
Our Mission Statement and Learning Objectives remain unchanged. We have added one “Element” to our evaluation process – a formal assessment of learning using a standardized field test in economics developed by the Educational Testing Service. Our Mission Statement, Learning Objectives and revised Assessment Elements follow.

We have decided after much discussion and investigation to administer a field exam in economics to all our seniors as part of their experience in our senior thesis seminars during the Fall Semester. We will then compare the results overtime with previous classes and with a set of ten other schools who administer the same exam. We will use the results of this exam as an additional means of assessing the progress of our students and the efficacy of our program.

Mission

The mission of the Economics program is to educate undergraduates in the fundamental concepts and methods of economics and to help them become better informed and more productive citizens through enhanced understanding of the economic underpinnings of society.

Learning Objectives

Learning outcomes for students include the development of sufficient facility with the tools of economics to critically analyze private and
public decision-making processes, contemporary and historical socioeconomic issues, and the fundamental role that economic forces play in political and social development.

**Assessment Elements**

1. Analysis of empirical research project and paper presentation in ECON 374, Introduction to Econometrics
2. Senior Thesis Evaluation
3. Senior exit survey
4. Alumni (five-year-out) survey
5. Analysis of the record of our graduates in their careers and graduate school experiences.
6. Standardized field exam in Economics.

**Analysis**

A significant portion of the Economics Department our annual retreat is devoted to the assessment process including the review of related surveys and of exam results and of proposals to modify the curriculum and the co-curriculum accordingly.

**Recent Changes in our Assessment Process**

The Department has changed our assessment process in three significant respects over the last several years.

First, the senior research seminar has been successfully transformed into a senior thesis seminar. Altering our major requirements to include completion of a thesis allows us to gauge the progress of our majors more fully. Beginning in with the 2006-2007 academic year, we
altered our curriculum to offer our senior thesis seminars in the Fall Semester. This was done in order to provide an opportunity for students to continue work on their thesis during the Spring Semester of their senior year towards publication or presentation at regional or national meetings. The department instituted the thesis requirement, in part, in response to survey results (particularly from our graduates five years out) indicating the desire for a more integrative experience, for more intense writing experiences and for more opportunities to present findings orally. The department is also creating opportunities through our Third Thursday Presentation Series for formal student oral presentations.

Second, the department encourages and facilitates paper presentations and other forms of participation by majors in regional and national economic conferences where they (and department faculty) obtain feedback from students and faculty at other institutions.

Third, beginning in the Fall of 2007 the Department will administer a standardized field exam in economics as part of the overall assessment process. We will compare the exams results with a cohort of ten other liberal arts institutions as a means of gauging our success in promoting learning. We will also track the results of this exam through time to obtain some sense of our longitudinal record. We should also be able to ascertain particular strengths or weaknesses in our curriculum on the basis of this exam.