In the US, Asian students tend not to be disadvantaged relative to whites and tend to perform better. For that reason we usually focus on outcomes of “under-represented minorities” (URM) and look at Asian students separately. It does seem BAME hides a lot of important variation.

Data at Berkeley, where we can break data by race & gender, shows that Asian-American students are in econ major = or slightly > than % representation in university. AND, no gender bias in that population. Ditto the international population which is largely Asian. But it's the white & black&Hispanic pop's where there are disparities (relative to representation in population) both by race and by gender.

Do you know whether your BAME students are UK nationals or international students?

Answer: The experience in the United Kingdom is quite different from the US - the country is predominantly white (>80%) with (South) Asians being the largest minority group at about 6% and black people making up about 3% of the population. Ethnic minorities across all these groups are predominantly in urban areas. (Ref: https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2011/may/18/ethnic-population-england-wales). There is also a BAME pay gap, and gap in representation across the top professions and in governments. The issue of Asians in Britain is quite different from in the US, as in education they are often over-represented as shown in my data (only looking at UK domicile students), but nevertheless, there is an attainment gap. The point here is that there are two slightly separate issues - one is representation (my results show that there are very few black students and those from less privileged backgrounds) and the other is the gap in marks (the Asian students are coming from only slightly less privileged backgrounds compared to white students and entering with the same high school marks, but nevertheless, performing significantly worse at university). This is what my paper is aiming to highlight as it implies that even if representation among black students is increased, they may end up with the same gap in attainment.
Does this distinguish between "Economics" and "Business" programs? (USA schools will frequently house these in the same program: accounting students get an Econ degree, etc.)

Answer: These data are only for Economics degrees (no business degree offered at this university), but it’s true that because of the perception of economics as business especially at the high school level might mean that those with an interest in business (or finance which is the most popular post-university destination) may be choosing economics at such universities.

Brooks Depro (Elon University)

Did you do any check via alumni association to see what share of Econ majors label their occupation as economist? and demographic distribution of those who do?

Answer: I know the answer for our small group of economic consulting majors but do not have data on all economics majors. Our professional development center does survey all economics majors after graduation with a questionnaire about their experiences and places of employment. I am confirming whether they are able and willing to add a question next year that asks what occupation they consider themselves as.

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In the UK a lot of specialist economic consultancies and government economic service are doing blind recruitment or targeted diversity hiring to improve diversity at entry level but are now struggling to get any good candidates because so few students taking the degree. Should we work more closely with the employers to encourage students to study economics?

Answer: Big question is why students don’t choose to enter economics (See Sharpe, 2018 for a great discussion). You might consider partnerships with organizations like the Sadie Collective. https://www.sadiecollective.org/ Anna Gifty Opoku-Agyeman is the CEO of the organization.

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Would you be willing to share syllabus / assignment examples?


We are currently reviewing the spring 2020 evaluations of the course and will be modifying the assignment and the course syllabus and assignment for Spring 2021. We will also be completing a revised draft of the paper.

Abdullah Al-Bahrani (Northern Kentucky University)
https://www.abdullahalbahrani.com/articles/teacheconconference

Interesting that STEM attracts twice as many women (in %) as Econ. Why do you think that is happening? How do those departments do it?

Answer: STEM has made efforts to engage K-12 education in fun and entertaining ways. They have embraced the idea that education should be enjoyable. A quick search on YouTube will result in several pages of fun experiments for all ages. https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=stem+classroom+activities

Try the same with economics and the youngest age group would be high school students. https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Economics+classroom+activities

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What do you mean by economic profession? It might be different meaning between UK and US, for example

Answer: Economics profession refers to academic and research positions.

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This ties into the assignment by Brooks, which would be difficult to do in a respectful way without any training. Can you comment on this?
Answer: There are some educators that are better equipped at managing classroom environments with respect to diversity and inclusion. It is my view that it is not due to innate ability, but a conscious effort to refine and grow the skillset. Their focus is on designing interactions that are welcoming.

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**Could you give us a quick preview from a classroom mgmt. angle on how to incorporate diverse student perspectives in large classes? Apart from a choice of materials**

Answer: Listening is important. Survey your students. Use the responses to design classroom experiences. Your students will feel heard. More information will be available in the paper when it is available next month. Large lectures can make personal connections more difficult to develop but it is not impossible. Think of your students in clusters, by where they sit, their interest, or class standing are some examples. Use these clusters to provide examples based on their interest. This requires you to listen to what students want or are interested in. It is your role to create environments to allow students to talk and share their interest, hence the survey.

**Questions for all presenters**

*I'd love to hear a couple examples of ways instructors can behave in the classroom that would be more welcoming to minority students and/or female students?*

Parama: I think being more reflective of your speech and body language, e.g. if you use sports analogies, think of some other fields as well. If you are making assumptions (student with foreign name must be international/ESL), stop and think about how you can communicate without that assumption.

Brooks: There are alot of great ideas here: http://diversifyingecon.org/index.php/Main_Page

Abdullah: Think about your assumptions and be conscious of your demeanor when walking into the classroom. Students are watching! Your enthusiasm and eagerness are contagious.

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Might online teaching increase diversity by reducing the importance of student cliques/groups information network (decrease of unintentional exclusionary behavior from peers)?

Parama: there are possibilities for sure, but I think we need to be carefully about access to technology etc but also things like access to extra support for learning and assessments. E.g. a student who has a PhD parent will have more access to additional support versus one who is first-gen. We also need to design group activities such that students don’t feel isolated (only non-white student/woman in a group).

Abdullah: I agree with Parama. I’ll add another point that Ramin Nassehi (UCL CTaLE) made during one of our breakouts. We are connecting online from our homes. Some of our personal life will appear in these online meetings. Whether it’s the bookshelf you have, the cat that interrupts the discussion, the dog that barks, or the kids that walk into the discussion. Allowing some of that personal aspect to show can be good for creating a welcoming environment. On the other hand, I can see this backfiring as well!

**General Comments**

One concern: with online instruction the norm in the fall, will that worsen (or improve) the sense of "belonging" we can create in our F2F classrooms. Online, it is all about presence. Are you creating Presence with introductions, facilitating their learning and creating opportunities for them to engage together. A good intro video goes a long way...where you stress your availability and your openness.

I have thought about this a lot. Recently redid my intro video: [https://youtu.be/W97w_WbNlhw](https://youtu.be/W97w_WbNlhw) (Abdullah Al-Bahrani)

And one more reason, when pitching their subject, economists always talk about their “method” or “distinctive way of thinking” or their research subjects, WHILE stem people talk about the actual ACHIEVEMENTS of their discipline. So I think we should replace “what economist really do” with “what economists have really achieved”. This takes sustained time and attention, along with resources. The sciences are well ahead of us in this area

Economics is rarely present in high school but hard sciences are. First exposure in higher education can be intimidating. Perhaps even more problematic as the economics...
that does turn up in high school is all about money. I've argued in a different talk that we should push econ for folks who enjoyed history and geography and are mathy.

Science doesn't negate/deny your experience. Econ does. When economists praise markets, and imply there are equally powered economic actors on both sides of every transaction, that negates the experience of those who know from life that is untrue. I have had a black student tell me that at a Posse retreat when I asked him why he didn’t major in economics.

Students also find this paper interesting (Goldsmith, Hamilton & Darity on skin tone and wages): [https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/000282806777212152](https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/000282806777212152)

Some of these issues came up in the “Women in Economics: Student Workshop” we organised at Warwick. I summarised some of the main points here: [https://steffiepf.blogspot.com/2020/01/women-in-economics-at-warwick-what-was.html](https://steffiepf.blogspot.com/2020/01/women-in-economics-at-warwick-what-was.html)