Cycle and Entity Selection:

2013-2014 (Previous) Economics, MS

Use Settings from: Texas A&M University

Assessment Summary

Select View  Lifespan Manager  Detailed Assessment Report

View Sections:  All  Goals  Outcomes/Objectives  Measures & Findings

Goals

Expand All  Collapse All

View this set of Goals:  Active  Hidden  All

1: Prepare advanced students for employment in analytical economic policy, financial services, or other corporate careers  (Draft / In Progress)

Outcomes/Objectives

(Numbers inside parentheses show related Goals,  ✔ indicates Student Learning.)

Expand All  Collapse All

1: Acquire an understanding of and ability to apply core economic theory ✔ (G:1)  (Draft / In Progress)

2: Become knowledgeable in the use of quantitative and computational techniques in financial economics ✔ (G:1)  (Draft / In Progress)

3: Receive practice in communication and presentation skills ✔ (G:1)  (Draft / In Progress)

Students will be able to explain economic principles and analytical findings and their significance, by developing skills in research and report design, written communication, visual presentations, speaking to and connecting with audiences, and teamwork.  [Preview Formatting]

Student Learning
Outcome/Objective: Yes
Established in Cycle: 2008-2009
Active Through: Keep Active
Entry Status: Draft / In Progress
Last Updated By: Douglas Eckel on 6/30/2013
Established By: Rajiv Sarin on 9/12/2008
Relevant Associations

**General Education/Core Curriculum Associations**
2 Demonstrate critical thinking
3 Communicate effectively
4 Practice personal and social responsibility
5 Demonstrate social, cultural, and global competence
7 Work collaboratively

**Strategic Plan Associations**
Texas A&M University
2 Strengthen our graduate programs.
5 Build on the tradition of the professional education.

**Graduate Outcome Associations**
1.4 Communicate effectively.
1.5 Use appropriate technologies to communicate, collaborate, conduct research, and solve problems.
1.7 Choose ethical courses of action in research and practice.

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**Measures & Findings**

(Numbers inside parentheses show related Outcomes/Objectives.) Toggle triangles to add/edit Target, Findings, or Action Plan.

1: Theory Progress

This description provides great context to how/when an outcome will be measured. Context helps reviewers and future assessment liaisons.

2: B. Techniques in final

In addition to these techniques, the rubric gives further context. To simplify an assessment plan, supporting documentation is best provided as an attachment and association under: Assessment/document management in the blue tool bar of Weave.

3: Receive practice and become comfortable in communicating and presenting analytical findings to an audience (O:3) (Draft / In Progress)

Beginning in AY 2013-2014, students will be tested on their communication skills in ECON 680 (a presentation explaining the performance of a sample portfolio over the course of the semester, in the form of a professional presentation using PowerPoint slides), a series of team presentations in the capstone course on a major research project, and individually in an oral exam in the last semester. A sample measure from the rubric for grading presentations is given below.

Research & Report Design - Dimension 1 - Identifies and clearly describes project objectives Sophisticated (10 points) - All important major and minor questions in the research are identified and clearly described. Competent (8 points) - All major questions are identified but one or two considerations are missing or poorly outlined. Not yet Competent (6 points) - Major study questions are not identified, and those identified are either unimportant or not clear. (Source: adapted from: "Example 2: Engineering Design Project - performance standards for three aspects of a team project: research and design, communication, and team work." Accessed at: http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/assessment/assesslearning/rubrics.html, May 10, 2013.)

[Preview Formatting]

Source of Evidence: Presentation - Presentation, either individual or group
Established in Cycle: 2008-2009
Active Through: Keep Active
Entry Status: Draft / In Progress
Last Updated By: Douglas Eckel on 7/1/2013
Established By: Rajiv Sarin on 9/12/2008
Targets and Findings:

3: Receive practice in communication and presentation skills

Target (Final) [Preview Formatting]
80% of student teams will score 85 total points or above on the report and presentation rubric on their final project in ECON 675, the Capstone course.
Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Active Updated Through: Keep Active
Last Updated by Douglas Eckel on 7/1/2013 Established by

Findings:

2013-2014 [Assessment Summary / Findings (Final)]
Target: Not Met

Targets and Findings – 3: Receive practice and become comfortable in communicating and presenting analytical findings to an audience. Beginning in AY 2013-2014, students were assessed in a series of team presentations in the capstone course on a major research project, and individually in an oral exam in their last semester. Our target is that 80% of student teams will score 85 total points or above on the report and presentation rubric on their final project in ECON 675, the Capstone course. (Note: We decided not to assess presentation skills in in ECON 680 (a professional presentation using PowerPoint slides explaining the performance of a sample portfolio over the course of the semester), because of the increased emphasis on and instruction in presentations in the capstone. We will also be changing our curriculum beginning in fall 2014 to a non-thesis option professional degree program, eliminating the final thesis oral examination.) ECON 675 - Capstone Course: Receive instruction and practice in research design, communication and presentation skills - 80% of student teams will score 85 total points or above on the report and presentation rubric on their final project in ECON 675, the Capstone course. On the final presentation, students are graded in three areas, Research & Report Design, Communication, and Presentation. They can receive 10 points each for two separate preliminary presentations during the semester, and a total of 80 points on the final presentation. This fall, students performed as follows: out of 60 total students in the course (we had a smaller 2nd year class), almost exactly 80% of the students received "Sophisticated" scores on the report design portion, and 20% were scored as "Competent." On written communication (the quality of the final paper), only 42% of the students received "Sophisticated" scores, and 58% were scored as "Competent" or worse. Similarly, 45% of the students received a top score for their oral presentation and 55% were scored as "Competent," or "Not Yet Competent." These areas are the ones on which we will be focusing much of our attention in the coming year. Rubric and Grading for Final Research Reports Capstone Project - MS in Economics Fall, 2013 80% of the total grade, 80 points possible total Component Sophisticated (14 points) Competent (12 points) Not yet Competent (10 points) Equivalent Letter Grade A B C Research & Report Design 56 total points Identifies and clearly describes project objectives All important major and minor questions in the research are identified and clearly described. All major questions are identified but one or two considerations are missing or poorly outlined. Major study questions are not identified, and those identified are either unimportant or not clear. Identifies relevant & valid information/data sources to support study. All relevant information/data is obtained and all data sources are valid. Sufficient information is obtained and sources lack validity. Shows competence in selecting and utilizing analytical tools The report analysis and the use of all tools is appropriate and correct and conclusions flow directly from the research. Appropriate analyses and tools are selected but analyses include some errors inappropriate analyses are selected and/or major procedural and conceptual errors are made. Generates and reports valid conclusions and/or findings The report summary links analysis back to problem identification, and answers the major and minor questions identified. The report summary is mostly reasonable; further analysis of some of the data or findings might impact the conclusions. Only brief reference to report introduction. Limited conclusions are offered or obvious findings ignored or incompletely analyzed. Summary does not reference the introductory problem statement. Communication Sophisticated (16 points) Competent (14 points) Not yet Competent (12 points) Written Communication Report is well organized and clearly written. The underlying logic is clearly articulated and easy to follow. Words are chosen that precisely express the intended meaning and support reader comprehension. Diagrams or analyses enhance and clarify presentation of ideas. Sentences are grammatical and free from spelling errors. Report is organized and clearly written for the most part. In some areas the logic or flow of ideas is difficult to follow. Words are well chosen with some minor exceptions. Diagrams are consistent with the text. Sentences are mostly grammatical and only a few spelling errors are present but they do not hinder the reader. Report lacks an overall organization. Reader has to make considerable effort to understand the underlying logic and flow of ideas. Diagrams are absent or inconsistent with the
 Targets and Findings – 3: Receive practice and become comfortable in communicating and presenting analytical findings to an audience. Beginning in AY 2013-2014, students were assessed in a series of team presentations in the capstone course on a major research project, and individually in an oral exam in their last semester. Our target is that 80% of student teams will score 85 total points or above on the report and presentation rubric on their final project in ECON 675, the Capstone course. It would be simpler to concisely communicate whether the findings met the target and attach a detailed report in the document library.

(Note: We decided not to assess presentation skills in ECON 680 (a professional presentation using PowerPoint slides explaining the performance of a sample portfolio over the course of the semester), because of the increased emphasis on and instruction in presentations in the capstone. We will also be changing our curriculum beginning in fall 2014 to a non-thesis option professional degree program, eliminating the final thesis oral examination.)

ECON 675 - Capstone Course: Receive instruction and practice in research design, communication and presentation skills - 80% of student teams will score 85 total points or above on the report and presentation rubric on their final project in ECON 675, the Capstone course. On the final presentation, students are graded in three areas, Research & Report Design, Communication, and Presentation. They can receive 10 points each for two separate preliminary presentations during the semester, and a total of 80 points on the final presentation. This fall, students performed as follows: out of 60 total students in the course (we had a smaller 2nd year class), almost exactly 80% of the students received “Sophisticated” scores on the report design portion, and 20% were scored as “Competent.” On written communication (the quality of the final paper), only 42% of the students received “Sophisticated” scores, and 58% were scored as “Competent” or worse. Similarly, 45% of the students received a top score for their oral presentation and 55% were scored as “Competent,” or “Not Yet Competent.” These areas are the ones on which we will be focusing much of our attention in the coming year.

Rubric and Grading for Final Research Reports
Capstone Project - MS in Economics

Fall, 2013

80% of the total grade, 80 points possible total

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Sophisticated (14 points)</th>
<th>Competent (12 points)</th>
<th>Not yet Competent (10 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equivalent Letter Grade</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research &amp; Report Design</td>
<td>56 total points</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Identifies and clearly describes project objectives*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All important major and minor questions in the research are identified and clearly described.</th>
<th>All major questions are identified but one or two considerations are missing or poorly outlined.</th>
<th>Major study questions are not identified, and those identified are either unimportant or not clear.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifies</td>
<td>All relevant</td>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>Insufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant &amp; Valid Information/Data Sources to Support Study</td>
<td>Information/Data is Obtained and All Data Sources are Valid.</td>
<td>Information is Obtained and Most Sources are Valid.</td>
<td>Information is Obtained and/or Sources Lack Validity.</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</table>

**Shows Competence in Selecting and Utilizing Analytical Tools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generates and Reports Valid Conclusions and/or Findings</th>
<th>The Report Summary Links Analysis Back to Problem Identification, and Answers the Major and Minor Questions Identified.</th>
<th>The Report Summary is Mostly Reasonable; Further Analysis of Some of the Data or Findings Might Impact the Conclusions. Only Brief Reference to Report Introduction.</th>
<th>Limited Conclusions are Offered or Obvious Findings Ignored or Incompletely Analyzed. Summary Does Not Reference the Introductory Problem Statement.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Communication**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sophisticated (16 points)</th>
<th>Competent (14 points)</th>
<th>Not yet Competent (12 points)</th>
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</table>

**Written Communication**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sophisticated</th>
<th>Competent</th>
<th>Not yet Competent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report is well organized and clearly written. The underlying logic is clearly articulated and easy to follow. Words are chosen that precisely express the intended meaning and support reader comprehension. Diagrams or analyses enhance and clarify presentation of ideas. Sentences are grammatical and free from spelling errors.</td>
<td>Report is organized and clearly written for the most part. In some areas the logic or flow of ideas is difficult to follow. Words are well chosen with some minor exceptions. Diagrams are consistent with the text. Sentences are mostly grammatical and only a few spelling errors are present but they do not hinder the reader.</td>
<td>Report lacks an overall organization. Reader has to make considerable effort to understand the underlying logic and flow of ideas. Diagrams are absent or inconsistent with the text. Grammatical and spelling errors remain in the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Presentation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sophisticated (8 points)</th>
<th>Competent (7 points)</th>
<th>Not yet Competent (6 points)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slides are error-free and logically</td>
<td>Slides are error-free and logically</td>
<td>Slides contain errors and lack a</td>
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<td>Oral Presentation</td>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
<td>Oral Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>present the main components of the process and recommendations. Material is readable and the graphics highlight and support the main ideas.</td>
<td>present the main components of the process and recommendations. Material is mostly readable and graphics reiterate the main ideas.</td>
<td>logical progression. Major aspects of the analysis or recommendations are absent. Diagrams or graphics are absent or confuse the audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speakers are audible and fluent on their topic, and do not rely on notes to present or respond. Speakers respond accurately and appropriately to audience questions and comments.</td>
<td>Speakers are mostly audible and fluent on their topic, and require minimal referral to notes. Speakers respond to most questions accurately and appropriately.</td>
<td>Speakers are often inaudible or hesitant, often speaking in incomplete sentences. Speakers rely heavily on notes. Speakers have difficulty responding clearly and accurately to audience questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body language, as indicated by appropriate and meaningful gestures, eye contact with audience, and confident movements, demonstrates a high level of comfort and connection with the audience.</td>
<td>Body language, as indicated by a slight tendency to repetitive and distracting gestures (e.g., tapping a pen, wringing hands, waving arms, clenching fists, etc.) and breaking eye contact with audience, demonstrates a slight discomfort with the audience.</td>
<td>Body language, as indicated by frequent, repetitive and distracting gestures, little or no audience eye-contact, and/or stiff posture and movement, indicate a high degree of discomfort interacting with audience.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2012-2013 ▼ Assessment Summary / Findings

Target: Not Reported This Cycle

Economics did not collect data in 2012-2013 for assessment pending resolution of a program fee application; the fee was needed to provide a sustainable funding model for the MS program. Last month the Board of Regents finally approved the fee and the program will go ahead. We are now drafting a whole new assessment plan for the degree to be finished and entered in WEAVEOnline for the July 1 deadline. [Preview Formatting]

Established by Douglas Eckel on 7/31/2014

2011-2012 ▼ Assessment Summary / Findings

Target: Not Reported

Department re-evaluated assessment plan anticipated for fall 2012. A department can choose which measures and outcomes to focus on each year. If a data point has not been collected or is not a priority that year, there is no need to report the data.

[Preview Formatting]

Established by Tim Gronberg on 7/30/2011

2010-2011 ▼ Assessment Summary / Findings

Target: Met

Of the 15 students who participated in a final exam for the MS degree, 93% received either a 3 or a 2 evaluation score from their Masters committee. [Preview Formatting]

Last Updated by Tim Gronberg on 7/20/2011

2009-2010 ▼ Assessment Summary / Findings

Target: Not Met

Of the 21 students who participated in a final exam for an MS degree, 76% received either a 3 or a 2 evaluation score from their Masters committee. The Department has instituted a moratorium on admissions to the stand alone MS program, i.e no admissions for AY 2010-11. The long-run status of the MS program is under review. [Preview Formatting]

Last Updated by Tim Gronberg on 7/22/2010
Advanced language, writing, and presentation skill instruction

**Description:**
We are expanding the number of class periods in the capstone course devoted to instruction in research writing and presentation skills. We will also be instituting an English conversation session for students to assess how well they are doing acquiring spoken English and the ability to converse with potential employers and interview effectively. *(Draft / In Progress)*

**Implementation Status:** Planned
**Priority:** High
**Implementation Description:** Conversational English sessions will be started for the entering class, Fall, 2014. The capstone course is still refocusing on writing and presentation skills.

**Projected Completion Date:** 1/1/2015
**Responsible Party:** Doug Eckel, Li Gan
**Additional Resources:** None

**Established in Cycle:** 2013-2014
**Active Through:** Keep Active
**Include on Action Plan Tracking page:** Yes
**Include in Reports:** Yes
**Entry Status:** Draft
**Last Update:** n/a
Achievement Summary

- **Not Met**
- Targets Partially Met Category is empty.
- **Met**

Analysis Questions

**Please answer both Analysis Questions**

- **Based on the analysis of your findings, what changes are you currently making to improve your program? Identify the specific findings you analyzed and how they led to your decision.**

  This fall in the capstone course, students performed as follows: out of 60 total students in the course almost exactly 80% of the students received “Sophisticated” scores on the report design portion, and 20% were scored as “Competent.” However, on written communication (the quality of the final paper), only 42% of the students received “Sophisticated” scores, and 58% were scored as “Competent” or worse. Similarly, 45% of the students received a top score for their oral presentation and 55% were scored as “Competent,” or “Not Yet Competent.” The student performance was better than the previous year but is still below targets.

  These areas are the ones on which we will be focusing much of our attention in the coming year. We plan to emphasize written and presentation skills for our students, many of whom have English as their second language.

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Last Updated By: Douglas Eckel on 8/31/2014
Established By: Douglas Eckel on 8/31/2014
Provide an update for completed or ongoing action plans from the previous year(s). Highlight your improvements.

We were planning last year to institute a pre-test/post-test assessment regime for a selected set of SLOs to be used alongside measures embedded in coursework. Specifically, this would have been comprised of a short test that would contain some financial economics technical content questions, a brief writing/language component, and some intercultural knowledge and competence touchstones, that we could then revisit at the end of the program (to gauge “value-added). Due to the difficulty of writing evaluative questions in the last two areas, this test was postponed to the 2014-2015 assessment year. The first chance to administer this instrument will be during the first week of school in Fall, 2014.

Last Updated By: Douglas Eckel on 8/31/2014
Established By: Douglas Eckel on 8/31/2014