cloud on the fields of specialization studied by individuals who are listed in the Diversifying Economics Seminars Speakers List. As Jose emphasizes, speakers from every subdiscipline of economics are represented on this list. I know that the next time that my department seminar organizer puts out a call for suggestions for seminar speakers, I will start by going to this list!

The economics discipline has long had a reputation of having a seminar culture that is unwelcoming to many, but it does not have to stay that way. I hope that all of us find some useful insights in the information in this section as we prepare for the first in-person ASSAs in several years. If we do, stories like the one above will become legends of the past. See you in New Orleans!

*The opinions expressed in this introduction are solely those of the author and do not reflect those of the United States Air Force Academy, the United States Air Force, or the Department of Defense. (USAFA-DF-2022-882)

Economics has a distinctively aggressive seminar culture, and some have speculated that it may have a disparate impact on marginalized groups including women, LGBTQ, and scholars of color. Examining and addressing the seminar culture in economics can shed light on the implicit bias within the profession that potentially prevents marginalized groups from succeeding and/or deters these scholars from entering the field. It is also an important indicator as to whether the economics profession is living up to the Code of Conduct that was adopted by the American Economic Association in 2018.

At the 2020 CSWEP session at the ASSA meetings, I presented findings from the first systematic attempt at quantitatively measuring whether women are treated differently than similarly situated men when presenting their research findings. During 2019, our team of anonymous coders, the Seminar Dynamics Collective, hand-coded every interaction between the speaker and the audience at regular department seminars and job-market talks at many of the top 30 economics departments as well as the NBER Summer Institute. The study revealed notable differences between how male and female presenters are treated across an array of both objective and subjective indicators. Women were asked about 12 percent more questions per seminar and they were asked more patronizing and hostile questions—particularly, but not exclusively, during job market talks. Our analysis of the 2019 NBER Summer Institute revealed that this behavior was more likely to occur in male-dominated fields such as macroeconomics and persisted even in some cases when rules were in place.

What can we learn from these results? One might respond that the differences in how women and men are treated, while notable (and robust to many different sets of controls)—may not seem particularly large. However, the size of the gender gap we document is in line with the "unexplained" gender gap in wages in the United States, estimated at 8–18% (Blau and Kahn 2017). My own view is that it is hard to know whether to call these effects "large" or "small," at least partly because it is hard to think about the long-term consequences of receiving 12 percent more interruptions throughout one's career or having a particularly bad experience on the job market.

Many of us have heard stories of friends and colleagues whose bad experiences in seminars have led them to avoid presenting their research findings altogether, forgoing an important mechanism for receiving feedback. For example, we know from the AEA climate survey that 46 percent of women versus 18 percent of men said they had "not spoken at a conference or during a seminar presentation" to avoid possible harassment, discrimination, or unfair or disrespectful treatment. Moreover, it seems likely that the same biases that lead women economists to be treated differently in the seminar room may also be evident in many other domains of their professional lives, perhaps shaping decisions about publication, hiring, promotions, tenure, and the allocation of professional resources. The cumulative effect of these various disadvantages may well be far greater than that of any individual bias considered in isolation.

More importantly, our findings confirmed that the current institutional arrangements that govern economics seminars are not gender neutral. Fortunately, the profession has started to recognize this as a systemic problem that needs to be addressed. The AEA Task Force on Best Practices for Professional Conduct in Economics recommend "setting and enforcing rules

of responsible behavior by attendees at conference and seminar presentations" (Bayer et al. 2019). After our data were collected, a number of leading economics departments (including the NBER) surveyed their members, discussed potential remedies, and set new ground rules for how they want their seminars to operate. These ground rules range from simple actions like no questions in the first ten minutes and raising one's hand to be called on by the presenter, to having a moderator who guides seminar interactions and maintains a professional environment. Ironically, the move towards remote seminars during the pandemic helped to enforce these new norms as having multiple interruptions and side conversations is unwieldy on Zoom.

But as we increasingly move back towards in-person seminars, what lessons can we apply to the upcoming 2023 ASSA meetings and job market season? First, I think it's instructive to note that in terms of the type of question asked, about half of all questions asked during a seminar are clarifying questions which probably reveals that we often don't read the paper before the seminar. Another 20 percent are comments, suggesting that we like to hear ourselves talk. Many of these clarifying questions and comments happen early on in the seminar and tend to disrupt the speaker's flow, possibly derailing their talk. Evidence from the psychology literature suggests that we can mitigate the impact of implicit bias by "slowing ourselves down" (Eberhardt 2020). In the context of seminars or conferences, this would mean for example taking time to ask ourselves: "How important is the answer to this question at this time?" "Could I find the answer if I looked through the paper?" "What is the likelihood that the information I am after will be provided in later slides?" In other words, if your question starts with "You might be getting to this" or "This might be in the paper but" then just stop and wait to ask your question later, maybe even after the talk.

Second, I think it's important to highlight that not all rules are equally effective and that rules are only effective if they are enforced. Surprisingly, we found that having a discussant and/or Q&A at the end does not mitigate the differential treatment of women presenters. This appears to at least partly reflect audiences being less likely to respect the formatting rules when facing female presenters: they are 8 percentage points more likely to ask a question before the official question time begins. The only mitigating factor appears to be the "moratorium" on questions in the first 5 or 10 minutes of the talk. We find that the moratorium completely undoes the gender gap, and this appears to be the result of fewer "clarifying" questions that end up being deferred anyway or followed up on later when asked too early (see point one above!).

I suspect that one reason why the moratorium on questions at the beginning of the seminar is more successful than other rules is that it is easily enforced. The moderator simply has to set a timer and let the audience know when they are allowed to start asking questions. It's certainly a more difficult job to moderate your colleagues' behavior from that point on as it requires some judgement about whether the question is appropriate and some intervention if it is not. However, as Sue Dynarski tweeted, I would agree that one reason why the economics profession has such difficulty in policing itself is because of our core belief in markets as a mechanism for driving out bad behavior. But in the case of seminar dynamics, WE are the market for our colleagues' bad behavior. So, I would encourage moderators as well as participants to make a commitment to enforcing these new norms.

Nowhere is this more important than during the upcoming job market season. Job market talks are especially high stakes seminars, particularly for those at the start of their careers. It is also where we document the greatest gender disparity in terms of how speakers are treated, with male professors asking most of the additional questions that women receive during a job market talk. As such, the differential treatment of women that we document in this key part of the hiring process is the first evidence potentially linking economics seminar culture with the persistent under-representation of women within the profession. As such, I think it is absolutely critical during the job market that departments appoint a strong senior member as the moderator to establish the ground rules and step in when (rather than if) things go awry. Even better, I encourage departments to systematically engage in a self-evaluation of their seminar culture during the spring semester and we are happy to make our online tool available as one potential resource.

Surprisingly, we found that having a discussant and/or Q&A at the end does not mitigate the differential treatment of women presenters.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge that there are very few among us that have always been a model of good seminar behavior, so some introspection is likely in order. Looking towards the future, making appropriate professional conduct during seminars a part of how we train the next generation of economists can help perpetuate a better environment going forward. And while none of these suggestions is likely to be a silver bullet, my hope is that we will spark discussions that lead to a cultural shift towards a more inclusive and constructive environment. It should be clear by now that the market alone will not solve the profession's diversity problem and that representation among economists matters if we want to be able to solve the world's most intractable public policy problems.

Seminar Dynamics in Economics
A View from a Member of the Seminar Dynamics Collective

Silvia Vanutelli

Seminars play a crucial role in our profession. We use seminars to decide whether or not to hire a person, and we use seminars to disseminate our research in high-stakes environments, where editors of journals are frequently sitting in the room. Understanding the dynamics of interactions of seminars is thus of primary importance to shed light on factors that might drive observed gender and racial differences in the career progression in our profession. I decided to join the effort of the seminar dynamics collective after attending a conference on diversity in Berkeley with my friend and colleague Vittoria Dicandia (we were co-chairs of the Boston University Women in Econ Organization at the time). The objective of the study was to examine whether women receive disparate treatment in the context of economic seminars relative to their male counterparts.

After joining, we worked to recruit other students in the department to help us attend all the possible seminars in the department and have two collectors in the room at the same time. The data collection process was a very formative experience which changed my future perceptions of economic seminars.

The research team developed a measurement tool in Qualtrics to systematically record interactions during seminars. The tool included a first section to collect general information about the seminar before the seminar starts. Then, after the start of the seminar, we would move to the second section of the tool, where each single question could be recorded. We were asked to click on a green "start" button. At that point, a timer started running and a button with 'end question' gets highlighted in red to indicate that's the button to click on to indicate the question ended. Once the question ended, the timer automatically started timing the answer, and a button for "answer ends" got highlighted in red. There was also the possibility to record a back and forth between the questioner and the speaker (potentially including several members of the audience who jump in on the same point), and to record whether a question was interrupted quickly by another question, so we could code both of them simultaneously.

For each question, we were asked to collect some specifics, such as whether the question was asked by a student or a professor and their gender, and the tone of the question. On this point, we were given four alternatives, and clear explanations about them, which I report below:

- **Supportive:** For example, I provide the speaker with a great example they can use. Or provide an answer to a problem. Or I tell them why I find their insight useful.
- **Patronizing:** A comment that may be apparently kind or helpful, but betrays a feeling or sense of superiority over the speaker. A comment could be both supportive and patronizing if the interjection acts as if the speaker can't answer themselves.
- **Disruptive:** Here we think of interactions that disrupt the flow of the seminar, maybe shifting the talk into a completely different direction, away from the speaker and their research.
- **Demeaning:** A comment that—in some measure—causes the speaker to lose their dignity or the respect of others. A demeaning comment is less about the scientific point being made, and more about shifting the focus to the speaker and undermining their status as an expert.
- **Hostile:** A comment that is unnecessarily antagonistic, aggressive, confrontational or combative. Hostility describes an aggressive interaction, one that you may not want to encounter as a speaker. Hostility is not required to make a scientific point.

We were asked to record details about the answers, namely whether the question was answered, referred, ignored, or answered by someone else in the audience.

Finally, the tool included a last section, to be completed after the seminar ended, where we were asked to record some overall impressions about the seminar, such as whether the overall tone of the questions asked were unfair and whether the presenter seemed confident relative to the average in the seminar series. We were also asked to assess the level of attendance. Furthermore, each page included both an error box, where we could signal errors in the data collection process (for each question/answer recorded) and a comments box, where we could provide additional comments.

Before the project started, we were provided with a detailed training on how to use the survey tool and specific examples. We were also asked to do two practice rounds on two seminars on YouTube (thus common across all coders), plus at least two test rounds for seminars at our own institutions. Plus, at the beginning of each data collection process, we were always given a reminder of the basic instructions.

Once the official data collection process started, I sat in over 30 seminars during the spring semester. This process led me to experience seminars in a different way. I started paying much more attention not only to the speaker, but also to the other interactions in the room. But I also started realizing how disruptive some interactions dynamics can be, not only for the speaker but also for the listeners in the room.

The study had some impressive findings. Women are asked 12% more questions during a seminar. These effects are not due to women presenting in different fields, different seminar series, or different topics, nor they are related to differential perceptions of coders, as

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they are robust to coder fixed effects and to restricting the sample to male coders only. Women receive a greater number of suggestions (23%) and clarifying (12%) questions, but also questions that are rated as patronizing or hostile (53%).

The disparity is more pronounced for job talks, while it disappears (or is even reversed) for internal seminar speakers. Moreover, it appears that there are important differences by field: at the average NBER talk, women receive 9% more questions than men, but this number goes up to 25% for the NBER Macro talks. These additional questions are mostly coming from men, and tend to arrive earlier in the talk, and none of them are rated as valuable, constructive, or collegial. The norm that questions should be held until later is 23 percentage points more likely to be breached when a woman is presenting in a Macro talk compared to a man.

Gender differences do not seem to be uniformly mitigated by more rigid seminar formats, such as the presence of a discussant, while they are effectively contrasted by the introduction of a moratorium on questions in the first 5 or 10 minutes of the talk. The observed disparities in treatment are potentially worrisome, particularly if we think that seminar culture might have a disparate impact on women economists (as documented in Boustan and Langan (2019)).

The paper also reports some interesting facts related to the gender differences among seminar participants which might have gone overlooked in previous discussions. The authors report that there are 3.6 times as many questions from men as from women during regular seminars— and 7.6 times during job market talks—despite men only outnumbering women roughly 2 to 1 in attendance (and 3 to 1 in job talks). This pattern is potentially problematic especially coupled with existing evidence that women ask fewer questions when a man asked the first question (Carter et al. 2018). In regular seminars, the additional questions asked to women are usually coming from females, while the opposite is true in job talks. Female presenters seem to receive more questions from female students, suggesting a potential empowering role for young female scholars.

What can we learn from the results

Previous research has found important disparities of treatment of female economists in essentially every margin studied: women economists receive less credit than their male co-authors when assessed for tenure and promotion; referees are more likely to reject papers written by women economists and take longer to evaluate them; economics papers with female authors, within subfields, are less likely to be appropriately cited by related papers than papers with male authors; and some of the ranking methodologies for top economists systematically disadvantage women. The evidence of disparate treatment in seminars adds an extra piece, and a particularly salient one, given the huge role played by seminars for the selection and career progression in economics. If women are treated differently than men in the seminar environment, this could potentially also affect the way they are evaluated after the seminar.

While the study was not designed for this, it is important to reflect on a potentially important side effect of continuous disruptions: the spillovers on other seminar participants. The persistent raising of questions might make it difficult for participants to follow the stream of the talk and encourage distractions. If these types of interruptions are more common with female speakers, this might potentially induce the audience members to think that women are less effective presenters and cause them to leave the seminar with a less clear picture of the value of female speakers' research. This, in turn, might affect the overall evaluation of speakers, an aspect that might become particularly salient in high-stakes seminars, such as job talks.

How should we proceed

Awareness: a key objective of this study was to go beyond impressions and effectively see if what seemed to be a persistent impression was traceable in the data. Now that we have data, we should work hard to share them and organize moments of reflection as to why and how they might matter within departments. In my personal experience as a graduate student, in the summer of 2019 we organized a conference at BU specifically devoted to academic research on gender disparities in the profession. This was the first public conference in which an earlier version of this paper was presented. The conference sparked a lot of important reflections amongst our community. For myself, every time I attend a seminar, I inevitably notice much more how many questions get asked at the very beginning, as well as the dynamics of interactions.

Simple rules might be very helpful: many departments are now adopting "moratorium" types of rules for seminars, banning questions in the first 5 or 10 minutes of the talk. As shown in the paper, these rules can be very helpful in reducing disruptions and might also generally improve the seminar experience for all participants.

Moderator in the room: sometimes, it might be good to have a person in the room that is allowed to interject, to help set the right tone and stop unproductive interactions. The moderator can also remind the room at the beginning of the seminar what are the rules of conduct and the importance of fostering a collegial environment, as well as the existing evidence of disparate treatment towards different groups during seminars.

Training and Best Practices: circulating rules about the appropriate conduct in a seminar (as the NBER does) and even potentially providing short trainings at the beginning of the academic year might be another powerful tool to change the seminar culture in the profession.

All of these lessons are easy to implement, and I have personally tried my best, and will continue to do so, to implement them at my own institution.

Jose Fernandez

An Invitation to Speaker Diversity

The Economics research seminar is sometimes described as a hostile environment. It is not uncommon for questions to begin on the title slide. In graduate school, our home department would run job market candidates through the gauntlet so that we were not caught off guard during our first fly out interview. We have grown so accustomed to these rules of engagement that when we speak in front of other audiences at schools of public health or policy, we encourage them to use "econ rules". Please feel free to interrupt at will. Does this sound familiar?

Now, put yourself in the shoes of those individuals who are infrequently invited. Every time you present, you are the only person from your group in the room. Not only are you defending your research, but you feel the added pressure of representing a group that has not been previously invited into these spaces. Fail, and not only does your likelihood of getting another invitation decrease, but this decreases the likelihood of an invitation for other people who look like you. These underrepresented speakers live with the fear of "stereotype threat". The fear that something they say or do will confirm the stereotypes of their group. That they will feed into the implicit biases of people in the room.

Another cost associated with this form of underrepresentation is that it limits the number of interactions economists have with speakers who have first-hand experience with certain subject matter. Economists pride themselves on allowing the data to speak for itself. However, first-hand experience informs the researcher where to look for data and provides anecdotes and insights that can lead to the discovery of hidden trends. My own research on households with special needs children is driven by my experience as the father of an autistic child. Consider the unique perspective of mothers on female labor supply, women on abortion access, Black and LGBTQ+ economists on labor discrimination. We miss critical first-hand accounts when we limit the scope of invited speakers to individuals at schools of a certain rank, or who graduate from programs of a certain pedigree.

I invite you and your department to add more diversity to your speaker series. Research seminars are not just an opportunity for researchers to network and receive feedback on their work. These seminars are an opportunity for both the presenter and audience to learn about related areas of literature, to learn how to better manage the seminar series experience, and to integrate into the economics discipline more fully. Lack of diversity implies the work of these scholars, with their perspectives and first-hand experience, does not get the same integration into the broader economics discussion. This is a loss for the researcher, and the field of economics.

You may ask, "but where do I start?" In what follows, I will describe the inception of the Diversifying Economics Seminars - Speakers List and how it can help your department.

The Economics Seminar Diversity project (**https://econseminardiversity.shinyapps.io/EconSeminarDiversity/**) gathers data on how often economics research seminars feature women and URM economists. Across 22,149 seminar presentations and 9,226 unique seminar speakers, about 25 percent of all speakers are women, but less than 2 percent of speakers are URM economists. Doleac, Hengel, and Pancotti (2021) find that two-thirds of all departments in the database across the entire sample did not invite a URM scholar. As a base for comparison, economists identifying as women are 23.4 percent of all economics faculty and URM economists are 8 percent of economics faculty. The often-cited reason for a lack of representation is that it is too difficult to find someone who is an economist from an underrepresented group that studies X. This claim inspired CSMGEP's efforts to construct an economics diversity speaker database.

In 2020, Amanda Bayer, Renee Bowen, and I launched Diversifying Economics Seminars - Speakers List (**https://econspeakerdiversity.shinyapps.io/EconSpeakerDiversity/**). We were tired of hearing the excuses of being unable to find women and URM economists. This motivated us to construct the database and dramatically reduce the search cost for department seminar organizers, conference organizers, and the media. We see the list as a resource that not only benefits the young scholar who is trying to increase their network, but also for departments who want to be a part of the solution.

We wanted the list to be inclusive of the three underrepresented groups recognized by the American Economic Association: women, LGBTQ+, and URM economists (Black, Latinx, and Native American individuals). An economist who identifies with one of these groups may register on the list. The list allows a scholar to select any of the underrepresented groups they identify with along with additional information such as their institutional affiliation, location, up to three areas of research using a JEL code, website, and research keywords.

Currently, 672 people are registered: 24 percent identify as URM economists, 11 percent identify as LGBTQ+ economists, and 79 percent identify as Women economists. Nearly 48 percent of the listed URM economists and 40 percent of the listed LGBTQ+ economists also identify as women. Assistant Professors comprise the largest share of registered individuals at 45 percent, followed by Associate Professors at 14 percent, and Full Professors at 11.6 percent. The remaining 29.4 percent include people working in the industry, think tanks, government, and the Federal Reserve.

Every JEL code is covered in the database. We wanted to demonstrate that indeed you can find scholars from all walks of life in your field of interest.

An Invitation to Speaker Diversity

There are still some areas of economic research that remain popular within these subgroups. The top five JEL codes are Labor and Demographic Economics (J) with 45 percent; Health, Education, and Welfare (I) with 40 percent; Economic Development (O) with 27 percent; Public Economics (H) with 24 percent; and Microeconomics (D) with 20.2 percent. If the JEL codes themselves are too broad, then we encourage users to also use searchable keywords to describe their research.

Lastly, we recognize that schools have limited budgets. Travel and accommodation costs can be a true barrier reducing the number of invitations. Departments may prioritize inviting more prolific and influential scholars before inviting lesser-known scholars. The list allows you to limit your search to geographic areas. You can find scholars within driving distance who would be happy to receive the opportunity to present at your institution.

One blessing of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the implementation of virtual seminars. Virtual seminars have leveled the playing field by reducing the cost of inviting scholars, increasing the frequency of presentations, and increasing the audience size at each presentation. Bellemare and Bloem (2022) launched Online Agricultural and Resource Economics Seminar (OARES) during the pandemic. Driven by the leaky pipeline of promotion for women and URM faculty, they invited a larger share of women and URM presenters. Next, they measured seminar attendance and paper quality as judged by journal quality at the time of publication. They find no statistically significant difference in seminar attendance conditional on presenter characteristics or research topic. Additionally, they find no tradeoff between diversity and paper merit as papers presented were placed in similarly ranked journals regardless of presenter characteristics.

Therefore, I invite you to use the Diversifying Economics Seminars - Speakers List. Increase your department's exposure to scholars of various backgrounds. Increase the interactions of these scholars with your faculty and your graduate students. Research seminars act as an important vehicle to amplify research. Let's not limit the market of ideas by limiting the type of researchers with whom we interact.

For Further Reading

Bellemare, Marc F., and Jeffrey R. Bloem. "The contribution of the Online Agricultural and Resource Economics Seminar to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in agricultural and applied economics." *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy* (2022).

Blau, F.D. and L.M. Kahn (2017). "The gender wage gap: Extent, trends, and explanations." *Journal of Economic Literature, 55*(3), 789-865.

Boustan, L. and A. Langan (2019). "Variations in women's success across PhD programs in economics." *Journal of Economic Perspectives 33*(1), 23-42.

Carter, A.J., A. Croft, D. Lukas, and G.M. Sandstrom (2018). "Women's visibility in academic seminars: women ask fewer questions than men." *PloS one 13*(9), e0202743.

Doleac, J.L., E. Hengel, E. Pancotti (2021) "Diversity in economics seminars: who gives invited talks?" *AEA Papers and Proceedings 111*, 55-59.

Eberhardt, J.L. (2020). *Biased: Uncovering the Hidden Prejudice That Shapes What We See, Think, and Do*. New York: Penguin Books.

Calls, Announcements, and Sessions at Upcoming Meetings

Call for Papers CSWEP Sessions at Western Economic Association 98th Annual Conference

2–6 July 2023

Marriott Marquis San Diego Marina, San Diego, CA

DEADLINE: 15 January 2023

CSWEP will be sponsoring sessions at the 2023 Western Economic Association International (WEAI) conference. **The deadline for submission of paper and/or session proposals to CSWEP is January 15, 2023.**

Sessions will be organized by Francisca Antman (CSWEP Western representative). Proposals for complete sessions (organizer, chair, presenters, and discussants) or round tables on specific topics of interest are highly encouraged. Please email abstracts (1-2 pages, include paper title and names of all authors, as well as all their affiliations, addresses, and email contacts) by January 15, 2023, to:

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Call for Applications American Economic Association Summer Economics Fellows Program

DEADLINE: 1 February 2023

Sponsored by the American Economic Association and originally funded by a National Science Foundation grant, the Summer Economics Fellows Program is designed to increase the participation and advancement of women and underrepresented minorities in economics. Fellows spend a summer in residence at a sponsoring research organization or public agency, such as a statistical agency or a Federal Reserve Bank. Summer economics fellowships are available to senior graduate students and junior faculty.

Fellows are to be chosen by the program with the agreement of the sponsoring institution in line with the goal of advancing the participation of women and underrepresented minorities in the economics profession, the fit of a candidate with the activities of the research group at the sponsoring institution, and the value of the proposed research to advancing the sponsoring institution's own goals.

The application portal will open on **December 1, 2022**. Applications are due at **5 pm ET on February 1, 2023**. Stay tuned for the Summer Fellows Application portal link to be announced. Send a note to info@cswep.org to receive these upcoming announcements.

Sponsors will receive all applications mid-February. Sponsors are asked to make initial offers starting mid-March and hold offers through the end of April. Final notifications are anticipated by the end of May. *(This timeline varies depending on each sponsor's hiring processes.)*

For more information, visit our website or, contact Dan Newlon, Coordinator AEA Summer Economics Fellows Program at dan.newlon@aeapubs.org.

StatisticsCanada Podcast: Sylvia Ostry

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of her appointment as Canada's first and only female chief statistician, on October 7 StatisticsCanada released a podcast celebrating Sylvia Ostry, one of the world's leading economists and one of the most accomplished public servants of her generation. This episode of their podcast Eh Sayers features interviews with her sons, Adam Ostry and Jonathan Ostry, who introduce you to this remarkable woman and to share with you eight pieces of advice inspired by her life.

Sylvia was a Jewish woman in economics. After she earned a Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge in 1954, she was denied a job with the United Nations because of her gender. Nevertheless, she had a storied career, becoming the Chairman of the Economic Council of Canada and the first female chief economist at the OECD. She was also a contributor to *Foreign Affairs* Magazine, a Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, a member of the G30, and a Fellow of the American Statistical Association. Rather than focusing on her career highlights, the podcast goes behind the scenes to look at how she challenged herself to succeed and handled setbacks and discrimination, becoming both a respected economist and mother while staying true to herself and demonstrating the integrity for which she's remembered today.

To listen to the podcast or share with your students, use one of the links below:

Apple
Spotify
Google Podcast
Amazon Music & Audible
Podcast Addict
Player FM
RSS Feed
StatCan website

CSWEP Sessions at Allied Social Science Association 2023 Annual Meeting

6–8 January 2023

Hilton Riverside, New Orleans, LA

Friday, 6 January 2023

CSWEP Mentoring Breakfast for Junior Economists

8:00 AM–10:00 AM (CST)

Pre-registration required

Interventions to close gender gaps: what works and what can backfire

8:00 AM–10:00 AM (CST)

This session will be streamed live.

Session Organizer: Ina Ganguli (University of Massachusetts-Amherst)

Session Chair: Olga Shurchkov (Wellesley College)

Firm culture: the effects of information interventions on gender gaps in online labor markets

Belinda Archibong (Columbia University), Francis Annan (Georgia State University), Oyebola Okunogbe (World Bank), and Ifeatu Oliobi (Columbia University)

Discussant: Julia Seither (University of Rosario)

College field specialization and beliefs about relative performance: an experimental intervention to understand gender gaps in STEM

Stephanie Owen (Colby College)

Discussant: Mary Kaltenberg (Pace University)

Quota vs. quality? Long-term gains from an unusual gender quota

Ursina Schaede (University of Zurich) and Ville Mankki (University of Turku)

Discussant: Tatiana Mocanu (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)

A hidden cost of affirmative action: muddying signals about women's ability

Mallory Avery (Monash University)

Discussant: Michaela Pagel (Columbia University)

Big Data to Infer Beliefs, Information, and Unobserved Costs

10:15 AM–12:15 PM (CST)

This session will be streamed live.

Session Organizer and Chair: Laura Veldkamp (Columbia University)

Economic narratives and consumer sentiment: evidence from Twitter

Wenting Song (Bank of Canada)

Discussant: Kristoffer P. Nimark (Cornell University)

Air quality, avoidance behavior, and welfare

Nana Addai (University of North Carolina-Greensboro)

Discussant: Galina Hale (University of California-Santa Cruz)

Bank monitoring in construction lending

Amanda Rae Heitz (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and Tulane University), Chris Martin (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation), and Alexander Brendan Ufier (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation)

Discussant: Yiming Ma (Columbia University)

AEA/CSWEP Panel

Sexual Harassment in the Economics Profession: Lessons Learned and the Way Forward

10:15 AM–12:15 PM (CST)

This session will be streamed live.

Moderator: Judy Chevalier (Yale University, former CSWEP Chair)

Panelists:

Christina Romer (University of California-Berkeley, AEA President and Chair of the Ethics Committee)

Ben Bernanke (Brookings Institution, former AEA President and former Chair of the AEA Ethics Committee)

Leto Copeley (AEA Ombudsperson)

Audrey Anderson (Bass, Berry & Sims PLC, Title IX expert)

Billy Williams (Senior Vice President for Ethics, Diversity, and Inclusion, American Geophysical Union)

CSWEP Business Meeting and Award Presentation

12:30 PM–2:15 PM

Pre-registration required

Gender Inequality and Schools

2:30 PM–4:30 PM (CST)

This session will be streamed live.

Session Organizer: Ina Ganguli (University of Massachusetts-Amherst)

Session Chair: Justin Wolfers (University of Michigan)

Persistent effects of temporary policies: evidence from COVID-19 child care center closures

Lauren Russell (University of Pennsylvania) and Chuxuan Sun (University of Pennsylvania)

Discussant: Gizem Kosar (Federal Reserve Bank of New York)

Who ya gonna call: gender inequality in demand for parental involvement

Olga Stoddard (Brigham Young University), Kristy Buzart (Syracuse University), and Laura Katherine Gee (Tufts University)

Discussant: Marianne Bertrand (University of Chicago)

Workplace automation and the gender gap in college enrollment

Amanda Chuan (Michigan State University)

Discussant: Ina Ganguli (University of Massachusetts-Amherst)

Cassats in the attic

Marlene Kofi (University of Toronto)

Discussant: Clementine Effenterre (University of Toronto)

CeMENT Workshop Classes of 2021 and 2022 Reunion

3:00 PM–4:00 PM

CeMENT Workshop Reunion for All Classes

4:00 PM–5:30 PM

CSWEP Reception

6:00 PM–7:30 PM

Saturday, 7 January 2023

CSWEP Mentoring Breakfast for Mid-Career Economists

8:00 AM–10:00 AM

Pre-registration required

Gender in the Economics Profession

8:00 AM–10:00 AM (CST)

This session will be streamed live.

Session Organizer and Chair: Kasey Buckles (University of Notre Dame)

Recruiting economics majors: the impact of an information campaign targeted at high school counselors

Danila Serra (Texas A & M University), Melissa Gentry (Texas A & M University), and Jonathan Meer (Texas A & M University)

Discussant: Serena Canaan Canaan (Simon Fraser University)

Remote talks: changes to economics seminars during COVID-19

Marcus Bierman (Catholic University-Louvain)

Discussant: Alicia Modestino (Northeastern University)

Gender and tone in recorded virtual economics presentations: audio analysis with machine learning

Haoyu Sheng (Brown University) and Amy Handlan (Brown University)

Discussant: Joanna Lahey (Texas A & M University)

Fully promoted: the determinants and distribution of full professorship in the economics profession

Marieke Kleemans (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign) and Rebecca Thornton (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign)

Discussant: Amanda Bayer (Swarthmore College)

Race and Family Background as Determinants of Educational Outcomes

10:15 AM–12:15 PM (CST)

This session will be streamed live.

Session Organizer and Chair: Francisca Antman (University of Colorado Boulder)

Ending exclusionary discipline in the early grades: effects and implications

Sarah Komisarow (Duke University) and Ezra Karger (Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago)

Discussant: Briana Ballis (University of California–Merced)

Mitigating racial bias in teachers' assessments of students

Maria Zhu (Syracuse University)

Discussant: Carycruz Bueno (Wesleyan University)

The relationship between parental disability and child outcomes: evidence from veteran families

Leah Lakdawala (Wake Forest University) and Prashant Bharadwaj (University of California–San Diego)

Discussant: Chloe East (University of Colorado Denver)

Family background, educational attainment and earnings: the limited value of "test-score transmission"

Naomi Friedman-Sokuler (Bar Ilan University) and Moshe Justman (Ben Gurion University)

Discussant: Rebecca Dizon-Ross (University of Chicago)

Economic Uses of AI and Applications of AI and Big Data

2:30 PM–4:30 PM (CST)

This session will be streamed live.

Session Organizer: Jill Grennan (Santa Clara University)

Session Chair: Laura Veldkamp (Columbia University)

Consumer privacy and the value of consumer data

Mehmet Canayaz (Pennsylvania State University), Ilja Kantorovich (University Pompeu Fabra), and Roxana Mihet (Swiss Finance Institute and University of Lausanne)

Discussant: Daniel Rock (University of Pennsylvania)

Venture capital (mis)allocation in the age of AI

Lea Stern (University of Washington) and Victor Lyonnet (The Ohio State University)

Discussant: Romana Nanda (Imperial College London)

Control and influence in decentralized autonomous organizations

Jillian Grennan (University of California–Berkeley) and Ian Appel (University of Virginia)

Discussant: Jason Sandvik (Tulane University)

Measuring the velocity of money

Allison Luedtke (St. Olaf College), Crolina Mattson (Leiden Institute for Advanced Computer Science), and Frank Takes (Leiden Institute for Advanced Computer Science)

Discussant: Wenhao Li (University of Southern California)

The Economic Impact of Access to Reproductive Health Services (Joint AEA/CSWEP Session)

2:30 PM–4: 30 PM (CST)

This session will be streamed live.

Session Organizer: Janet Currie (Princeton University)

Session Chair: Martha Bailey (University of California-Los Angeles)

Effects of restrictive abortion legislation on cohort mortality: evidence from 19th century law variation

Joanna Lahey (Texas A & M University) and Marianne Wanamaker (University of Tennessee)

Trap'd teens: impacts of abortion provider regulations on fertility and education

Kelly Jones (American University) and Mayra Pineda-Torres (Georgia Institute of Technology)

The economic consequences of being denied an abortion

Sarah Miller (University of Michigan), Laura Wherry (New York University), and Diana Greene Foster (University of California-San Francisco)

How subsidies for contraception affect pregnancy, childbirth, and abortion in the U.S.: a randomized control trial

Martha Bailey (University of California-Los Angeles), Vanessa Lang (University of Michigan), Iris Vrioni (University of Michigan), Lea Bart (University of Michigan), Alexa Prettyman (University of California-Los Angeles), Daniel Eisenberg (University of California-Los Angeles), Paula Fomby (University of Pennsylvania), Jennifer Barber (Indiana University), and Vanessa Dalton (University of Michigan)

Sunday, 8 January 2023

Impacts of Curriculum, College, and Vocational Training on Educational Outcomes

8:00 AM–10:00 AM (CST)

This session will be streamed live.

Session Organizer and Chair: Francisca Antman (University of Colorado Boulder)

I have grown confidence in me: shifting adolescent mindsets on schooling

Jennifer Seager (George Washington University), Sarah Bird (George Washington University), T.M. Asaduzzaman (World Bank), Shwetlena Sabarwal (World Bank), and Amita Vyas (George Washington University)

Discussant: Bryce Millet Steinberg (Brown University)

Major complexity index and college skill production

Xiaoxiao Li (Villanova University), Sebastian Linde (Medical College of

Calls, Announcements, Sessions

Wisconsin), and Hajime Shimao (McGill University)

Discussant: Carmen Astorne (University of Memphis)

Vocational education training and entrepreneurship

Alina Malkova (Florida Institute of Technology)

Discussant: Celeste K. Carruthers (University of Tennessee)

Effects of group work on attitudes, trust and performance

Fullya Ersoy (Loyola Marymount University) and Graham Beattie (Loyola Marymount University)

Discussant: Tisha Emerson (Baylor University)

CSQIEP/CSWEP Joint Panel: Solutions/Innovative Ideas for Addressing DEI Issues

10:30 AM–12:15 PM

Moderator: Marionette Holmes (Spelman College)

Panelists:

Reena Agarwal (Georgetown University)

B. Douglas Bernheim (Stanford University)

Kit Carpenter (Vanderbilt University)

Brag Box

"We need every day to herald some woman's achievements . . . go ahead and boast!"
—Carolyn Shaw Bell

Andrea Ziegert was recently promoted to Full Professor at Denison University. In addition, her book *Work and the Well-Being of Poor Families with Children: When Work is Not Enough* (Lexington Books) was released in September 2022. Way to go Andrea!

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Join the CSWEP Liaison Network!

Three cheers for the 150+ economists who have agreed to serve as CSWEP Liaisons! We are already seeing the positive effects of your hard work with increased demand for CSWEP paper sessions, fellowships and other opportunities. Thank you! Dissemination of information—including notice of mentoring events, new editions of the CSWEP *News* and reporting requests for our Annual Survey and Questionnaire—is an important charge of CSWEP. For this key task, we need your help. Visit CSWEP.org to see the list of current liaisons and departments for whom we'd like to identify a liaison. We are also seeking liaisons from outside the academy. To indicate your willingness to serve, send an e-mail with your contact information to info@cswep.org.