

# Comprehensive Program Review Report



## Program Review - Economics

### Program Summary

#### 2020-2021

**Prepared by:** christian anderson

**What are the strengths of your area?:** The essential strength of Economics Department lies in its faculty. This past year the department has been fortunate enough to build on this strength by hiring a full-time faculty member and by appreciably expanding its adjunct pool. These developments represent a significant accomplishment and are the result of several years of concerted effort by COS faculty, staff and administrators (thank you to everyone who contributed!).

During the 2019-20 academic year the department's only full-time member continued to be very engaged both internally and externally. During that year, he co-chaired both the District's Institutional Review Board and the Research Advisory Work-group. In addition, he presented a peer-reviewed session at the 2019 annual conference of the American Educational Research Association as well as the 2019 Strengthening Student Success conference hosted by the RP Group. Finally, the instructor completed a sabbatical in Fall 2019 and presented outcomes to the COS Board of Trustees in Spring 2020.

Complementing the strength of the faculty is the quality of the department's curriculum. Students at COS continue to score higher and demonstrate greater improvement (pre/post) on the American Economic Association's Test of Understanding in College Economics than a nationally normed sample of both undergraduates at four-year institutions and community college students. Success rates for courses in the department are similar or better than the average for UC transferable courses at COS (71% to 83% over the last three academic years). Success rates were relatively consistent across ethnicity/race and gender over the same period. Additionally, success rates between face-to-face and online offerings were nearly identical during the past three academic years.

Effective Fall 2015, the department began offering Associate in Arts in Economics for Transfer (AA-T). Since the 2017-18 academic year to date, the college has awarded 13 of these degrees.

**What improvements are needed?:** Given its recent expanded faculty capacity, the department is in the position to significantly improve its course offerings across modes of instructional delivery, campuses, and times of day compared to last year. Currently, the department is offering all courses using remote instructional delivery techniques. However, in the past three years, course offerings have been limited primarily to the Visalia Campus (with limited offerings on the Hanford campus using 2-way televised distance education format).

**Describe any external opportunities or challenges.:** The main external challenge for the department for the 2020-21 academic year is the effect of Covid-19 pandemic. In response to this challenge the department has begun to offer remote instruction in the second half of Spring 2019, continues to do so in Fall 2020, and will continue to offer instruction remotely in Spring 2021. As a result, outcomes during this period may prove to be highly anomalous and may not be valid representations of the department's productivity and efforts.

Also, AB705 continues to pose an important external challenge to the department. New externally mandated placement procedures will result in the enrollment of under-prepared students who, heretofore, would not have been eligible to enroll in every class offered by the department (ECON 25, ECON 40, & ECON 50). Demand for the course sections may increase as a greater number of students become eligible to enroll. More important, however, is the second reason: under-prepared students require additional academic support. Currently the CCCCO and the California Acceleration Project suggest that this reality be met through the development and offering of co-requisite curriculum (see <https://accelerationproject.org/> and <https://>

//assessment.cccco.edu/ab-705-implementation/). The department will need to assess both student need and the feasibility of offering such support courses over the next few years.

**Overall SLO Achievement:** Due to unforeseeable circumstances outside the control of department faculty (e.g. the fact that the department had no permanent full-time faculty due to the delayed sabbatical of the department's only full-time faculty member in Fall 2019 and the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in Spring 2020), SLO assessments were not conducted during the 2019-20 academic year. Therefore, no new information is available for evaluation at this time. In the recent past, the department has maintained successful course completion rates similar to the college and the division for UC transferable courses. This fact represents a considerable achievement, given that these courses are generally considered to be well above average in terms of difficulty. In addition, the department will continue to assess SLOs in these courses using its established methods and protocols.

**Changes Based on SLO Achievement:** For the reasons outlined above, changes to curriculum, assessment plans, and the evaluation of results will not be created or addressed during the 2020-21 academic year.

**Overall PLO Achievement:** The AA-T in Economics has had very few graduates to date (only 3 during the 2019-20 academic year). Furthermore, only 6 of the 22 units (27%) that comprise the major are taught in the economics department. Thus, the assessment and evaluation of PLO achievement is impractical and has yet to have taken place.

**Changes Based on PLO Achievement:** None.

**Outcome cycle evaluation:** Because, until Fall 2020, the department has been staffed by a single full-time faculty member (and because of the singular challenges that the department faced during the 2019-20 academic year) maintaining the schedule has been both taxing and precarious. A sincere effort to sustain the three-year cycle has been attempted. However, because of the challenges outlined above, slight deviations from the 3-year schedule have been inevitable. During the current year, the department will evaluate the current gaps in the cycle and formulate a plan to recover.

## Action: 2020-21: Scheduling

Department faculty will evaluate enrollment data and assess student needs related to the scheduling of course offerings.

**Leave Blank:**

**Implementation Timeline:** 2020 - 2021

**Leave Blank:**

**Leave Blank:**

**Identify related course/program outcomes:**

**Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position):** Full-time department faculty, scheduling chair, division dean

**Rationale (With supporting data):**

**Priority:** Medium

**Safety Issue:** No

**External Mandate:** No

**Safety/Mandate Explanation:**

### *Link Actions to District Objectives*

District Objectives: 2018-2021

**District Objective 1.1** - The District will increase FTES by 1.75% over the three years

**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

## 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

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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

## Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2018-2021

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

## 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

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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

## 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

## Action: 2018-19 Economics Department Human Resource Development

The department will increase its capacity to support the District's stated goal from the 2015-2025 Master Plan to "improve the rate at which its students complete degrees, certificates, and transfer objectives" with respect to its human resources.

Leave Blank: Essential for Operation

Implementation Timeline: 2019 - 2020

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Identify related course/program outcomes: 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 four-year institutions by 10 percent over three years.

District Objective 2.3: By 2021, increase the percentage of students who complete transfer-level English by 15 percentage points and transfer-level math by 10 percentage points within their first year.

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**Person(s) Responsible (Name and Position):** Christian Anderson

**Rationale (With supporting data):** Current trends ADT award trends indicate the increasing need for section offerings of ECON 40 & ECON 50 to meet growing needs in both the social science and business divisions (see Program Award data). The Economics Department does not currently have the capacity (see FTEF found in the Economics department's Program Review Dashboard) to develop or offer the additional sections that may be demanded as a result of the implantation of AB705. In addition the department does not have the capacity to develop or offer sections delivering the co-requisite curriculum strongly recommended by the CCC Chancellor's Office and the California Acceleration Project (see <https://accelerationproject.org/> and <https://assessment.cccco.edu/ab-705-implementation/>).

**Priority:** High

**Safety Issue:** No

**External Mandate:** Yes

**Safety/Mandate Explanation:** AB705 implementation guidelines strongly encourage the development of co-requisite curriculum to support the success of under-prepared students enrolling in courses which require proficiency in basic math and communication skills under AB705.

Update on Action	
<b>Updates</b>	
<b>Update Year:</b> 2020 - 2021	09/25/2020
<b>Status:</b> Action Completed	
The department successfully recruited and hired its second full-time faculty member in Fall 2020.	
<b>Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):</b>	
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<b>Update Year:</b> 2020 - 2021	09/25/2020
<b>Status:</b> Action Completed	
Full-time faculty member hired and adjunct pool expanded.	
<b>Impact on District Objectives/Unit Outcomes (Not Required):</b>	

## Link Actions to District Objectives

District Objectives: 2018-2021	
<b>District Objective 2.1</b> - Increase the percentage of students who earn an associate degree or certificate (CTE and Non-CTE) by 5 percentage points over three years	
<b>District Objective 2.2</b> - Increase the number of students who transfer to a four-year institution by 10 percent over three years	
<b>District Objective 2.3</b> - By 2021, increase the percentage of students who complete transfer-level English by 15 percentage points and transfer-level math by 10 percentage point with their first year.	