



NATIONAL ECONOMICS  
TEACHING ASSOCIATION



VIRTUAL  
CONFERENCE

# 22<sup>nd</sup> NETA

## Economics Teaching Conference



Friday, late October  
or early November 2026  
Exact Date Coming Soon

### Economics Beyond the Textbook:

Using Stories, Pop Culture, Policy,  
and Classroom Experience to Reach Students

The National Economics Teaching Association is pleased to  
announce its 22nd Economics Teaching Conference.

This year's virtual conference will bring together veteran  
NETA presenters and respected economics educators to  
explore fresh ways to help students see economics in  
stories, public life, classroom experience, and the real  
decisions people make.



#### A Virtual Bridge Year

This focused virtual conference  
brings our community together  
as NETA prepares to return  
in person in 2027.



In-Person  
Conference  
Coming in 2027!

**PRACTICAL. CREATIVE. CLASSROOM-READY.**  
Helping Students See Economics in the World Around Them.



# FEATURED SESSIONS & SPEAKERS

## Talk Descriptions



### GAME THEORY OF THRONES

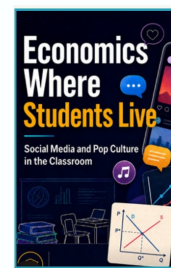
Linda Ghent and Alan Grant  
Strategic Thinking Through Popular Culture  
BOOK COVER COMING SOON

#### Game Theory of Thrones

Linda S. Ghent and Alan P. Grant

Eastern Illinois University / Baker University

A world of kings, dragons, alliances, and betrayals offers a vivid way to introduce students to strategic decision-making. This session uses *Game of Thrones* to bring core game theory concepts to life, including incentives, credible commitments, cooperation, conflict, and strategic interaction. Drawing from their forthcoming *Game Theory of Thrones* project, Linda Ghent and Alan Grant will show how familiar stories can move students from dramatic scenes to economic reasoning in ways that are memorable, accessible, and classroom-ready.



#### Economics Where Students Live: Social Media and Pop Culture in the Classroom

Wayne Geerling

University of Texas at Austin

Students encounter economics every day through the media they watch, share, and discuss. Wayne Geerling will show how television, music, social media, and online videos can be used to make economic concepts more engaging and memorable. Using examples from *After Life*, BTS, Roger Federer's commencement speech, and TikTok, this session will explore how carefully chosen media clips can help students connect economic reasoning to the world they already inhabit.

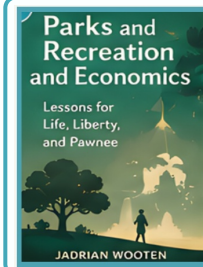


#### Potternomics: Why Wizards Still Live in the Dark Ages

J. Brian O'Roark

Robert Morris University

The Harry Potter universe is filled with magic, but it also raises surprisingly serious economic questions about institutions, incentives, technology, trade, and everyday decision-making. Drawing from *Potternomics*, J. Brian O'Roark will examine why wizards still use owls, gold coins, and hand-written letters in a world of extraordinary magical power. This session will show how familiar stories can open the door to economic reasoning, even in the most magical settings.

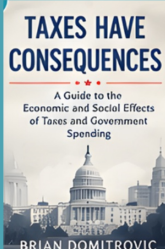


#### Parks and Recreation and Economics

Jadrian Wooten

Virginia Tech

Behind the humor of Pawnee are serious economic questions about incentives, public choice, budgeting, regulation, and the unintended consequences of policy. This session uses *Parks and Recreation* to make economic concepts more approachable without watering them down. Drawing from his work on *Parks and Recreation and Economics*, Jadrian Wooten will share ways to help students connect classroom models to public decisions, local government, and the tradeoffs built into civic life.

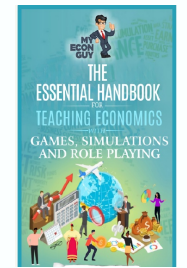


#### Taxes Have Consequences

Brian Domitrovic

Laffer Center

Tax policy is never just a matter of revenue; it shapes incentives, investment, entrepreneurship, economic growth, and the distribution of opportunity. Drawing from *Taxes Have Consequences*, Brian Domitrovic will examine major turning points in American tax history and the economic ideas behind them. This session will offer a historically grounded look at how tax decisions have influenced the direction of the American economy and why debates over taxation remain central to public life.

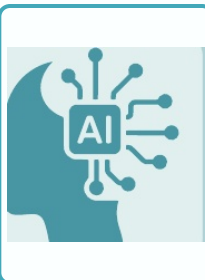


#### Teaching Economics with Classroom Experiments

Richard Gosselin

Houston City College / NETA

Classroom experiments can do more than energize a lesson; they can give students a lived experience of economic decision-making before formal models are introduced. Drawing from his unpublished book, *The Essential Guide for Teaching Economics with Games, Simulations, and Role-Playing*, Richard Gosselin will show how MobLab experiments, debriefings, and reflection exercises can help students connect participation to theory, evidence, and real-world economic behavior.

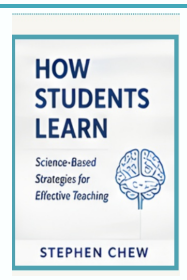


#### Working Lunch: Building Classroom Simulations with AI

Florencia Gabriele

Berklee College of Music

Artificial intelligence is opening new possibilities for instructors who want to create interactive classroom activities without advanced programming skills. In this hands-on working lunch, Florencia Gabriele will introduce a plain-language approach to building simple simulations that can support economic reasoning, student engagement, and active learning. Participants will see how AI can help turn classroom ideas into usable activities while keeping the instructor's judgment, creativity, and teaching goals at the center.



#### How Students Learn

Stephen Chew

Samford University

Students often enter our courses with mistaken assumptions about how learning works, how much effort is required, and what successful studying actually involves. Stephen Chew's session will draw on cognitive psychology and decades of research on teaching and learning to explain why students struggle and how instructors can help them develop more effective habits of mind. The session will offer a clear, research-based framework for improving learning, persistence, and academic success.

# SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Experienced Teachers. Creative Classrooms. Lasting Contributions.



## Linda S. Ghent and Alan P. Grant Eastern Illinois University / Baker University

Linda S. Ghent is Professor Emeritus of Economics at Eastern Illinois University, where her work has included economic pedagogy, voting, aging, and innovative approaches to teaching economics. She has also served as editor of the *Journal of Economics Teaching* and as a leader in the National Economics Teaching Association. Alan P. Grant is Professor Emeritus of Economics at Baker University and has written on lotteries, public economics, and popular culture in the classroom. Together, they co-authored *Seinfeld and Economics* and continue to show how familiar stories can make strategic decision-making memorable. Their work is especially useful for instructors who want students to recognize incentives, choices, and strategic behavior in scenes they already enjoy discussing.

Teaching focus: game theory, incentives, stories, and popular culture



## Wayne Geerling University of Texas at Austin

Wayne Geerling is Professor of Instruction in Economics at the University of Texas at Austin. His work spans economics education, economic history, multimedia learning, and the use of popular culture to help students connect abstract concepts to the media they already watch and share. He has written on teaching economics with music, television, film, social media, and online video, and has co-authored principles-level economics textbooks. His classroom work emphasizes curiosity, relevance, and examples that help students see economics in everyday life. He is especially interested in helping instructors use short, carefully chosen media moments to open discussion, clarify models, and make concepts stick after class ends.

Teaching focus: social media, music, film, history, and student relevance



## J. Brian O'Roark Robert Morris University

J. Brian O'Roark is University Professor of Economics and B.K. Simon Fellow at Robert Morris University. He earned his Ph.D. in economics from George Mason University and has published in public finance, information security, sports economics, and economics education. He is the author of *Potteronomics: Why Wizards Still Live in the Dark Ages* and *Why Superman Doesn't Take Over the World*. As editor of Routledge's Economics and Popular Culture series, he has helped expand the use of fictional worlds as serious starting points for economic reasoning. His work invites students to ask why institutions, prices, incentives, and rules matter, even inside imaginary universes.

Teaching focus: fictional worlds, institutions, incentives, and tradeoffs



## Jadrian Wooten Virginia Tech

Jadrian Wooten is Collegiate Associate Professor of Economics and Director of Undergraduate Studies at Virginia Tech. His teaching and scholarship focus on economics education, pedagogy, applied economics, and sports economics. He is the author of *Parks and Recreation and Economics* and director of the Econ Media Library, a resource that helps instructors find television, film, sports, and pop-culture clips for teaching. His work gives instructors practical ways to connect models, data, public policy, and the stories students already understand. He has become a leading source for classroom-ready examples that help students move from recognition and humor to careful economic analysis.

Teaching focus: media clips, public choice, sports, and applied examples



## Brian Domitrovic Laffer Center

Brian Domitrovic is the Richard S. Strong Scholar at the Laffer Center in Nashville and an economic historian whose work focuses on American tax policy, economic growth, and supply-side economics. He holds a Ph.D. in history from Harvard University, where he also did graduate work in economics. He is the author or editor of *Econoclasts* and *The Emergence of Arthur Laffer*, co-author of *JFK and the Reagan Revolution* with Lawrence Kudlow, and co-author of *Taxes Have Consequences* with Arthur Laffer and Jeanne Siquefield. His work places current tax debates in historical context and helps students see how fiscal choices affect incentives, investment, entrepreneurship, and long-run economic performance.

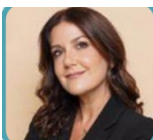
Teaching focus: tax history, incentives, growth, and economic policy



## Richard Gosselin Houston City College / NETA

Richard Gosselin is Professor of Economics at Houston City College, founding president of the National Economics Teaching Association, and the Ewing Endowed Chair of Teaching Excellence. He has taught economics since 1989 and has served in academic leadership roles while remaining closely connected to the classroom. His teaching emphasizes discovery, storytelling, classroom experiments, simulations, and reflective writing. His current project, *The Essential Guide for Teaching Economics with Games, Simulations, and Role-Playing*, draws on decades of practice helping students move from experience to analysis. His approach emphasizes active learning, careful debriefing, and reflective prompts that help students turn classroom participation into durable economic understanding.

Teaching focus: experiments, simulations, reflection, and discovery learning



## Florencia Gabriele Berklee College of Music

Florencia Gabriele is Associate Professor at Berklee College of Music, where she teaches economics, finance, taxation, and music business courses. She holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Northeastern University and graduate training in international economics and finance from Brandeis University. Her work brings together economics, political economy, instructional design, and emerging technologies. Recent projects explore how artificial intelligence can support faculty creativity, active learning, and the design of classroom simulations while keeping human judgment and teaching goals at the center. Her work is especially valuable for instructors who want to experiment with new tools while maintaining a clear focus on learning outcomes, student engagement, and responsible pedagogy.

Teaching focus: AI tools, simulations, finance, and active learning



## Stephen Chew Samford University

Stephen Chew is Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Samford University and a nationally recognized expert on the cognitive basis of effective teaching and student learning. Trained as a cognitive psychologist, he taught at Samford for more than three decades and served as department chair from 1993 to 2019. He is widely known for his video series *How to Get the Most Out of Studying*, as well as workshops that help faculty and students understand misconceptions about learning, metacognition, study strategies, persistence, and academic success. His work gives instructors a practical language for explaining why effort alone is not enough and how students can study more strategically, monitor their understanding, and improve performance.

Teaching focus: cognition, metacognition, study habits, and learning science

PRACTICAL. CREATIVE. CLASSROOM-READY.