

Potential Interventions

Better Information	Mentoring and Role Models	Content and Presentation Style
<p>Without accurate information about the broader application of economics (e.g., beyond finance and consulting), women are more likely to major in less rigorous fields, often within the social sciences or humanities.</p>	<p>Women are more sensitive to their grades in introductory courses when choosing their major than are men. The creation of networks among students within the department and showing support for their decision to major in the field has been effective in recruiting underrepresented minorities.</p>	<p>On average, female undergraduates are less confident about their quantitative skills than are men even if they are equally able and prepared. Their lack of confidence may diminish their belief that economics fits their personal strengths and abilities.</p>
<p>Use the <i>UWE-AEA Video</i> (to be produced by the AEA before Fall 2015) during freshman orientation week to highlight key points about the major, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The many applications of economics; • The diversity of its practitioners; and • The range of potential careers. <p>Also use the video at the start of the introductory course, post it on the course website, and include it on the department's website.</p> <p>Augment the material provided on your department's website or in printed pamphlets to highlight information such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subfields and upper-level courses; • Various career options and course requirements for the different career tracks; and • How economics relates to other fields and majors, and the high return to an economics degree. <p>Guest speakers in lecture and other times:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite alumni working in diverse fields to talk about their jobs and interests. • Have talks during campus open days, e.g., freshman parents' weekend. • Guest speakers in lecture classes should include diverse faculty in terms of gender, race and field. • Recruit faculty, from non-business/non-finance fields, who are inspirational and approachable. 	<p>Mentoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of female TAs/grad students/older undergrad mentors for students in intro and intermediate courses. • Make a video of your alumni talking about their work involving economics, even though "economist" may not be in their job title. • Facilitate opportunities for research and collaboration with the faculty. • Help students find summer jobs that value economics, are dynamic, and include human contact. <p>Creating student learning communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage coffee/study breaks in the economics department lounge. • Organize student groups to work with the department to create talks and conferences on diverse topics. • Connect with students through social media. <p>Faculty lunches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have informal lunches with professors and TAs. • Pick faculty who specialize in diverse areas of economic research (e.g., health, labor, education, environmental, econ history, behavioral, corporate finance). <p>Student counseling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer faculty counseling at midterms and other grade times (research papers, presentations, etc.). Convey that making mistakes is often part of learning economics. 	<p>Add modules and case studies to introductory and intermediate courses. Use more evidence-based material in teaching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present information through real-world examples that cover diverse subfields in economics and related disciplines. • Include study results and also information on the researchers who did the work and how they became interested in the subject. Invite the researchers to give a lecture. • Help faculty communicate more clearly and encourage more evidence-based theory courses. <p>Support independent/group projects in various sub-fields (e.g., health, education, poverty, crime, inequality, sports).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students interview community residents about issues in recent economics news (e.g., pay-day loans; Affordable Care Act; student debt) and how they have been affected. • Coordinate community service opportunities that apply economic concepts and tie into course material. <p>Make sections more conducive to learning for students with different skill levels, styles of learning, and interests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate sections based on students' quantitative experience, not by ability. • If sections are heavily skewed by gender, deliberately change the gender mix and collect data on grades and drop-off rates.