

Committee on Economic Education of the American Economic Association

Minutes of the Meeting of January 4, 2003
Grand Hyatt Hotel, Washington, DC

Present: William Becker, Rae Jean Goodman, Charles Holt, Mark Maier, Greg Mankiw, Michael Murray, Michael Salemi, and William Walstad (chair). Robert Duvall, President of the National Council on Economic Education attended. Absent: Dan Hamermesh. The meeting was called to order at 12:45 p.m.

1. Introduction

Bill Walstad opened the meeting by reviewing the status of the CEE membership. He reported that Paul Romer had been appointed to serve a three-year term by the AEA President. Dan Hamermesh and Bill Walstad were reappointed to serve second three-year terms. Bill will continue as CEE chair.

2. Past Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of January 5, 2002 in Atlanta were approved as written.

3. DC Sessions

Bill asked for a report on 2003 AEA sessions organized by the CEE. The responses from the CEE members were very positive on the four of the five AEA-CEE sessions that had been conducted. Paper Session #1 "Preparing and Improving the Economic Teacher" (Greg Mankiw chair) drew about 70 participants. Paper Session #2 "Outcomes Assessment in Undergraduate Economics" (Bill Becker chair) attracted 70–80 participants. Workshop #1: "Funding Projects to Advance the Teaching and Learning of Economics" (Mark Maier chair) was attended by 60 participants. Workshop #2: "Web Games and Strategies: Recipes for Interactive Learning in Economics" (Charles Holt chair) had about 50 people participate. [Note: Workshop #3: "Poster Session on Active Learning" (Rae Jean Goodman chair and held after the meeting) drew about 70–80 participants.]

4. Reports

a. *Journal of Economic Education*

Bill Becker gave the highlights of the JEE annual report that had been mailed to the CEE members in December (a copy of this annual report is available at the JEE website: <http://www.indiana.edu/~econed/anrpts.htm>). Bill thanked Bob Duvall and the National Council on Economic Education for its renewal of a commitment to provide on-going support for the JEE. The JEE website continues to receive a great deal of attention from faculty members at many universities, not only in the U.S. but also abroad. Bill also expressed some concerns about publishing problems at Heldref (the JEE publisher) and also explained the relationship between the CEE and the JEE. Bill Walstad reported that copies of the Fall 2003 issue of the JEE had been distributed at the Economics Department Chair's breakfast and attention given to the article on "Foreign GTAs Can Be Effective Teachers of Economics" by Belton Fleisher, Masanori Hashimoto, and Bruce Weinberg at Ohio State.

b. National Council on Economic Education (NCEE)

Bob Duvall, President of the National Council on Economic Education, gave the NCEE report that described the recent major activities and publications of the NCEE. Of particular interest was the National Symposium on Economic and Financial Literacy that the NCEE organized and conducted with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis in May, 2002 in Washington. Bob provided recent data on requirements for pre-college economics in the various states. He also described developments in the NCEE's work on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test in economics, which is to be conducted in 2006. Bob invited all members to attend a reception the NCEE was hosting that evening.

Greg Mankiw, Chief Economist for the NCEE, reviewed the new list of NCEE publications and programs

as part of the report. Greg also suggested that high school teachers be invited to attend the AEA meeting because some of the sessions would be of interest and value to them. Several suggestions were offered about how to achieve this objective. We could start by inviting teachers in the host city. We could focus on AP teachers. We could prepare a teacher guide to the meeting. Bob Duvall and Bill Walstad will follow up with John Siegfried to develop this idea for AEA.

c. Regional Teacher Workshops

Mike Salemi presented a report summarizing the status of the regional workshops that had been conducted under the sponsorship of the Committee and the NCEE, and which were funded by the Kazanjian Foundation. Nine workshops proposals received funding in 2002. Eight of the nine workshops were conducted in 2002. See www.unc.edu/~salemi for more information. The 2002 workshops attracted 225 faculty participants and received high ratings as did the 2001 workshops. This program will continue for one more year with funding from the Kazanjian Foundation.

d. CEE Annual Report

Bill Walstad invited Committee members to make suggestions to him about the Annual Report that he had sent out prior to the meeting. No additional comments were offered, so the report will appear as is in the May 2003 AER Papers and Proceedings.

5. Program for the January, 2004 Meetings in San Diego, CA

a. Paper Session #1

Bill presented a proposal for a 2003 session on “Recent Research in Economic Education.” This session would consist of three papers that were products of funding proposals initiated at the May 2000 AEA–CEE Research Projects Conference: (1) A research report on the efficient use of technology in economic education that evaluates the effectiveness of different technologies in introductory courses (Kim Sosin, Betty Blecha, Rajshree Agrawal, Robin Bartlett, and Joe Daniel); (2) An investigation of the long-term effects of studying undergraduate economics based on an analysis of survey data collected from alumni at four universities (Sam Allgood, William Bosshardt, Wilbert van der Klaauw, and Michael Watts); and (3) A study of the match between knowledge and skills acquired by new economics Ph.D.s during a graduate program and the knowledge and skills required by new Ph.D.s during their first year of work (W. Lee Hansen and Wendy Stock). The papers from this CEE-sponsored session would be published in the AER Papers and Proceedings (May, 2004). Michael Murray, Mike Salemi, and Bill Becker volunteered to serve as discussants. The CEE approved the session proposal.

b. Paper Session #2

This session will focus on economics and journalism. Four economists will prepare articles describing their experiences in educating the public and writing about economics for news media: (1) Greg Mankiw: “The Economist as Public Intellectual”; (2) Klaus Zimmermann: “Advising Policy-makers Through the Media: A European Perspective”; (3) Hal Varian: “How to Make a Scene”; and (4) Dan Hamermesh: “Maximizing the Substance in the Soundbite: Economic Education through the Media.” The discussants are yet to be identified, but CEE members suggested that one or two journalists be included as discussants. The set of papers and perhaps the discussant comments would be slated for publication in the JEE. (This arrangement for publishing papers from AEA–CEE sessions in the JEE has a long history.)

c. Three Workshop Sessions on Teaching and Learning

The discussion turned to the three active learning workshops. Mike Salemi presented a workshop proposal to have a session on “Teaching to Literacy in the Principles of Economics Course.” Suggestions were made by CEE members to re-focus the workshop on the learning and retention of economic principles, and Mike agreed to do so. His plan called for having a mixture of a standard session and a poster session. There would a speaker to give an overview of the issues and the session. Then there would be teaching modules presented by other faculty members who would explain how they teach economic

principles with an emphasis on mastery and retention.

Rae Jean Goodman and Mark Maier will be organizing the traditional poster session. They will also help Mike Salemi organize his workshop session. Both workshop sessions are requesting poster presentations, so there would need to be coordination between the RFP and presentation selections for these workshops. The current plan calls for Mike, Rae Jean, and Mark to prepare and submit RFP ads to the AER and JPE this winter calling for poster submissions on Mike's workshop topic of learning and retaining economic principles, and the general topic of teaching and learning in undergraduate economics.

Charlie Holt also agreed to conduct another workshop on web-based experiments and strategies that would be similar to the one he led this year. The new feature of this session is that it would use web games and experiments to show how new ideas from economics research that reflect the most current thinking in the profession can be taught to undergraduate students. The CEE authorized Charlie to organize this workshop.

6. New Business

The main subject for new business was to begin considering ideas for sessions for the 2005 ASSA meetings in Philadelphia. Bill Walstad invited CEE members to send him suggestions or proposals by August 1 so that the CEE has full proposals to consider early this fall.

a. Paper Session #1

To start the process, Bill presented a draft proposal for a session that would be devoted to perspectives on whether economics teaching and research are complements or substitutes. Suggestions for papers were given and briefly discussed. The papers from this session would be slated for publication in the AER Papers and Proceedings.

b. Paper Session #2

Bill presented a concept for this session that would focus on "The Changing Role of Textbooks and Supplements for Principles of Economics Instruction in a Multimedia Environment." About 4–8 textbook authors would be invited to present papers. There would be 4–8 discussants. These paper and discussant comments would be slated for publication in a special issue of the Journal of Economic Education.

c. Workshops

Michael Murray suggested a workshop on international economic education. It would cover such topics as the effect of trips and study abroad on the development of economic understanding, how to conduct an effective trip or study abroad program in economics, and faculty experiences in providing trips and study abroad programs for learning economics. He agreed to develop a workshop proposal for CEE consideration.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.