



**COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PLANNING AND REVIEW
ANNUAL PROGRAM REPORT**

College	CBE
Department	Economics
Program Unit	MA in Economics
Reporting for Academic Year	2012-2013
Department Chair	Jed DeVaro
Date Submitted	8/9/2013

1. SELF-STUDY (about 1 page)

A. Five-year Review Planning Goals

1. Scholarship
 - 1.1 Explore possible ways of converting PQ and "Other" faculty to AQ category
 - 1.2 Explore the possibility of increasing faculty research support
 - 1.3 Explore new sources of research funding
2. Educational Programs
 - 2.1 Reinvent the MBA program- for example, identify niches, create brand identity, etc.
 - 2.2 Strategically examine International Programs
 - 2.3 Build real world experiences for students and faculty; for example, guest speakers, internships, projects, and student clubs
3. Internal Operations
 - 3.1 Address facilities and teaching support
 - 3.2 Address networking system
4. People
 - 4.1 Retain and maintain equity for senior and junior faculty
5. External Relations
 - 5.1 Reactivate Advisory Board of Bay Area leaders

B. Five-year Review Planning Goals Progress

At my request, the Department spent 2012-2013 focusing on the question of how to revitalize the MA program. During the first week of 2012-2013 I convened a Department meeting in which I announced the creation of the Economics Strategic Planning Committee (ESPC). Its first of three charges was to draft a strategic plan for “Improving the quality of the MA Economics Program while expanding its size”. The ESPC’s work, further Department discussions, and my own work culminated in a 9-page “Plan for Revitalizing the M.A. Program in Economics”, which I submitted to the interim dean on April 19, 2013. The report (available upon request) summarized the challenges the program faces, the resources needed to rebuild, and the steps that the Department wants to take or that are under discussion. Importantly, the report had input from the

3 new faculty hires who will join the Department in Fall 2013. The success of the effort to rebuild the MA program hinges on their participation and engagement, so their participation in the discussion was crucial.

C. Program Changes and Needs

The Department continues to actively focus on and discuss the needed changes. We cannot yet present a complete list. The document we submitted in April best describes our current assessment and indicates the areas that are (and will continue to be) under active discussion. The biggest need is to rebuild the faculty, and the Department is grateful for the administration's support in that area. The Department is pleased to welcome 3 new members in Fall 2013 and will recruit another new hire (targeting the area of international economics) in 2013-2014. The program curriculum also needs work. As a first step in that direction, in Spring 2013 the Department successfully created two new electives (one in urban economics, and another in innovation and intellectual property, both of which will be taught by incoming faculty). Another important (forthcoming) change is that the Graduate Advisor will be replaced by one of the incoming faculty, effective at the start of Fall 2013. Historically, the Graduate Advisor has taken an active leadership role in managing the program towards success. But the decline the program has experienced during the last few years suggests that the program would benefit from new leadership and fresh ideas. The incoming Graduate Advisor has already contributed in important ways to the ongoing discussion about how to revitalize the program. Finally, effective Fall 2013, the Department will return to offering core classes in the MA program every year (as it had until Fall 2010) rather than every other year as it has done in recent years. While this change is expected to lead to small class sizes initially, longer term it should generate a lot more applicants since it allows the program to be completed much faster.

2. SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT (about 1 page)

A. Program Student Learning Outcomes

PSLO 1: Students will demonstrate an advanced understanding of micro and macroeconomic theory.

PSLO 2: Students will be able to apply economic theory and methods at an advanced level to selected economic topics through independent research.

PSLO 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to present orally a coherent, logical economic argument grounded in economic theory.

PSLO 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to present a coherent, logical economic argument grounded in economic theory and methods in writing.

PSLO 5: Students will use appropriate computer technologies to develop research problems and present written and oral economic arguments.

B. Program Student Learning Outcome(s) Assessed

Following the 2012 5-year AACSB Accreditation Review visit, the visiting team identified key areas needing improvement in the Maintenance of Accreditation Review report. One area identified by the review team was AACSB Standard 15, Management of Curricula. Highlighted in the Team Visit Report – Maintenance of Accreditation Review, the AACSB Review Team stated the College of Business & Economics' (CBE) Assurance of Learning system needs further

maturity, with clear roles and responsibilities, an enhancement of the quality of the data we collect, more useful analysis of the data, and evidence that the data is being used effectively to “close the loop.”

We reviewed all available guidance from AACSB on Assurance of Learning and developed a comprehensive plan for our Assurance of Learning (AoL) system. We consulted with other schools highlighted by AACSB for their well-developed AoL systems, such as the Coles College of Business at Kennesaw State University, interviewed for the AACSB Spotlight in 2012, and universities with strong assessment programs, like Eastern Michigan University and DePaul University for assistance and advice.

The result was a comprehensive, in-depth plan for assessment that consisted of a number of systematic changes, educational improvement changes, and building a culture of assessment desperately lacking at the College of Business & Economics in the past. The past 2012-2013 academic year has focused on this complete redesign of the college’s assessment program. We began with a complete overhaul of the BSBA and MBA programs. The following year will see a similar overhaul and redesign of the BA and MA Economic assessment programs. Therefore, no outcomes were assessed for BA or MA Econ in the previous year. The redesign will begin with a reformatting and modifications to the existing program learning goals/outcomes statements listed in section A above.

C. Summary of Assessment Process

See section B

D. Summary of Assessment Results

See section B

3. STATISTICAL DATA (about 1 page)

Historically, the Economics Department offered the core courses in the MA program annually. In Fall 2010, an administrative decision was imposed that allowed the Department to offer core classes only every other year. This change imposed high costs on students, in terms of expected time until degree completion, and set the program sharply into deterioration mode. As a consequence of the “Plan for Revitalization” that the Department submitted to the interim dean in April 2013, the Department is now allowed (effective Fall 2013) to return to offering core courses annually. Although reversing the damage will not happen overnight, as a long term proposition the Department is confident that this change will help the program to flourish.

Course offering plans give students access to eleven courses that they should be able to complete in slightly more than a year. If we could offer summer courses (one item the Department is discussing as a future goal) it would be possible for some students to complete the entire program in a year, which would make the program more attractive to prospective applicants. A total of two sections were offered in Fall 2012. The average class size for the MA in Economics in Fall 2012 was 14 students. All courses in the MA program were taught by Academically Qualified (AQ) faculty in Fall 2012, and that has been the Department’s unwritten policy for years. I have seen no deviations from it during the 5 years I have been in the Department. As

stated in the first charge I gave to the ESPC in Fall 2012, expanding the number of students is a top priority for the program.