

**Program Review Report
2008-2009**

Department Economics

Recorder Shannon Marting, Xinfu Zhu

Participants Shannon Marting, Xinfu Zhu, and Michael McIlhon

*Please answer the questions and prompts on the Program Review Form in the following categories onto this form. **Please remember that your audience will not see the questions, so be clear in your statements.***

ALIGNMENT

The department discussed, reviewed and updated the mission, vision and Goals during the program review.

Mission:

The IHCC Economics Department is committed to helping students learn the economics principles necessary to understand our own and other economic systems, to successfully complete upper division coursework in economics and related fields, and to contribute to their communities as informed citizens.

Vision:

The IHCC Economics Department envisions students who understand the nature of the U.S. and world economies and are prepared to use that understanding to be successful in future coursework, in their work lives, and as participating citizens in a democratic society.

Goals:

Provide multiple opportunities (through the department's courses) to help students successfully reach their educational goals.

Encourage student critical-thinking in the "economic way" as part of a liberal arts education and as a well-informed citizen in a diverse world.

Continuously improve faculty and student understanding and use of effective tools and technologies for learning and work.

Participate in college-wide interdisciplinary, student success and retention activities to enhance student educational outcomes.

Encourage faculty participation in local, MnSCU-wide, and profession-wide teaching and learning opportunities to improve classroom learning.

CURRICULUM

The Economics department reviewed the course curricula of Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Consumer Economics, and Survey of the World Economy. We changed the course goals of Microeconomics from Goals #5 and #8 to #2 and #5 and sent the change request to the Academic Council for review. The feedback from the Academic Council was that courses with Goal #8 might be more attractive to students, thus helping enrollment. We took this advice and kept Goals #5 and #8 for Microeconomics and inserted additional course outcomes and topics related to Goal #8.

We also conducted research on Economics coursework offered by other community colleges. Century College offers Macroeconomics with Goal #5 and Microeconomics with Goal #5. Classes are offered on campus, online, web-enhanced and Saturdays.

Normandale Community College offers Macroeconomics with Goals #5 and #8, Microeconomics with Goals #5 and #9. They also offer Personal Finance and Survey of World Economy courses. Classes are offered on campus, online, web-enhanced and Saturdays.

Saint Cloud State University offers both Macroeconomics and Microeconomics, and also offers more upper division classes.

Metropolitan State University has a similar course portfolio compared to Saint Cloud: Microeconomics and Macroeconomics, and more upper division classes.

COURSE OUTLINES

We reviewed the course outlines for our offerings and made several changes to ECON 1106 (Microeconomics). For example, we added more international economics topics: international trade and different economic systems in different countries. We also changed the weight of some chapters.

COURSE SYLLABI

Each of us reviewed the course syllabi to align them with the course outlines and college policies. We want to assure that our syllabi are clear and accessible to our diverse student population. Syllabi are contracts between instructors and students.

INTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

The Economics department has been conferring with the Political Science, Accounting and Business departments to be sure that our courses are meeting content and critical thinking needs that those departments might expect our courses to provide.

We have begun to explore some learning community classes. Survey of World Economy in particular is a good candidate for such collaboration; it will draw students' interest and shares multi-faceted topics with multiple departments.

For the last several years, the Economics department has worked with the ASAP program and taught 8-week accelerated classes at various ASAP sites. Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, and Consumer

Economics have been offered. Courses are prepared differently to accommodate adult learning. We will continue to work with ASAP to offer these classes every semester to meet demand.

Students showed great interest in the income distribution simulation on Student/Faculty Conference day. Our faculty member also discussed with instructors from Sociology and Criminal Justice the possibility of future class collaboration. For example, the income distribution simulation requires about 80 participants, a large room, and three hours class time. It is less efficient to play the simulation in one class size or one class period. Since this topic is discussed not only in Economics, but in Sociology and Criminal Justice as well, it is conceivable to combine 2 or 3 classes in different departments to experience the simulation together in one evening. This benefits evening class students so they do not feel that they are left out of campus activities.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment in the Economics department has increased steadily in the past 3 years. In Fall semester 2005, the department offered a total of 8 sections of courses and enrolled 259 students. In the 6 semesters since Fall 2005, the department has expanded its course sections to a total of 11 in Spring semester 2009 enrolling 354 students.

Most classes are now full or nearly full. Recently the department has shown an 83% fill rate in our classes which is among the highest on campus. We have continued to add on-line courses. To improve enrollment for evening classes and diversify the selection of classes that we offer, we have critically reviewed all of our offerings and made schedule changes for 2009-2010.

First, we shortened the evening classes from 16 weeks to 10 weeks. Classes will start after Labor Day and finish before the Thanksgiving holiday. These hybrid classes will consist of 2/3 in-class time and 1/3 online learning.

Second, we added hybrid courses to afternoon classes, for both Microeconomics and Macroeconomics. These classes meet once a week for 75 minutes, and spend the same amount of time online for assignments and class activities.

We will continue to monitor these new offerings in the future to assure that our courses are meeting students' needs.

STUDENT LEARNING

The Economics Department's success, failure and withdrawal rates fall in line with the rates observed by the overall college. In Fall 2008, the department success rate for all courses was 77.01% as compared to the college's 76.42%. The department's rate of unsuccessfulness was 14.66% as compared to the college's 14.02%. And the department's withdrawal rate in all courses was 8.33% as compared to the college's 9.57%. In addition, the department's success rate has continued to climb from 65.6% in Fall 2005 to the 77.01% in Fall 2008, while our non-success and failure rates have declined.

In the past, the Economics Department's attention to Inver Hills' Student Academic Achievement Plan (SAAP) has been sporadic at best. With a new full-time unlimited member of the department (bringing the total to 2 UFT), we are using department meetings to strategize as to how we can better participate in college-wide assessment initiatives at the individual course and at the department level. Although our

department SAAP plan has not worked out well this year, we have provided individual course feedback to the critical thinking initiative and plan to continue to improve our participation in SAAP in the future. In addition, the department is planning to research the feasibility and usefulness of using the Test of Understanding in College Economics (TUCE) as a tool for department assessment.

STUDENT FEEDBACK ON TEACHING AND LEARNING

As we consider Economics to be an important part of a student's college experience, the members of the Economics Department strive to be part of Inver Hills' commitment to a satisfactory college experience for our students. For Inver Hills, student feedback in the areas of instructional effectiveness, concern for the individual, and student centeredness rank well above national and MnSCU averages. The Economics Department faculty seeks to provide classroom experiences that are rigorous, caring, and relevant for all students.

RESOURCES

The Economics Department is pleased with the resources available to it on campus. The IHCC library has on-line and on-shelf resources that support the department well, and both the personnel and the technology available to support the faculty and the students in the department. The IT department has also been supportive of expanding faculty and classroom technology resources. The Inver Hills bookstore is willing to work with us to provide current and affordable texts for students.

COST ANALYSIS

The Economics Department is a cost effective department for Inver Hills. The department has been effective at designing a course schedule that assures a high fill rate. The department rarely seeks additional resources (commonly a small budget of \$100-\$150 annually to support students or outside college initiatives) and tries to rely on resources already available through other college departments.

FACULTY

Perhaps the most exciting development in the department recently is the addition of a new unlimited full-time faculty member. The department now consists of 3, including 2 unlimited full time, members who regularly teach courses in the department:

Shannon Marting (B.B.A. (Economics) Gonzaga University; M.S. (Economics) Colorado State U; M.B.A. (Finance Concentration) University of Minnesota)

Primary interests: economic education and finance

Xinfu Zhu (M.S. (Economics and Finance) University of Southampton UK)

Mike McIlhon (Adjunct)

SWOT Analysis 2008-2009

Department: ECONOMICS

Participants: Shannon Marting, Xinfu Zhu, Mike McIlhon

Every department should use the four levels; Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat. Each department must use the categories for Curriculum and Faculty. Some departments should also use Equipment/Supplies for a category. Some departments may need a category for Facilities. Your department may have a unique category that may be added. Create a form similar to the following to suit the needs of your department.

Category	Curriculum	Faculty/Personnel	Equipment/supplies
Level			
Strengths	<p>Is in line with other MnSCU institutions</p> <p>Provides students with a strong base in economics to use in school and work and personal lives</p> <p>Offers courses in many formats – traditional, accelerated, online, web-enhanced, off-campus, evening and day</p>	<p>Has a varied group of faculty members with diverse interests and varied educational backgrounds committed to undergraduate education with access to professional development monies</p>	
Weaknesses	<p>Addressing assessment issues at course and department levels</p>		
Opportunities	<p>Making information about courses and discipline more accessible to students and other stakeholders through website, print materials and other marketing tools.</p> <p>Explore the possibility of developing new lower division courses</p>	<p>Can use available monies to continue to enhance professional development for members of the department</p>	TUCE

	<p>Develop AA with emphasis in Economics & articulation agreements as result of emphasis</p> <p>Explore Economic Student Club</p>		
Threats			

Action Plan 2008-2011

Department: ECONOMICS

Participants: Shannon Marting, Xinfu Zhu, Mike McIlhon

Departments should use the SWOT Analysis and departmental goals to develop an Action Plan for the two to three years before the next Program Review. An Action Plan should state the goals to be achieved, steps needed to be completed to achieve the goal, a timeline, and persons responsible for each step. A template follows and a sample is attached.

Goal	Steps	Timeline	Responsible Party
Improve department assessment in line with college assessment plans	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend assessment meetings 2. Develop a baseline department assessment plan 3. Explore the feasibility of using the TUCE as an assessment tool 	04-07/09 08/09 06-07/09	Shannon, Xinfu
Develop a department budget	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend budget forum in spring 2009 2. Set department priorities for 3 years— what do we need? 3. Devise a budget for 3 years to support department goals 4. Advocate for inclusion in final budget as appropriate 	04/09 08/09 08/09	Shannon Anne
Develop a department website	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply for an Award for Excellence grant 2. Research info for the website 3. Develop website portfolio 4. Work with others at IHCC to set up the site 5. Continue to monitor and add more links and information to site 	Spring 09 Summer 09 Summer 09 Summer 09	Shannon, Xinfu
Enhance student success in Economics department	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor student withdrawal/failure rates 2. Explore feasibility of 	Academic Year 2009-10 Fall 09	Shannon

	<p>writing intensive courses in department</p> <p>3. Explore feasibility of structured learning assistance</p> <p>4. Offer a course within at least one learning community.</p>	<p>Spring/Summer 09</p> <p>Academic Year 2010-11 & 2011-12</p>	Shannon, Xinfu.
Work with other departments to develop internal partnerships	<p>Learning community course</p> <p>ASAP program</p>	<p>Spring 09 for Spring 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	

Departmental Curriculum Map

Outcomes Courses	Communication	Critical Thinking	Civic Engagement	Departmental Goal 1	Dept. Goal 2	Dept. Goal 3
				Encourage students to think in the “economics way” as a part of a liberal arts education and as a well-informed citizen in a diverse world	Continually improve faculty and student understanding and use of effective technologies for lifelong learning	Provide multiple opportunities (through the department’s courses) to help students successfully complete their educational goals
ECON 1100 CONSUMER ECONOMICS	X	X	X	X	X	X
ECON 1102 SURVEY OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY	X	X	X	X	X	X
ECON 1105 PRINCIPLES OF MACROECONOMICS	X	X	X	X	X	X
ECON 1106 PRINCIPLES OF MICROECONOMICS	X	X	X	X	X	X

Create a chart which indicates which college-wide and departmental outcomes are taught and assessed in the courses in your department. Your departmental goals should reflect your departmental mission. You should list at least three goals, but can do more.