Problem: Household Income Inequality

Since 2007, real median household income declined by 6.1 percent and...

Uneven pie

Incomes have become increasingly unequal over time, with the top 10 percent (and the top 1 percent) taking an outsized slice of the pie.

When income grows, who gains?

Between 1918 and 2008:

- Average incomes in the U.S. grew by $39,099
- The richest 10% got 51% of that growth.
- The bottom 90% shared 49%.

Source: The data come from this table: http://www.econ.berkeley.edu/~saez/TabFig2008.xls on Emmanuel Saez’s website at University of California, Berkeley. Methodology.
There are 1,167 community colleges in the U.S. enrolling over 8 million students, representing 43% of total U.S. undergraduates and an estimated 50% of enrollment in economics principles courses.

In comparison with students at four-year institutions, community college students more likely to be older, minority group members, first generation to attend college, working at paid employment, and enrolled part time.

But very little detail is known specifically about economics instruction.
Community college transfers do poorly when majoring in economics at a 4 year institution... Why?

**Figure 2.** Grade Distribution in ECON 311: Transferring from a Community College (Other than Principles of Macroeconomics)

![Graph showing grade distribution for transfer students in ECON 311.](image)
This poster reports on findings of one of four regional surveys conducted for an NSF-funded project, *Adapting Effective Outreach and Workshop Practices to Improve Community College Economic Instruction* Award Number=1043245.

A phone/email survey was conducted Q3 2011 covering VA, DC and MD community colleges. The survey shows:

- Most colleges/campuses have one economics instructor
  - A limited number Ph.Ds
  - Many cases taught by a business/social science faculty
- No discipline specific professional development opportunities
- No consistent curriculum standard (e.g. “Up to an instructor!”)
- No effectiveness measurement
- Offer best practice teaching resources & workshops (more to come... )