



## **Program Assessment Report (PAR)**

**Economics (ECON) Baccalaureate Degree**

**REPORT PREPARED by: Beauchamp, Andrew**

**ACADEMIC YEAR COVERED BY THIS REPORT: 2020-2021**

### **I. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Students will use economic models in domestic and global contexts to analyze individual decision making, how prices and quantities are determined in product and factor markets, and macroeconomic outcomes 2. Students will analyze the performance and functioning of government, markets and institutions in the context of social, economic and ecological problems. 3. Students will use critical thinking skills to examine different microeconomic models, evaluating their assumptions, implications and applications 4. Students will identify salient developments in the world economy, in both present-day and historical contexts. 5. Demonstrate use of mathematical and statistical skills to be able to analyze economic problems and to make use of those skills in their future careers.

### **II. PROCEDURES USED FOR ASSESSMENT**

#### **A. Direct Assessment**

We used indirect measures listed below.

#### **B. Scoring of Student Work**

We used an indirect survey measure for these responses. This included our attempt to recruit all graduated students in the recent past.

#### **C. Indirect Assessment**

This year we launched our first indirect measure of student achievement via an online Qualtrics survey which asks students to rate their learning on the five program learning objectives. Responses were recorded on a five point scale.

### III. ASSESSMENT RESULTS/INFORMATION:

#### 1. Economics graduating student survey.

Summary Overall the data revealed specific areas in which students would like to see program level changes, which is quite helpful. Our consistent finding across all years surveyed was that students believed they learned the most with regard to learning objective three and the least with regard to learning object five. For all learning outcomes we split the sample among those graduating in the past three academic years and those who graduated before that to ensure that past performance wasn't driving the conclusions. As we move forward administering this survey for each graduating cohort, we'll gain more real-time information. Analysis The total sample size was 79 response (31 from last three years, 48 from earlier years). A strength of our program according was learning objective three (critical thinking in microeconomics), which 75% of recent respondents said they strongly agreed with. An area of improvement is learning objective five (adequate math and stats skill development). Here only 50% of respondents said they strongly agreed with that question. In the following table we present mean fraction of respondents who said they strongly agreed that they mastered the learning outcome in question. Table I Undergradaute LO Past 3 years Earlier LO 1 0.563 0.619 LO 2 0.563 0.524 LO 3 0.750 0.619 LO 4 0.563 0.429 LO 5 0.500 0.476 Importantly we note that none of the gaps in the Table 1 are statistically significant, and so we cannot interpret differences as a meaningful trend. Rather we have work to do in improving our performance in a number of relevant courses, as well as in developing and offering new courses designed to better prepare students for data analysis.

[Analysis]

### IV. ACTIONS TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

We plan to discuss this just completed survey at our first faculty meeting of the next calendar year. Major topics to discuss are differences between master's and undergradaute responses, the need for more data analysis courses and how we can improve our core courses and elective offerings to better align with student needs. Additionally I plan to make changes to the scheduling of courses, teaching assignments and course offerings that are consistent with the goals of improving student learning outcomes. Dr Mingming Pan and I have agreed to offer our BSB required course Introduction to Econometrics (EC4090) in a hybrid manner, which will allow students who struggle in the course more time to work through online materials and allow a flipped course environment, while still preserving the F2F contact students need in more complex statistics courses. We

have done much more work in the past on continuous improvement to our 1000 and 2000 level courses (which are in the WSU and RSCOB core), in part due to AACSB requirements. Going forward our curriculum committees will meet more regularly to discuss similar feedback and improvement with departmental programs.

## **V. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Additional documentation, when provided, is stored in the internal Academic Program Assessment of Student Learning SharePoint site.