

CSB

Department of Economics

Student Outcomes Assessment Plan (SOAP)

I. Mission Statement

Advancing economic understanding is the mission of the Department of Economics. The study of economic ideas and theories, the attainment of economic literacy and economic reasoning are fundamental elements of a liberal arts education. Acquiring proficiency in economics is a necessary component of active citizenship. Thus, the Department's objective is to ensure that students acquire the ability to reason analytically regarding economic issues, theories and institutions.

II. Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

Goal 1: Economic competencies – Mastery of the descriptive, conceptual, and analytic processes necessary to understand the nature of economic systems, their functioning and their dynamic properties.

SLO 1.1 For general education courses, students will describe the flows of goods, services, resources, expenditures and incomes in the US and global economies and their component markets and sectors.

SLO 1.2 For general education courses, students will explain how price signals lead to resources allocation in a market economy.

SLO 1.3 For general education courses, student will identify the trade-offs faced at all levels of economic activity.

SLO 1.4 For upper division courses, students will interpret the assumptions behind different economic perspectives or paradigms.

SLO 1.5 For upper division courses, students will apply/use the formal language and concepts of the discipline (theory & praxis) to issues of contemporary and historical relevance.

Goal 2: Analytic competence – Students will learn the methods of quantitative analysis and statistical techniques, empirical methods, and hypothesis testing. Students will obtain mastery of analytical methods of various models and dominant paradigms through comparative analysis, the application of statistical techniques, comparative static analysis and dynamic methods, models, and theories.

SLO 2.1 Students will apply formal logical, statistical, and econometric analyses, in order to evaluate a wide array of hypotheses, qualitative- and quantitative evidence and interpret the results.

Goal 3: Critical thinking – Students will be able to think critically and evaluate a full range of social issues. Students will demonstrate advanced thinking by testing core received ideas and “conventional wisdoms” as advanced in the present historical context and over the past two hundred and fifty years.

3.1 Students will evaluate contrasting models/paradigms to identify key points of consensus and divergence on issues of contemporary and/or historical relevance.

Goal 4: Communication skills– Ability to present complex economic arguments and concepts; capability of explaining and articulating economic analyses; proficiency in accurate oral and written communication. Ability to identify and use appropriate and relevant sources and to explain economic ideas and concepts to both specialist and general audiences. Students will be able to clearly communicate key information with the aid of graphs, tables, formulas, models and other quantitative measures, or formal mathematical concepts.

4.1 Students will demonstrate proficiency in writing knowledgeably, coherently, and persuasively on an array of conceptual and/or real, contemporary and/or historical topics related to the discipline.

Goal 5: Application of economics– Students will learn to apply economic analyses. Applications of knowledge, including core theoretical concepts, to a broad range of social issues. Application of economic analysis, or simulations of actual applications.

5.1 Students will practice independent economic research, including—but not limited to— use of professional and scholarly resources, secondary source materials, and statistical/econometric analyses.

Goal 6: Social awareness and responsibility – To acquire an understanding of a diverse and complex society, and an increasingly integrated global environment. To play a leadership role based upon informed, balanced and reflective decision-making in a full range social contexts, including the workplace and civil society. To acquire a comprehensive analysis and understanding of social stratification, the determination of policy decision and processes and the dynamic and institutional properties of economies other than the U.S. through courses emphasizing international content and context.

6.1 Students will identify the economic causes and consequences of social stratification and describe the policy decisions/processes used to address these.

6.2 Students will examine the risks and rewards of globalized economic activity from multiple perspectives.

Goal 7: Community economic education— To advance the level of economic understanding in the community at large.

7.1 Diffuse economic knowledge through public presentations, applied research, grant-supported activities, publications and through print and electronic media.

III. Curriculum Map (Matrix of Courses X Learning Outcomes)

Courses / Objectives	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	2.1	3.1	4.1	5.1	6.1	6.2	7.1
Econ 25 Intro Econ	I	I	I				I			I	I	I
Econ 40 P/Micro	I	I	I		I			I				
Econ 50 P/Macro	I	I	I			I	I	I	I	I	I	
Econ 100A Int Micro	R	R	R				R		R			
Econ 100B Int Macro	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R			
Econ 101 Hist Thght				R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	
Econ 102W Expl Lit				R	R		R	R		R	R	
ECON 103 Intro of Business Cycles				R	R		R	R	R			
Econ 110 US Econ/Hist				R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	
Econ 111 Euro/Econ/Hist	R	R		R	R		R			R	R	
Econ 114 Econ Dev/Poor				R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	
Econ 115T Tpc in Historical and Political Economics				R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	
Econ 117 Environ Econ				R	R		R	R	R			

Courses / Objectives	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	2.1	3.1	4.1	5.1	6.1	6.2	7.1
Econ 119 Urban and Regional Economics				R	R	R	R	R	R			
Econ 120 Women/Econ				R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	
Econ 123 Econometrics				E	E	E	E	E	E			
Econ 125 Intro/Math Econ				R	R	R	R					
Econ 131 Public Econ				R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	
Econ 135 Money/Bank				R	R	R	R		R			
Econ 144 Econ/Sports				I	I	I	I		I			
Econ 146 Econ/ Crime	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R	
Econ 150 Labor Econ				R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	
Econ 152 Human Res	R	R	R	R	R	R	R		R	R		
Econ 162 Health Econ	R	R	R		R	R	R		R	R		
Econ 165 Mod Am Econ	I	I	I				I	I		I	I	I
Econ 167 Cont Econ Prob	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R		I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R	I/R	
Econ 178 Intnt'l Econ				R	R	R	R	R	R			

Courses / Objectives	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	2.1	3.1	4.1	5.1	6.1	6.2	7.1
Econ 179 Intl Pol Econ				R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	
Econ 181 Pol Econ/L Am	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	
Econ 183 Pol Econ / Mid East	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	
Econ 185 Directed Readings				R	R	R	R	R	R			
Econ 188T Special Topics				R	R		R		R			
Econ 189T Tpcs Pub Policy				R	R	R	R		R	R	R	
Econ 190 Ind Study				E	E	E	E	E	E			
Econ 191 Internship				E	E	E	E	E	E			
Econ 192 Senior Project	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M

I = Introduced R=Reinforced E=Emphasized M=Mastered

IV. Assessment Methods

A. Direct Measures

1. Pre/Post- tests. Pre-/post- test using questions that cover fundamental and key concepts of microeconomics or macroeconomics may be piloted in Econ40 or Econ50 sections at the beginning and end of the semester.
2. Course embedded questions. Targeted-topics questions embedded in the course final exams.
3. Senior Survey. Survey questions that contain seven assessment goals and economics curriculum were delivered online to recent graduates majoring in economics. Data will be analyzed with responses tabulated for discussion by Department faculty.

4. Writing Assignments. Case study essays, short reports, research papers, reviews, and summary may be assessed using the rubric developed by the instructor or uniform scoring rubric with responses tabulated for discussion by Department faculty.

B. Indirect Measures

1. Surveys for service learning project: pre/post surveys or surveys between treatment and control groups for service learning projects.
2. Course-embedded assessment: targeted assessment goals will be assessed based on students' exams and assignments.
3. Site supervisors' evaluations of students' service-learning activities from community organizations.
4. Internship Supervisor Survey. Data will be analyzed with responses tabulated for discussion by Department faculty.

V. Student Learning Outcomes X Assessment Methods Matrix

Table V-1 Matrix of SLOs mapped onto assessment methods

	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	2.1	3.1	4.1	5.1	6.1	6.2	7.1
Direct methods												
Pre-Post Tests	x	x	x		x			x				
Course embedded questions	x	x	x		x			x				
Senior Survey	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Writing Assignments	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Indirect methods												
Surveys for SL projects	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Course embedded assessment				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Site supervisor's evaluations								x	x	x	x	x
Internship supervisor survey						x	x	x	x	x	x	x

VI. Timeline for Implementation of Assessment Methods and Summary Evaluations

Table VI-1 Assessment Activities & Tentative Timeline

	I	II	III	IV	V
Objective	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Economic competence	x	x	x		
Analytic competence				x	x
Critical thinking		x			x
Communication skills		x	x	x	
Application of economics			x		x
Social awareness		x			
Community economic education				x	

Table VI-2 Assessment Methods & Tentative Timeline

	I	II	III	IV	V
Assessment methods	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Direct methods					
Pre-Post Tests		x	x		
Course embedded	x				
Senior Survey		x	x	x	x
Writing Assignments		x	x		x
Indirect methods					
Surveys for SL projects		x		x	
Course-embedded assessment		x			
Site supervisor's evaluations		x		x	
Internship supervisor survey				x	x

VII. Process for Closing the Loop

The Economics Department, in conjunction with its mission statement and with the mission statement of Fresno State, implements assessment as part of an iterative process. This process involves continuously evaluating student learning outcomes using course imbedded assignments, reviewing and discussing the data generated, and making necessary and appropriate changes to the assessment measures and curriculum as warranted by the results. The department discusses all assessment scores and patterns regarding strengths and weaknesses of our majors in department meetings. Proposed changes to assignments or to the curriculum are also discussed by the entire department prior to submitting any course or curriculum change proposals to the College and University Curriculum Committees.