

Weber State University  
Annual Assessment of Evidence of Learning

Cover Page

Department/Program: **Economics**  
Academic Year of Report: 2014-2015  
Date Submitted: 12/15/2015  
Report author: Doris Geide-Stevenson

Contact Information:  
Phone: 801-626-7634  
Email: [dgsteven@weber.edu](mailto:dgsteven@weber.edu)

**A. Brief Introductory Statement:**

Please review the Introductory Statement and contact information for your department displayed on the assessment site: <http://www.weber.edu/portfolio/departments.html> - if this information is current, please indicate as much. No further information is needed. We will indicate “Last Reviewed: [Nov. 2014]” on the page.

If the information is not current, please provide an update:

Economics is a social science that provides general analysis of decision making where resource constraints are present. Economics provides a logical framework that allows analysis of decisions on the personal, firm, societal and global level. Frequently, this analysis is conducted by drawing on mathematical and statistical reasoning.

Students have a choice between a degree in Business Economics, International Business Economics and General Economics with various emphasis areas. Students with a bachelor's degree in Business Economics are generally prepared to take entry level jobs in any area of business, but are particularly prepared for jobs that call for data analysis, pricing, purchasing, and report writing. Business economists are often employed in private business firms in the financial, retailing, and industrial sectors. A degree in Quantitative Economics prepares students for graduate studies in economics, but also for high-level analysis work as an actuary.

A degree in Economics is also regarded by graduate schools as excellent preparation for advanced work toward an MBA, advanced degrees in other business related disciplines such as human resource management, public administration, finance, and international business, and law.

**B. Mission Statement**

Please review the Mission Statement for your department displayed on the assessment site:

<http://www.weber.edu/portfolio/departments.html> - if it is current, please indicate as much; we will mark the web page as “Last Reviewed [current date]”. No further information is needed.

If the information is not current, please provide an update:

Mission Statement is current.

### **C. Student Learning Outcomes**

Please review the Student Learning Outcomes for your department displayed on the assessment site:

<http://www.weber.edu/portfolio/departments.html> - if they are current, please indicate as much; we will mark the web page as “Last Reviewed [current date]”. No further information is needed.

If they are not current, please provide an update:

#### Measurable Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes are current.

### D. Curriculum

Please review the Curriculum Grid for your department displayed on the assessment site:

<http://www.weber.edu/portfolio/departments.html> - if it is current, please indicate as much; we will mark the web page as “Last Reviewed: [2014]”. No further information is needed.

If the curriculum grid is not current, please provide an update:

### Curriculum Map

	Department/Program Learning Outcomes							
	Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3	Learning Outcome 4	Learning Outcome 5			
Core Courses in Department/Program								
ECON 2010 Principles of Microeconomics			E					
ECON 2020 Principles of Macroeconomics			E	E				
ECON 4010 Intermediate Microeconomics Theory			E					
ECON 4020 Intermediate Macroeconomics Theory				E				
ECON 3110 International Trade			E		E			
ECON 3120 International Finance and Monetary Arrangements				E	E			
ECON 3200 Money and Banking				E				
ECON 4170 Development Economics					E			
ECON 4550 Econometrics	E	E						
ECON 4970 Introduction to Research Methods	E	E						
ECON 4980 Research Methods	E (A)	E (A)	A	A	A			
QUAN 2400 Business Calculus	E							
QUAN 2600 Business Statistics I		E						
QUAN 3610 Business Statistics II		E						

E = Emphasized, A = Assessed

*Note<sup>a</sup>*: Define words, letters or symbols used and their interpretation; i.e. 1= introduced, 2 = emphasized, 3 = mastered or I = Introduced, E = Emphasized, U = Utilized, A = Assessed Comprehensively; these are examples, departmental choice of letters/numbers may differ

Additional Information (if needed)

### **E. Assessment Plan**

Please review the Assessment Plan for your department displayed on the assessment site:

<http://www.weber.edu/portfolio/departments.html> - if the plan current, please indicate as much; we will mark the web page as “Last Reviewed [Dec. 2015]”. No further information is needed.

Assessment Plan is current.

### **F. Report of assessment results for the most previous academic year:**

There are a variety of ways in which departments can choose to show evidence of learning. This is one example. The critical pieces to include are 1) what learning outcome is being assessed, 2) what method of measurement was used, 3) what the threshold for ‘acceptable performance’ is for that measurement, 4) what the actual results of the assessment were, 5) how those findings are interpreted, and 6) what is the course of action to be taken based upon the interpretation.

a. Evidence of Learning: ECON 4980 Research Methods (undergraduate research and capstone experience as high impact learning)

2014 – 2015 Evidence of Learning:					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Economics majors..	Direct and Indirect Measures*				
<b>Learning Outcome 1:</b> Numerically literate and communication skill.	Measure 1: Rubric to evaluate the final research paper in ECON 4980	Measure 1: 80% of all students will meet or exceed expectations (score of 18+)	Measure 1: 82% of students met or exceeded expectations per rubric.	Measure 1: More students have taken the preparatory ECON 4970 class.	Measure 1: Starting Fall 2015, all ECON 4980 students are taking ECON 4970.
<b>Learning Outcome 2:</b> Use of statistical methods.	Measure 1: Evaluation of the use of Methods in the final research paper in ECON 4980.	Measure 1: 80% of all students will meet or exceed expectations (score of 3 or higher)	Measure 1: 84 % of all students scored above 80% on the Methods section for their final research paper.	Measure 1: Students successfully demonstrated competence in the area of the use of statistical methods.	Measure 1: Faculty will continue to focus on projects in QUAN 3610 and encourage students to take econometrics.

Evidence of Learning:					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Economics majors..	Direct and Indirect Measures*				
<b>Learning Outcome 3:</b> Use concepts of demand and supply to analyze current economic issues.	Measure 1: Standardized test to assess Principles of Microeconomics knowledge	Measure 1: The class average will be substantially above the national average.	Measure 1: The class average of 46.2% barely exceeded the normed national average of 42.6%. Scores were lower than the year before (when exams were taken in class).	Measure 1: Majors should, on average score higher on this national test.	Measure 1: The economics department will continue to monitor transcripts of international transfer students. In May 2015, WSU faculty taught an additional principles economics course to students at Shanghai Normal. Discussion with ECON 4010 faculty to embed principles materials.



Evidence of Learning:					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Economics majors..	Direct and Indirect Measures*				
<b>Learning Outcome 4:</b> Use aggregate demand and supply to analyze current macroeconomic issues.	Measure 1: Standardized test to assess Principles of Macroeconomics knowledge	Measure 1: The class average will be substantially above the national average.	Measure 1: The class average of 55% exceeded the normed national average of 47.3%. Scores are comparable to last year when exams were taken in class	Measure 1: Majors should, on average score higher on this national test.	Measure 1: The economics department will continue to monitor transcripts of international transfer students. In May 2015, WSU faculty taught an additional principles economics course to students at Shanghai Normal. Content in ECON 4010 and 4020 will also be discussed among faculty.

Evidence of Learning:					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Economics majors..	Direct and Indirect Measures*				
<b>Learning Outcome 5:</b> Identify costs and benefits of a global economy.	Measure 1: Subset of international questions on the micro- and macroeconomics exam.	Measure 1: The class average will be substantially above the national average and will be higher than for the entire exam since most students take at least 2 upper-level courses that deal with international subject matter.	Measure 1: The class average increased from 45% to 55% and was at par with the higher exam scores on the macro-TUCE.	Measure 1: Students show improvement on the international subject area. Students are still expected to perform better.	Measure 1: The economics department will discuss this finding with instructors of the upper-level international classes. This includes a number of new faculty members.

#### Additional Information - Pass Rates of ECON 4980

Year	Number of Students enrolled	Number of Successful Completions	Pass Rate
2007-08	8	5	62.5%
2008-09	16	13	81.25%
2009-2010	9	7	77.77%
2010 - 2011	33	28	84.8 %
2011 - 2012	39	34	87%
Fall 2012	12	11	91.7%
Spring 2013	31	27	87.1%
Fall 2013	11	7	63.6%
Spring 2014	30	26	86.7 %

Fall 2014	14	10	71.4%
Spring 2015	33	29	87.9%

**b. Evidence of Learning: General Education Classes ECON 1740**

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Students will...	Direct and Indirect Measures*				
Learning Outcome 1: AI General education Learning outcomes Objective 1	Measure 1: Switch to a mix of essay questions and multiple choice questions.	Measure 1: Threshold will have to be determined in light of a change in format and grading practice.	Measure 1: Students scored on average 56%. The lowest scores were on written essay questions.	Measure 1: With the addition of written essay questions, students performed lower.	Measure 1: The assessment plan has just changed and will be refined.
Learning Outcome 2: AI General education Learning outcomes Objective 2	Measure 1: Switch to a mix of essay questions and multiple choice questions.	Measure 1: Threshold will have to be determined in light of a change in format and grading practice.	Measure 1: Students scored on average 56%. The lowest scores were on written essay questions.	Measure 1: With the addition of written essay questions, students performed lower.	Measure 1: The assessment plan has just changed and will be refined.
Learning Outcome 2: AI General education Learning outcomes Objective 3	Measure 1: Switch to a mix of essay questions and multiple choice questions.	Measure 1: Threshold will have to be determined in light of a change in format and grading practice.	Measure 1: Students scored on average 77%. The lowest score is on the written essay questions.	Measure 1: The assessment results meet last year's threshold.	Measure 1: The assessment plan has just changed and will be refined.
Learning Outcome 2: AI General education Learning outcomes Objective 4	Measure 1: Switch to a mix of essay questions and multiple choice questions.	Measure 1: Threshold will have to be determined in light of a change in format and grading practice.	Measure 1: Students scored on average 73%.	Measure 1: The assessment results meet last year's threshold.	Measure 1: The assessment plan has just changed and will be refined.

## ECON 1740 - AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS LEARNING OUTCOMES and NEW (2014-15) Assessment Questions

*Objective 1:* The significant political, economic, and social changes in American history.

1. [Essay] What was the main source of economic growth in nineteenth-century US according to Callender? Was the American economy a laissez-faire economy? Why or why not? Why was transportation important? What explains the difference in the ability of states and private sector to develop internal improvements (like canals) in the first half of nineteenth century?
2. [Essay] How did birth rates evolve between 1790 and 1860 (be as precise as possible; if unable to provide exact numbers, just mention the general trend of birth rates: increase, decrease or staying at about the same level)? Name at least two factors that could explain the previous evolution of birth rates in America. What was the relationship between birth rates and income in the Malthusian income? Is that assumption still valid for developed countries? Why or why not? (Midterm II: 19) 9/17
3. According to Fogel and Rutner's model, Western expansion resulted in...
  - a. migration to the West and both intensive and extensive economic growth.
  - b. migration to the East and intensive economic growth but not extensive economic growth.
  - c. migration to the West and extensive but not intensive economic growth.
  - d. migration to the East and extensive economic growth but not intensive economic growth.
  - e. migration to the West and neither intensive or extensive economic growth

*Objective 2:* The major principles of American civilization, including the concepts of popular sovereignty, liberty, and equality.

1. According to Bailyn and his ideological origins of the Revolution
  - a. The colonists rebelled against the idea of mixed government.
  - b. The colonists thought that the British constitution led to slavery.
  - c. The colonists thought there was a plot to eliminate liberties and mixed government in the British Empire.
  - d. The colonists thought that the Glorious Revolution was an attempt to enslave the colonies.
2. [Essay] Which type of government would promote freedom and protect against tyranny according to eighteenth-century English political theory? Did the political system in England actually work as it was supposed to work in

theory? Why? Name at least one instrument that the "One" in England (that is, the King) had to influence the "Many" (that is, the House of Commons or Parliament). How does Bailyn relate the political ideas of the time with the events in the colonies between 1763 and 1775 and colonists' decision to revolt?

*Objective 3:* The institutions and practices of the government provided for in the United States Constitution.

1. Which of the following groups was expected to be less national (i.e. less supportive of the Constitution) according to McGuire in "The Political Economy of the Constitution"?
  - a. Holders of public debt.
  - b. Merchants.
  - c. Slave owners.
  - d. Representatives of larger states.
2. When compared to the Articles of the Confederation, the Constitution of 1787...
  - a. gave more power to the States
  - b. gave more power to the Federal Government
  - c. created a laissez-faire economy
  - d. received greater support from slave-owners
3. [Essay] What was Charles Beard's hypothesis about the Constitution? What should be the position of debtholders vis-à-vis the Constitution if Beard was right? Why? What about slave-owners' position? Why? How does McGuire test Beard's hypothesis? Do McGuire's results confirm or reject Beard's hypothesis? 8/18

*Objective 4:* The basic workings and evolution of a market economy in the United States.

1. [Essay] How does the Principle of Comparative Advantages (PCA) determine the product or service in which a given region or nation must specialize? How does the PCA relate to the economic success of the colonies? Explain what was produced in each of the four regions in which the colonies could be divided (that is, enumerate the four regions and explain what they were producing during colonial times).
2. [Essay] Was the nineteenth-century American economy a laissez-faire economy? Why or why not? Which American regions are distinguished in Callender's paper? What are these regions producing and why? Why were transportation and banking important in making these specializations and economic growth possible? 12/17

3. Liquidity crisis are more likely when the bank
  - a. has a low money multiplier.
  - b. has a high reserve ratio.
  - c. has a low reserve ratio.
  - d. none of the above.

c. Evidence of Learning: General Education Courses ECON 2010

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Students will...	Direct and Indirect Measures*				
<b>SS Learning Outcome 1:</b> Describe a social science approach to studying and understanding human behavior:	Measure 1: A set of 3 multiple choice questions on the final exam (N = 145), Fall 2013	Measure 1: 70% of students will correctly answer the questions.	Measure 1: More than 90% of students correctly answered Q1 and Q2, only 57% answered Q3 correctly.	Measure 1: Students mostly demonstrate competence.	Measure 1: Instructors will focus on the condition of profit maximization as it relates to different market structures.
<b>SS Learning Outcome 2:</b> Describe basic assumptions about humans and their behaviors from a social science perspective.	Measure 1: A set of 3 multiple choice questions on the final exam (N = 145), Fall 2013	Measure 1: 70% of students will correctly answer the questions.	Measure 1: The average of correct answers exceeded 70% for all questions (71%, 96%, and 84%)	Measure 1: Students demonstrated competence for all questions in that area.	Measure 1: No specific action is necessary.
<b>SS Learning Outcome 3:</b> Apply a social science perspective to a particular issue and identify factors impacting change (past or present).	Measure 1: A set of 3 multiple choice questions on the final exam (N = 145), Fall 2013	Measure 1: 70% of students will correctly answer the questions.	Measure 1: The average of correct answers fell below 70% for two questions (72%, 66%, and 56%)	Measure 1: Application of concepts remains the most difficult area for students.	Measure 1: Instructors will devote more time to practice applications.

c. Evidence of Learning: General Education Courses ECON 2020

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Students will...	Direct and Indirect Measures*				
<b>SS Learning Outcome 1:</b> Describe a social science approach to studying and understanding human behavior:	Measure 1: A set of 2 multiple choice questions on the final exam (N = 259), Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, all 8 sections.	Measure 1: 70% of students will correctly answer the questions.	Measure 1: On average 73.3% of all students in all sections answered correctly.	Measure 1: Students demonstrate competence.	Measure 1: No specific action necessary.
<b>SS Learning Outcome 2:</b> Explain the basic elements and operation of a sociocultural system.	Measure 1: A set of 2 multiple choice questions on the final exam (N = 259), Fall 2014 and Spring 2015, all 8 sections.	Measure 1: 70% of students will correctly answer the questions.	Measure 1: On average 83.3% of all students in all sections answered correctly.	Measure 1: Students demonstrated competence for all questions in that area.	Measure 1: No specific action is necessary.



c. Evidence of Learning: General Education Courses ECON 1010 (2014-2015)

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Students will...	Direct and Indirect Measures*				
<b>SS Learning Outcome 1:</b> Describe a social science approach to studying and understanding human behavior:	Measure 1: A set of 4 multiple choice questions on Exam 1, 2 and 3 (N = 86), Spring 2015, 2 sections.	Measure 1: 70% of students will correctly answer the questions.	Measure 1: On average 76.6% of all students in all sections answered correctly.	Measure 1: Students demonstrate competence.	Measure 1: No specific action necessary.
<b>SS Learning Outcome 2:</b> Describe basic assumptions about humans and their behaviors from a social science perspective.	Measure 1: A set of 4 multiple choice questions on Exam 1 and 3 (N = 84) Spring 2015, 2 sections.	Measure 1: 70% of students will correctly answer the questions.	Measure 1: On average 71.3% of all students in all sections answered correctly.	Measure 1: Students demonstrate competence.	Measure 1: No specific action is necessary. Students improved compared to last year.
<b>SS Learning Outcome 3:</b> Apply a social science perspective to a particular issue and identify factors impacting change (past or present).	Measure 1: A set of 6 multiple choice questions on Exam 2 (N = 89), Spring 2015, 2 sections.	Measure 1: 70% of students will correctly answer the questions.	Measure 1: On average 71.5% of all students in all sections answered correctly.	Measure 1: Students demonstrate competence.	Measure 1: No specific action is necessary.

c. Evidence of Learning: General Education Courses ECON 1010 (2013-2014) – this data has not been reported in last year’s assessment report

Evidence of Learning: Courses within the Major					
Measurable Learning Outcome	Method of Measurement	Threshold for Evidence of Student Learning	Findings Linked to Learning Outcomes	Interpretation of Findings	Action Plan/Use of Results
Students will...	Direct and Indirect Measures*				
<b>SS Learning Outcome 1:</b> Describe a social science approach to studying and understanding human behavior:	Measure 1: A set of 4 multiple choice questions on Exam 1, 2 and 3 (N = 126), Fall 2013 and Spring 2014, 4 sections.	Measure 1: 70% of students will correctly answer the questions.	Measure 1: On average 72.3% of all students in all sections answered correctly.	Measure 1: Students demonstrate competence.	Measure 1: No specific action necessary.
<b>SS Learning Outcome 2:</b> Describe basic assumptions about humans and their behaviors from a social science perspective.	Measure 1: A set of 4 multiple choice questions on Exam 1 and 3 (N = 126), Fall 2013 and Spring 2014, 4 sections.	Measure 1: 70% of students will correctly answer the questions.	Measure 1: On average 68.3% of all students in all sections answered correctly.	Measure 1: Students did not demonstrate competence.	Measure 1: For the next year, instructor will emphasize learning outcome.
<b>SS Learning Outcome 3:</b> Apply a social science perspective to a particular issue and identify factors impacting change (past or present).	Measure 1: A set of 6 multiple choice questions on Exam 2 (N = 126), Fall 2013 and Spring 2014, 4 sections.	Measure 1: 70% of students will correctly answer the questions.	Measure 1: On average 76.3% of all students in all sections answered correctly.	Measure 1: Students demonstrate competence.	Measure 1: No specific action is necessary.

### G. Summary of Artifact Collection Procedure

Artifact	Learning Outcome Measured	When/How Collected?	Where Stored?
ECON 4980 Rubric	Departmental Outcomes 1 and 2	In Canvas at the end of semester.	Canvas ECON 4980 class site
TUCE Micro and Macro Test Results	Departmental Outcomes 3, 4 and 5.	End of Spring semester in ECON 4980.	Electronic format in Chi-tester.
General Education outcomes for SS and AI	AI and SS outcomes	Embedded exam questions in various sections of all general education classes.	Individual faculty and department chair computer. G-mail account.

Summary Information (as needed)

The number of course sections assessed has increased for 2014-2015. A number of new faculty members now contribute to the data gathering process.

## Appendix B

Please provide the following information about the full-time and adjunct faculty contracted by your department during the last academic year (summer through spring). Gathering this information each year will help with the headcount reporting that must be done for the final Five Year Program Review document that is shared with the State Board of Regents.

Faculty	
Headcount	
With Doctoral Degrees (Including MFA and other terminal degrees, as specified by the institution)	
Full-time Tenured	5
Full-time Non-Tenured (includes tenure-track)	7
Part-time	1
With Master's Degrees	
Full-time Tenured	
Full-time Non-Tenured	
Part-time	8
With Bachelor's Degrees	
Full-time Tenured	
Full-time Non-tenured	
Part-time	
Other	
Full-time Tenured	
Full-time Non-tenured	
Part-time	
Total Headcount Faculty	
Full-time Tenured	5
Full-time Non-tenured	7
Part-time	9

**Please respond to the following questions.**

- 1) Reflecting on this year's assessment(s), how does the evidence of student learning impact your faculty's confidence in the program being reviewed; how does that analysis change when compared with previous assessment evidence?

In order to ensure improved performance in the required capstone experience course ECON 4980 Research Methods, the department is strictly enforcing the pre-requisite class ECON 4970 Introduction to Research Methods. The change has been too recent to see any systematic changes. However, the top performing students in ECON 4980 now include international students who have success in getting university support for NCUR and who submit papers to ERGO. Students' performance on the normed TUCE (Test of Understanding College Economics) remains too low. The department supplemented the economics preparation of the 2+2 cohort from Shanghai Normal University by having a tenure-track faculty teach an additional principles economics class in Shanghai during May 2015.

- 2) With whom did you share the results of the year's assessment efforts?

A series of assessment discussion among targeted faculty groups will be conducted during spring 2016. This is essential as the economics faculty has several 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year tenure-track faculty members.