

Comprehensive Program Review Report



Program Review - Economics

Program Summary

2023-2024

Prepared by: Christian Anderson and Lucy Malakar

What are the strengths of your area?: The essential strength of Economics Department (ED) lies in the depth of its faculty members' experience. Despite having more than 30 combined years of teaching experience, the faculty continue to seek out and participate in professional development having attended "Teaching New Monetary Policy Tools" hosted by Norton Publishing (11/18/2022). Other professional development activities are detailed below.

The doubling of size of seasoned, fulltime faculty and the addition of qualified adjuncts has allowed for an expansion of economics offerings in terms of section numbers, meeting times and course modalities. While census enrollment in all economics courses dipped slightly between AY2021-22 (n= 766) and AY 22-23 (n = 737) the number of ECON AA-T majors held steady at 36 (after a 42% increase between AY 20-21 and 21-22).

According to the COS Master Plan, the department's productivity target is 19.43 FTES/FTEF. Despite economics courses being scheduled in smaller classrooms, the department managed to produce an efficiency ratio of 16.75. This can be considered an achievement under these circumstances.

During the 2022 - 23 academic year Christian Anderson continued to co-chair IPRC as well as Chair the COSTA Elections Committee. Professor Anderson also serves as Faculty Advisor for Alpha Gamma Sigma and the Dungeons and Dragons Club. Lucy Malakar represented the Social Sciences Division on COSTA. She also completed The Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) "Effective Online Teach Practices Course" and participated in several professional development webinars:

**10/8/2022 "Inputs into Monetary Policy Decisions" by Federal Reserve Education as part of the series Teaching Economics in Changing Tim

**11/4 and 11/5/2022 "Teaching the New Tools of Monetary Policy" presented at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis' Professors Conference

**11/18/2022 "Teaching New Monetary Policy Tools" by textbook author, Lee Coppock. Hosted by Norton Publishing.

**4/5/2023 "ChatGPT has Mastered the Principles of Economics. Now What?" by textbook author, Dirk Mateer. Hosted by Norton Publishing.

**4/13/2023 "Engaging Students: Insights from Neuroscience & the Big Screen" by Dr. Barbara Oakley. Hosted by Top Hat Learning.

Complementing the strength of the faculty is the quality of the department's curriculum. Success rates for all courses in the department increased slightly during the 2022 -23 academic year (76.8%) from the multi-year average in the department (76.3%) and remain similar or better than the average for transferable courses at COS since AY 2022-23 (70.5%).

ECON success rates excluding EWs are similar across gender (81.4% male / 77.1% female) and are relatively consistent across ethnicity/race over the 3 year period from AY 2020-21 to AY 2022-23:

59% African Americans

89% Asians

77% Hispanic

86% White

93% Multi ethnicity

Additionally, success rates between face-to-face (78.7%) and online (79.7%) offerings are similar over the past six academic years. All of these statistics are comparable to or above the institutional average of 73.4% over the same period.

Just over 47 percent (47.6%) of ECON students were female in AY 2022-23 which is nearly identical to the six year average of 47.8%. The shortage of women and historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in the economics profession has received considerable public attention in the past several years. As places of rich social diversity, community colleges can help attract greater numbers of diverse students into an economics major and, in the process, create a more diverse, inclusive pipeline of economist. Since the 2017 -18 academic year, 162 students have declared their major as Associate in Arts in Economics for Transfer and 26 degrees have been awarded.

What improvements are needed?: The department and COS would benefit from identifying and hiring additional qualified adjunct instructors.

The department also faces significant scheduling challenges in trying to meet student demand for online ECON courses while complying with the administrative directive of limiting online sections to 25% of ECON course offerings. Typically, 9 or 10 sections of ECON are offered per semester. If we offer at least one online section for each course (ECON 25, 40, 50) that automatically puts us over the 25% limit since $3/9 = 33\%$ and $3/10 = 30\%$

In addition, the department might be able to better support students who have declared their major to be economics to attain their degree.

Describe any external opportunities or challenges.: An external challenge is the fact that there are no local colleges or universities offering graduate programs in economics. This severely limits the pool of qualified adjunct instructors.

An external opportunity is the proposed synchronization and harmonizing of general education requirements between the UC and CSU systems.

Overall SLO Achievement: The department is back on track in terms of the three year SLO evaluation cycle. Results are provided elsewhere in TracDat.

Changes Based on SLO Achievement: None. COS econ students are outperforming national norms on the assessed student learning outcomes.

Overall PLO Achievement: The department mapped the AA-T PLOs to the course SLOs. This mapping satisfactorily demonstrates PLO achievement.

Changes Based on PLO Achievement: None.

Outcome cycle evaluation: The ECON department is back on track for the 3-year outcome evaluation cycle. See the pertinent action update for more details.

Action: 2020-21: SLO assessment

Evaluate the current gaps in the assessment cycle and formulate a plan to recover.

Leave Blank:

Implementation Timeline: 2020 - 2021, 2021 - 2022, 2022 - 2023

Leave Blank:

Leave Blank:

Identify related course/program outcomes:

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Christian Anderson & Lucy Malakar, full-time faculty

Rationale (With supporting data):

Priority: High

Safety Issue: No

External Mandate: Yes

Safety/Mandate Explanation: Accreditation

Update on Action

Updates

Update Year: 2023 - 2024

09/08/2023

Status: Action Completed

Conducted assessment and tabulated results for ECON 25, ECON 40, & ECON 50. The department is back on track!

Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

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Update Year: 2022 - 2023

09/07/2022

Status: Continue Action Next Year

We are back on largely back on track for SLO assessment:

Developed Plan: AY 2021 -2022

**we met to evaluate gaps in SLO assessments and determined our plan to get back on track;

**selected SLO #2 from ECON 025.

**selected SLO #2 from ECON 040.

**selected SLO #2 from ECON 050.

**ECON 040 and 050 SLOs will be assessed using selected questions from the Test of Understanding in College Economics (TUCE) which is a standardized test of economics nationally norm-referenced in the United States for use at the undergraduate level, primarily targeting introductory or principles-level coursework in economics. It is sponsored and published by the National Council on Economic Education.

The Test of Economic Literacy (TEL) will be used to assess ECON 25.

Implement Plan: AY 2022-2023

**ECON 025 SLO will be assessed using TEL on final exam

**ECON 040 and 050 SLO will be assessed via TUCE questions in final exams

Analyze Plan: AY 2023-2024

**will review and analyze SLO data to make any necessary adjustments to courses and/or program

Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2018-2021

District Objective 3.2 - By 2021, increase the percentage of students in targeted groups who complete transfer-level English (by 10 percentage points) and transfer-level math (by 5 percentage points) within their first year

District Objective 4.1 - Increase the use of data for decision-making at the District and department/unit level

District Objectives: 2021-2025

District Objective 4.1 - Increase the effective use of data and transparency in decision making at all institutional levels from 2021-2025.

Action: 2020-21: AB705

Explore and evaluate the possibility of offering support courses with mathematics prerequisites (i.e. ECON 40 & 50)

Leave Blank:

Implementation Timeline: 2020 - 2021, 2021 - 2022, 2022 - 2023

Leave Blank:

Leave Blank:

Identify related course/program outcomes:

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Christian Anderson & Lucy Malakar, full-time faculty

Rationale (With supporting data):

Priority: High

Safety Issue: No

External Mandate: Yes

Safety/Mandate Explanation: AB705

Program Review - Economics

| Update on Action | |
|---|------------|
| <i>Updates</i> | |
| Update Year: 2023 - 2024 Status: Action Discontinued After discussion with the college curriculum coordinator, it was determined that the action is not feasible. Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required): | 09/08/2023 |
| <hr/> | |
| Update Year: 2022 - 2023 Status: Continue Action Next Year As a first step in exploring the possibility of developing a support course for ECON 040, we selected an outstanding microeconomics (ECON 040) student to serve as SI for ECON 040 classes in Fall 2022. We will monitor how SI sessions go in terms of attendance and impact on course success to see if should continue selecting SIs or offer a faculty-led support course. Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required): | 09/07/2022 |

Link Actions to District Objectives

| |
|---|
| District Objectives: 2018-2021 |
| District Objective 2.1 - Increase the percentage of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and Non-CTE) by 5 percentage points over three years |
| District Objective 2.2 - Increase the number of students who transfer to a four-year institution by 10 percent over three years |
| District Objectives: 2021-2025 |
| District Objective 2.1 - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and non-CTE) by 5% from 2021-2025. |
| District Objective 2.2 - Increase the number of students who are transfer-ready by 15% and students who transfer to four-year institutions by 10% from 2021-2025. |

Action: 2022-23: Outreach

During this academic year we will reach out to declared economics majors to offer additional academic advising and/or information about economics as a profession. The first attempt at outreach will be via email campaign during Fall 2022.

Leave Blank:

Implementation Timeline: 2022 - 2023, 2023 - 2024

Leave Blank:

Leave Blank:

Identify related course/program outcomes:

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Christian Anderson & Lucy Malakar

Rationale (With supporting data): There are a relatively small number of declared econ majors on campus. In an effort to engage these students and potentially increase representation of women and historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups within economics, we plan to increase interaction with and among economics majors on campus. One of the goals of these interactions is to increase the numbers of diverse students majoring in economics and, in the process, create a more diverse, inclusive pipeline of economists.

Priority: Medium

Safety Issue: No

External Mandate: No

Safety/Mandate Explanation:

| Update on Action | |
|---|------------|
| <i>Updates</i> | |
| Update Year: 2023 - 2024 Status: Continue Action Next Year | 09/08/2023 |

Program Review - Economics

We requested and received contact information for all current economics majors at the colleges. Each of these students were individually contacted and offered advice / counseling regarding transfer and career opportunities. None of the students responded directly to the offer. We will attempt to reach out to students again in the 2023-24 AY.

Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025

District Objective 2.1 - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and non-CTE) by 5% from 2021-2025.

District Objective 2.2 - Increase the number of students who are transfer-ready by 15% and students who transfer to four-year institutions by 10% from 2021-2025.

Action: 2022-23: Online Course Offerings

Continue to work with administration regarding modality of econ course offerings to both maximize efficiency and meet student demand for online courses.

Leave Blank:

Implementation Timeline: 2022 - 2023

Leave Blank:

Leave Blank:

Identify related course/program outcomes:

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Christian Anderson & Lucy Malakar

Rationale (With supporting data):

Priority: Medium

Safety Issue: No

External Mandate: Yes

Safety/Mandate Explanation: Administrative directive that no more than 25% of ECON course offerings can be online

Update on Action

Updates

Update Year: 2023 - 2024

09/08/2023

Status: Continue Action Next Year

Continue to monitor enrollment and course offerings. Based on the results of these efforts, department faculty will continue to suggest changes to the scheduled courses .

Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025

District Objective 1.1 - The District will increase FTES 2% from 2021 to 2025.

District Objective 2.1 - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and non-CTE) by 5% from 2021-2025.

District Objective 2.2 - Increase the number of students who are transfer-ready by 15% and students who transfer to four-year institutions by 10% from 2021-2025.

Action: 2022-23: AB1705

Program Review - Economics

Research AB 1705 to determine its impact on ECON department and courses.

Leave Blank:

Implementation Timeline: 2022 - 2023

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Identify related course/program outcomes:

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Christian Anderson & Lucy Malakar

Rationale (With supporting data):

Priority: Medium

Safety Issue: No

External Mandate: Yes

Safety/Mandate Explanation: AB 1705 recently passed by state legislature and scheduled to begin in July 2023.

Update on Action

Updates

Update Year: 2023 - 2024

09/08/2023

Status: Action Completed

This legislation seems to have had minimal impact on the econ major, department or courses. No changes in course enrollments, the number of students declared to be economics majors, or the number of program graduates could be attributed to this legislation.

Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025

District Objective 2.1 - Increase the number of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and non-CTE) by 5% from 2021-2025.

District Objective 2.2 - Increase the number of students who are transfer-ready by 15% and students who transfer to four-year institutions by 10% from 2021-2025.

Action: 2022-23 PLO Mapping

Create a curricular map between PLOs and SLOs within the ECON AA-T degree .

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Implementation Timeline: 2022 - 2023

Leave Blank:

Leave Blank:

Identify related course/program outcomes:

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Christian Anderson & Lucy Malakar, full-time faculty

Rationale (With supporting data): see program summary.

Priority: High

Safety Issue: No

External Mandate: Yes

Safety/Mandate Explanation: Accreditation requirement

Update on Action

Updates

Update Year: 2023 - 2024

09/08/2023

Status: Action Completed

All SLOs from the courses listed in the economics AAT degree have been mapped to Program Level Outcomes and recorded in

Program Review - Economics

TracDat.

Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025

District Objective 4.1 - Increase the effective use of data and transparency in decision making at all institutional levels from 2021-2025.

Action: 2023-24: Professional Development

Faculty will attend professional conferences in person during this academic year.

Leave Blank:

Implementation Timeline: 2023 - 2024

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Leave Blank:

Identify related course/program outcomes:

Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position): Christian Anderson & Lucy Malakar, full-time faculty

Rationale (With supporting data): The faculty will maintain currency in subject matter, explore new pedagogical methods, and receive training regarding supporting our diverse student population (especially regarding transfer issues.)

Priority: Medium

Safety Issue: No

External Mandate: No

Safety/Mandate Explanation:

Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2021-2025

District Objective 4.3 - Improve professional development practices District-wide for all District employees to support equity and operational effectiveness from 2021-2025.