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Teaching about Modern Slavery: Highlighting Human Rights Principles in Evaluating Economic Systems

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The Social Practice of Human Rights: Charting the Frontiers of Research and Advocacy

2017 Conference of the University of Dayton Human Rights Center

Nov. 8-10, 2017, Dayton, Ohio

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Roundtable: The Importance of Social Justice and Human Rights in Economics

Presenter: Barbara E. Hopkins, Wright State University

Title: Teaching about Modern Slavery: Highlighting Human Rights Principles in Evaluating Economic Systems

Abstract:

Evaluating economic systems relies on several different criteria, but the current public discourse places a great deal of emphasis on efficiency, which students generally understand as producing at lower cost.

By using the extreme example of modern-day slavery, I am able to introduce students to the human rights framework for thinking about freedom and encourage students to question whether producing at the lowest possible cost is good for human beings and the environment.

About the presenter:

Barbara E. Hopkins is an associate professor of economics at Wright State University; among the courses she teaches are Economic Systems of the Global South and Comparative Capitalisms.