

# **Implementing and teaching “CORE” in Siena. A survey-backed illustration of the adoption of an induction-based approach to teaching introductory economics**

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## **Abstract**

This paper illustrates the case study of the introduction in a mid-sized Italian university (the University of Siena) of a new approach to teaching introductory economics, based on a set of online resources recently developed by an international team of researchers led by Samuel Bowles (Santa Fe Institute) and Wendy Carlin (UCL): CORE-ECON “*Teaching Economics as if the last three decades had happened*”. The main methodological change underlying the CORE-ECON project lies in the adoption of an inductive approach that starts from questions raised by economic phenomena rather than from economic models. Moreover, the project emphasizes social motivations behind human action, existence of disequilibrium, the role of institutions and technological change, and the need to adopt a long-period perspective. The analysis of the case study is based on two surveys administered to a total of about 500 first-year economics students, on the first day of lecture and after the end of course. The questions asked were meant to: (a) understand whether there is a correlation between a number of the students’ personal features and their appreciation for the CORE material; (b) understand whether there is a correlation between a number of the students’ personal features and their performance in the course; and (c) understand whether exposure to the CORE material changes in any way students’ opinion on some economics-related issues.