November 2025

Utility Maximization: Majors Newsletter

Wesleyan Economics Dept • Nov. 2025

Please read our roughly monthly newsletter
and follow our instagram account (wes_econ)!

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1. New classes for Spring 2026

The department is pleased to introduce two new courses in the upcoming semester:

1. Econ 208 - Healthcare Economics Policy. Professor Jo's class will cover the economic principles behind health and medical care and public policies.
2. Econ 313 - Economic Inequality. Professor Koru's research examines income inequality and wealth inequality. This class draws on his research and examines determinants of resource distribution within and across countries. We expect this course will be offered again in the 26-27 academic year.

2. Curricular Reform

The department is transitioning to a new ordering of the core courses: Econ 300 (introductory econometrics), Econ 301 (microeconomic analysis), and Econ 302 (macroeconomic analysis). **From next year, students will be required to complete *both* Econ 301 and Econ 302 *before* taking Econ 303, which will replace Econ 300.**

In order to enable all current majors to complete the core courses and to get as many of our sophomores as possible ready for Econ 303 next year, **we have massively increased the number of sections of both Econ 301 and Econ 302 this year.** In addition, the number of seats set aside for juniors and seniors in Econ 301 and Econ 302 for the spring is enough that every major who lists all sections of a core class in their top 4-5 courses for the spring should get a seat in a section. Note, students with scheduling constraints should list particular sections as their top pick(s) for the semester.

We strongly discourage first year students, and, lesserly, sophomores, from taking Econ 300 this year. To the extent possible, students really should prioritize Econ 301 and Econ 302. First year students are strongly encouraged to take 200-level courses in the spring if they cannot get a seat in Econ 301 or Econ 302.

This academic year students will be allowed to declare the major after completion of, or enrollment in, any one of the three core courses (Econ 300, Econ 301, Econ 302). From next year students will be allowed to declare the major after completion of, or enrollment in, one of the two theory courses (Econ 301 and Econ 302).

Students, particularly those in their first two years, are invited to drop-in peer advising sessions run by the Majors Committee. The drop-in sessions will be Tues 11/11 12-1pm in Frank 101 and Wed 11/12 12:20-1:10pm in Frank 100.

3. Study Abroad Credit

Advice from the Fries Center for Global Study on **"How to get study abroad courses approved for the ECON major or toward graduation"**

Did you know that not all courses abroad are transferable to Wesleyan? **To ensure that you get credit for courses you want to take abroad, enter them in the Course Approval System, found at Wesportal – Academics – Study Abroad Information and Application – Course Approval System.** The appropriate department and the Office of Study Abroad will receive messages to approve the courses.

Pro tip: business courses, such as marketing or management, do NOT transfer, even toward graduation, unless you get them approved by a department other than ECON. They are not economics courses. Rarely, another department such as CSPL or PSYC may approve a business course, if it is interdisciplinary enough in nature.

Econ addition: to receive credit at the 200-level the course must have a prereq for the equivalent of Wesleyan's 101 or 110. To receive credit at the 300-level the course must have prereqs equivalent to Wes requirements at that level (some combo of 300, 301, and 302) and require a research project. As a result most classes transfer in only at the 200-level.

Note: most approval requests are reviewed within a calendar week, usually faster. If the department chair needs additional information, they'll reach out directly.

4. Major certification

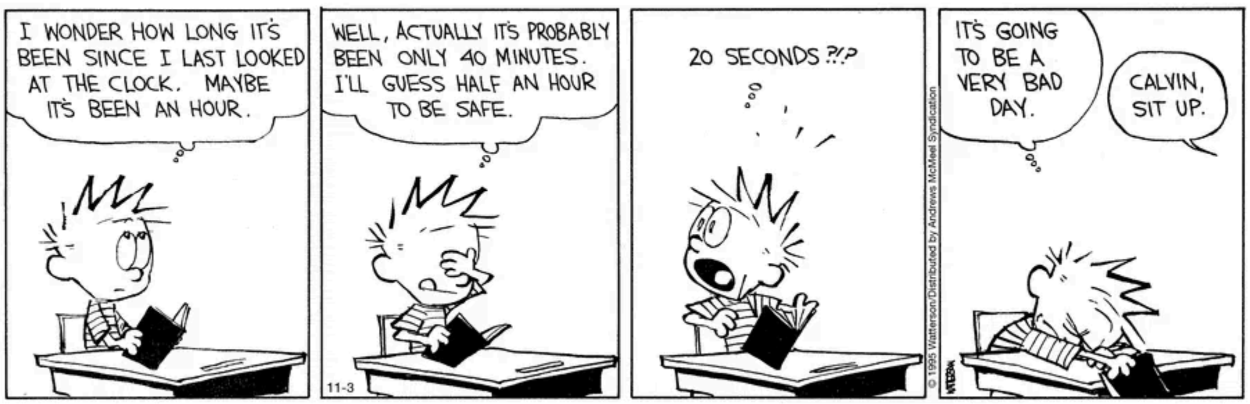
In Economics this is done only in a student's final semester, and it is handled entirely by the department's administrative assistant and chair. *Your advisor has no role.*

5. Econ at Play

Each month we share a photo (and post it to the department's bulletin board) and **students submit their economics inspired captions.**.

Prizes for winning answers...and, the number of winners each month may vary proportionately to the quality and quantity of answers (and more than 1 submission per student is possible!). **All answers must be submitted by November 30!**

This month's photo is:



[Submit responses here](https://tinyurl.com/WesEconPhoto): https://tinyurl.com/WesEconPhoto

Last month's winner is **Eli Fellus'27** with "**Ceteris Paribus**" for

6. Upcoming events!

This list only includes already confirmed events in the coming weeks. *There are more events coming!*

Event	How to participate	Target audience
`Research seminar` Wednesday 11/5 4:20-5:30pm Frank 301	Seminar - Seoyeon Jo (Wesleyan) will present "Understanding the Gender Pay Gap and Labor Force Survival: Why Women Should Major in Economics."	`Majors`
`Trivia Night` Thursday 11/6 7-9pm Frank 100	Jenny Cook '26 will host the Department's first ever Econ Trivia Night. *The department is sponsoring prizes galore and snacks.*	`All students`
`Peer mentoring for spring course selection` Tuesday 11/11 12-1pm, Frank 101 *and* Wednesday 11/12 12:20-1:10pm, Frank 100	Show up with questions regarding your journey through the Economics curriculum	`All students, especially first and second year students`
`Research seminar` Thursday 12/4 11:50am -1pm Frank 301	Seminar - César Jeanpierre Castillo-García (Wesleyan) will present his research	`Majors`

7. Gordon Career Center column

The next few weeks are packed with opportunities to explore careers in business and finance. Meet Wesleyan alumni and industry experts from leading firms to gain insight into recruiting, career paths, and life in fields like investment banking, consulting, and corporate strategy.

Here's what's coming up:

[TrailRunner International Info Session]
📅 **Tuesday, 11/4** 🕛 **12 PM** 📍 **Boger 113**
Join TrailRunner Analyst **Grace Cutler '24** to learn about strategic communications and public relations in a global context.

💬 ***Sign up for coffee chats*** *following the session.*

Evercore Summer Analyst Virtual Open House
📅 **Tuesday, 11/4** 🕛 **12 PM** 💻 **Virtual**
Get an inside look at Evercore's 2027 Summer Analyst program through a firm overview, analyst panel, and networking session. Open to selected NESCAC sophomores.

📝 ***Apply by November 2!***

Day in the Life at FactSet: NESCAC Alumni Panel
📅 **Wednesday, 11/5** 🕛 **12 PM** 💻 **Virtual**
Meet NESCAC alumni working in fintech at FactSet. They'll share career journeys, advice, and insights on how liberal arts skills translate into data-driven roles in finance and technology.

PJT Partners Info Session
📅 **Tuesday, 11/11** 🕛 **12 PM** 💻 **Virtual**
Hear from **Courtney Laermer '17** and **Natasha Nurjadin '18** of **PJT Partners** to learn about the firm's **Camberview team** and the recruiting process for **Summer 2027 internships**. This virtual session is open to sophomores interested in advisory, finance, and consulting careers. **Register by Nov. 10** to receive the event link.

Business, Finance & Life (BFL) Program Info Session
📅 **Wednesday, November 12** 🕐 **12:15 PM** 📍 **GCC**
Hear from **Tom Matlack '86** about the Business, Finance & Life (BFL) program—a mix of internships, professional training, guest lectures, and alumni connections. He'll outline what to expect and how to apply for the 2026 cohort or program assistant roles.

👉*Don't miss the* ***BFL Panel on 11/19*** *to hear from former participants!*

Data Consulting in NYC with The Data School
📅 **Thursday, 11/13** 🕛 **12 PM** 📍 **Boger 115**
Learn about The Data School New York's paid career accelerator, where you train to become a data visualization specialist before consulting with top companies.

💬 ***Sign up for coffee chats*** *following the session.*

Goldman Sachs Coffee Chats w/ Mike Dunderdale '23
📅 **Friday, 11/14** 🕚 **11:15 AM – 4 PM** 📍 **GCC**
Sophomores—reserve your 15-minute slot to connect with Mike Dunderdale '23 of Goldman Sachs Private Wealth Management. Bring your resume and get tips for the 2027 internship cycle.

Wesleyan to UTA: Alumni Insights and Career Opportunities
📅 **Friday, 11/14** 🕛 **12:15 PM** 💻 **Virtual**
Discover the business side of entertainment with UTA in this virtual session featuring Wesleyan alums **Samantha Greenwald '24**, **Lucas Larson '22**, **Jessica Moy '24**, and **Christopher Noh '24**. Learn how finance, strategy, and deal-making intersect with talent representation and hear about UTA's **Internship** and **Agent Training Program** opportunities.

Centerview Partners Info Session
📅 **Monday, 11/17** 🕐 **12:15 PM** 📍 **GCC**
Learn about Centerview's collaborative, high-impact advisory work and 2027 Summer Analyst recruiting timeline with **Pim Wandee '23** and **Kyle Davies '24** from the NYC office. Hear how analysts gain hands-on experience in a flat, mentorship-driven environment. ***Lunch provided!***
☕ *Stick around after the session for informal coffee chats with **Pim Wandee '23** and **Kyle Davies '24**—open to all class years, especially sophomores exploring finance.*

BFL Program Student Panel
📅 **Wednesday, 11/19** 🕐 **12:15 PM** 📍 **GCC**
Curious about the Business, Finance & Life (BFL) program created by **Tom Matlack '86**? Hear from students who completed the course as they share how BFL shaped their academic and career paths. Panelists **Sam Wheeler**, **Anthony Arirguzoh**, and **Roy Krueger**, moderated by **Joe Kwon**, will answer your questions about the course structure, application process, and what to expect from BFL 2.0.

🌟 **Apply for WesLink: Connect with Alumni This Winter!**
Gain firsthand insight into careers in business, finance, and related fields through *virtual 1:1 conversations* with Wesleyan alumni over winter break. Learn how they've built their paths and get advice to guide your next steps.
📝 **Applications open Nov. 10 on Handshake and close Dec 1.**

October 2025

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Majors Newsletter

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1. Stata

Stata is the most commonly used software in Economics, which is why we use it exclusively in Econ 300 and in upper-level electives. Other software packages such as R and Python are used infrequently in economics. The American Economic Association's data editor reported in May 2025 that Stata's dominant role reflects the stability of the software and programs, and ease of replication of existing research. In their most recent survey of economists, published in May 2020, 73% of respondents reported using Stata vs. just 4% for R and 2% for Python. So, the next time you use Stata: know that you're lucky to use the dominant software package in our field.

Want to learn additional packages? This is something that you should consider seriously as it not only increases your marketability but also enhances your ability to transition and work effectively in our ever-changing computing environment. Great, the QAC has courses that may be of interest.

2. Study Abroad Credit

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3. Major certification

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4. AEA Summer Training Program

American University will be the 2026 host institution for the **American Economic Association Summer Training Program (AEASP)**—a prestigious and intensive experience that prepares talented undergraduates for doctoral programs in economics and related fields.

Each summer, participants engage in an 8-week, rigorous curriculum in mathematical methods, microeconomics, econometrics, and research methods. Participants will get to engage in hands-on research and become part of a lasting professional network. The program offers students the chance to take advantage of Washington, DC's high concentration of economists, think tanks, research institutions, and policy organizations.

Rising juniors and seniors are encouraged to consider applying to this program!

Students can register for info sessions using this link.

A similar, but entirely separate, program for students who are ineligible for funding or the AEASP and are interested in academic careers is the University of Chicago's Expanding Discovery in Economics+.

AEA Summer Training Program

June 1-July 24, 2026 • Washington, D.C.

- Intensive two-month residential program held at American University
- Two levels of study
- Course work in math, microeconomics, econometrics, and research methods
- Real-world experiences unique to the nation's capital

Application deadline: January 31, 2026

"Being a part of AEASP was a rewarding experience! It confirmed that pursuing a Ph.D. in economics was the journey for me and provided me with a community of so many like-minded individuals passionate about economics."

JudeneJosephs,AEASP2023,B.A. 2024,Howard University,
Economics Ph.D. student, Georgia State University

"It is inspiring to see the caliber of research the students are able to produce by the end of the program."

JevayGrooms , AEASP 2016and 2017,
2021 AEASP Research and Faculty Fellow

Register today for an upcoming information webinar

- October 15, 3pm EST
- October 20, 12pm EST
- October 30, 7pm EST
- November 5, 2pm EST

www.american.edu/cas/economics/aeasp/

5. Econ at Play

Introducing the new feature where each month we'll share a photo (and post it to the department's bulletin board) and students will submit their ideas of economics inspired captions *or* economics principles with a twist: wrong answers only.

We will have prizes for winning answers…and, the number of winners each month may vary proportionately to the quality and quantity of answers (and more than 1 submission per student is possible!). **All answers must be submitted by October 30!**

This month's photo is:

[Submit responses here](https://forms.gle/vxbaCnhaioneTVte8): https://forms.gle/vxbaCnhaioneTVte8

Mark your calendar!

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To get info about our events, please read emails from Mrs. Launder *and* follow our instagram account: [wes_econ]

Event	**How to participate**	**Target audience**
`PREDOC Webinar` Friday 10/10 11:45am-1pm Frank 001	To learn about pre-doctoral research assistantships in the quantitative social sciences, join the zoom with Stephen Lamb (U Chicago). *The department provides lunch.*	`Seniors and juniors interested in academic and research careers`
`Research seminar` Wednesday 10/15 4:20-5:30pm Frank 301	Seminar - [April Meehl] (Haverford College) will present "Bailouts, Bail-ins, and Banking Industry Dynamics".	`Majors`
`Econ Smorgasboard` Thursday 10/30 11:50-1pm Frank 100	Many economics professors will each speak briefly about a current research project. *The department provides lunch.*	`All students`
`Research seminar` Wednesday 11/5 4:20-5:30pm Frank 301	Seminar - [Seoyeon Jo] (Wesleyan) will present her research	`Majors`
`Trivia Night` Thursday 11/6 7-9pm Frank 100	Jenny Cook '26 will host the Department's first ever Econ Trivia Night. *The department is sponsoring prizes galore and snacks.*	`All students`

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1. New faculty and staff

Professor Koru

Professor Koru is an Assistant Professor of Economics. He is a macroeconomist, and is teaching Econ 302 both semesters this year and also a spring 300-level macro elective.

His research focuses on macro, labor and public economics, and his research papers explore topics such as automation, income and wealth inequality, and inflation.

He received his PhD at the University of Pennsylvania and comes to us from Penn State University where he was a visiting assistant professor of economics.

Professor Jo

Professor Jo is a Visiting Assistant Professor of Economics. She is a microeconomist who will teach 200-level electives on labor economics, gender economics, and public economics.

Her research focuses on gender, labor, education and health economics, and her research papers explore topics such as the effects of state budget cuts on higher education, maternity leave, and gender earnings gaps.

She received her PhD from the University of Kansas and comes to us from Oberlin and Macalester Colleges where she was a visiting assistant professor of economics.

Mrs. Launder

Mrs Launder is our new Administrative Assistant. She is in the Departmental Office, Frank 106.

Her responsibilities are supporting all aspects of the department for faculty and students.
She is joining us after years at Wesleyan's Writing Center, English Department, and now-defunct Green Streets Arts Center.

(Yes, Mrs. Mascaro retired over the summer.)

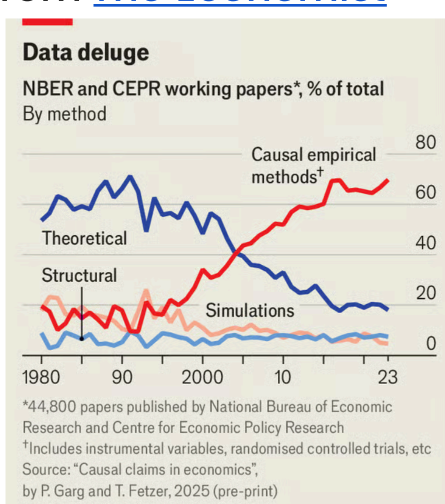
2. Curricular Reform

This was announced in a spring 2025 email to all majors and pre-majors.

Details

- **In 2025-26 only: 300, 301 and 302 can be taken in any order** once students have
  - Passed Econ 110 OR completed the 110 bypass (4 or 5 on both AP Micro and AP Macro or IB exam equivalents), met the math requirement for 110, and taken a 200-level elective
  - And for 300 and 302: stats requirement (e.g., 103 or other listed option)
  - Prefer all this info in flow chart or handout form? Go here!
- Note that in 2025-26 only: students can declare the econ major after completing one or more of 300-302 and 110 and earning a grade of C+ or higher in at least one of those classes.
  - If students had a grade of C+ or higher in 110 they can declare the major while enrolled in one or more of 300-302
  - If students did not have a grade of C+ or higher in 110, they cannot declare the major until they meet the entry requirement in at least one of the classes, 300-302
- Because Econ 110 must be taken for a grade to enter the major, effective fall 2025 Econ 110 can only be taken for a letter grade (no more student option)

Ex post motivation from *The Economist*



3. Grading policy

This was announced in a Fall 2023 email to all majors and students enrolled in Econ courses numbered 101-299. This will be emailed once again to all such students to ensure that everyone knows the department policy. The following statement was adopted unanimously by the Economics Department faculty in fall 2023.

A fundamental premise of grading is to provide an evaluation of student performance that has a consistent meaning across instructors and classes. This premise was challenged by the reality that some faculty changed grading procedures and/or course workload expectations during the pandemic and that some of those faculty have already returned to their pre-pandemic expectations. To make sure all students experience a fair and equitable learning environment, the Economics faculty have collectively agreed that all of us will return to our traditional grading standards and workload if we haven't already done so.

The economics department has restored the traditional meaning of each letter grade. The department has returned to our traditional median grade of roughly B+.

4. Wesmaps changes

Fall

Added a course on gender economics ([Econ 238]) with our new visiting assistant professor of economics, Professor Jo

Spring

These changes are not yet in Wesmaps but will be entered before planning period for spring courses (early Nov). They are being announced now to help students think about their entire academic year.

- Econ 238 (gender) will be offered and Econ 233 (discrimination) will not be offered
- All 300-level electives will have pre-requisites changed by the spring as students may have taken 301 or 302 without first taking 300.
    - Thus, please note that any course that is now listed with a prereq of 301 or 302 *might* require both 300 and either 301 or 302 *or* would require just 301 or 302

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Academic Forum Thursday 9/4, 11-12:30 Tent on Andrus Field	Visit our table in the corner closest to Exley and Clark to meet with faculty and majors	New students
Week of Welcome Econ Afternoon Tea Wednesday 9/10 4:30-5:30pm Frank 101	Come to meet faculty and students in the department. Got questions? We've got answers! Just want to socialize? We're social!	New students
Masters in Public Policy: A Conversation with Prof Jaeger of St Andrews Friday 9/12 11:30am-12:30pm Frank 101	Come with questions as broad as why an MPP or as narrow as why *this* MPP program	Majors
Jeff Cheung '21 seminar Wednesday 9/17 4:30-5:45pm Frank 101	Our first research seminar of the year will feature Jeff Cheung '21 who will receive his PhD in Economics in Spring '26 from UC Davis	Majors