

**Assurance of Student Learning
2019-2020**

Gordon Ford College of Business

Economics

Economic 638

Use this page to list learning outcomes, measurements, and summarize results for your program. Detailed information must be completed in the subsequent pages.

Student Learning Outcome 1: Students will demonstrate ability to conduct economic research and to communicate their findings using written communication.

Instrument 1 | **Direct: Analysis of Capstone Project/Research Paper**

Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.

Met

Not Met

Student Learning Outcome 2: Students will demonstrate ability to convey research ideas and findings using oral communication and appropriate visual aids.

Instrument 1 | **Direct: Capstone Project Poster Presentation**

Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2

Met

Not Met

Student Learning Outcome 3: Students will demonstrate knowledge of key principles of micro- and macroeconomics.

Instrument 1 | **Direct: Microeconomics Exam**

Instrument 2 | **Direct: Macroeconomics Exam**

Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.

Met

Not Met

Program Summary (Briefly summarize the action and follow up items from your detailed responses on subsequent pages.)

The results of the assessment indicated that there is a shortfall in the attainment of the SLO 1 – Written Communications. Specifically, the students struggled with the analytical part of the research paper they had to write in their capstone course as well as interpretation of their results. It is unclear, however, whether this was caused by COVID-19 pandemic or if there's deeper underlying cause.

Students' performance on Macro exam (SLO3, second instrument) improved compared to the previous assessment cycle.

Student Learning Outcome 1

Student Learning Outcome	Students will demonstrate ability to conduct economic research and to communicate their findings using <u>written communication</u> .		
Measurement Instrument 1	<p>DIRECT measures of student learning: Students in the Economics major (638) are required to complete a capstone course at the end of the program. One of the requirements of the course is to write a research paper that synthesizes the knowledge obtained in the program. Students choose a research topic, find the relevant data to conduct empirical tests, and perform statistical calculations to answer their research questions. Students are instructed to structure their papers similarly to an economics journal article and include an introduction, literature review, data and methodology section, analysis of empirical results, and a conclusion.</p> <p>Papers are evaluated on the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Did a student formulate an appropriate research question grounded in economic theory? 2. Does the paper contain an adequate literature review? 3. Did the student employ appropriate data to test the hypothesis? 4. Did the student correctly interpret the findings in the paper? 		
Criteria for Student Success	At the end of the program, students should be able to perform at the level of Capstone (4) or Milestone (3) according to LEAP <i>Inquiry and Analysis</i> rubric.		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	80% or more	Percent of Program Achieving Target	68%
Methods	Direct artifacts were collected from all students in the senior assessment course (ECON 499). The data cover the entire population of 2019-20 graduates of the program (N=7 in the fall of 2019 and N=18 in the spring of 2020). The papers were evaluated by three economics faculty on the four criteria listed above using a 1-4 scale for each criterion. The scores were assigned based on LEAP <i>Inquiry and Analysis</i> rubric items (1) Topic Selection, (2) Existing Knowledge, Research and/or Views, (3) Design Process, and (4) Analysis. Using this rubric, each evaluator produced an average score for each paper by computing a simple average of the four items in the rubric. Therefore, each paper received three scores – one from each evaluator – and the mean of these three score was computed for each student.		
Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.		Met	Not Met

Student Learning Outcome 2

Student Learning Outcome	Students will demonstrate ability to convey research ideas and findings using <u>oral</u> communication and appropriate visual aids.		
Measurement Instrument 1	<p>DIRECT measures of student learning outcomes: Students in the Economics major (638) are required to complete a capstone course at the end of the program. During that course, students are required to write a paper and present it to the economics faculty. The presentations are structured as a mini-conference with each student giving a poster presentation. Each student is required to prepare a poster, deliver a brief summary of his or her paper, and answer follow-up questions. The presentations are evaluated on the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Was the information organized well on the poster? 2. Did the student follow good practices when designing the poster? 3. Did the student present the material well? 		
Criteria for Student Success	At the end of the program, students should be able to perform at the level of Capstone (4) or Milestone (3) according to LEAP <i>Oral Communication</i> rubric.		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	80% or more	Percent of Program Achieving Target	80%
Methods	<p>The data are based on direct observations of the poster presentations. The data were collected from all students in the senior assessment course (ECON 499). The data cover the entire population of 2019-20 graduates of the (N=7 in the fall of 2019 and N=18 in the spring of 2020).</p> <p>Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the student conference could not take place during the spring semester, so each student recorded his or her presentation.</p> <p>Three faculty members served as the assessment committee tasked with evaluating all of the poster presentations and the recorded presentations to ensure consistency of measurement.</p> <p>Students' presentations were rated on the three criteria listed above using a 1-4 scale for each criterion. The scores were assigned based on LEAP <i>Oral Communication</i> rubric items (1) Organization, (2) Supporting Material, (3) and Language. Using this rubric, each evaluator produced an average score for each presentation by computing a simple average of the three items of the rubric, with each student receiving three scores – one from each evaluator – and the mean of these three score was computed was computed for each student.</p>		
Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.		Met	Not Met

Student Learning Outcome 3

Student Learning Outcome	Students will demonstrate knowledge of key principles of micro- and macroeconomics.		
Measurement Instrument 1	DIRECT measures of student learning: Students in the Economics major (638) are required to complete a capstone course at the end of the program. During the course, students have to take two exams – a microeconomics exam and a macroeconomics exam. The exams used in the class have been developed by the National Council for Economic Education (NCEE). These exams were designed with two objectives in mind: “(1)... to offer a reliable and valid assessment instrument for students in principles of economics courses; and (2) to provide norming data for large national sample of students in principles classes...”. The exams cover a range of economic topics and can serve as a good measure not only of the attainment of knowledge in the principles courses but also as a measure of retention and reinforcement of that knowledge throughout the program.		
Criteria for Student Success	At the end of the program students should perform at the 70 th percentile or higher compared to the national sample of economics principles students.		
Program Success Target for this Measurement	80% or more on each subject	Percent of Program Achieving Target	Micro – 79.17% Score >15 Macro - 87.5% Score >16
Methods	The tests used as the instrument are the Test of Understanding of College Economics (TUCE), developed by NCEE in conjunction with the American Economic Association. The tests cover a range of topics normally covered in the principles courses as well as in the rest of the upper-level courses of a typical economics program. Both micro- and macroeconomics tests consist of 30 multiple-choice questions. Based on the national sample of 3,255 college and university students who took these tests, for the microeconomics test, the score of 14 corresponds to a 67 th percentile and a score of 15 corresponds to 74 th percentile. For the macroeconomics test, the score of 16 is the 69 th percentile and 17 th is 74 th percentile. The tests were administered to all of the students in the senior assessment seminar. Compared to the previous assessment cycle, the average declined by 4% on Microeconomics exam and increased by 7% on the Macroeconomics exam. Despite slightly lower percentage of students who exceeded target score on the microeconomics exam, performance of those who met the goal is better – average score of those who met the goal was 21.8 points		
Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 2.		Met	Not Met
Actions (Describe the decision-making process and actions planned for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.)			
Individual items from the rubric for SLO1 indicate that students do well on topic selection as well as presenting relevant background and demonstrating knowledge of the topic: 88% of the students met the target on the first item of the rubric on SLO1 (Topic Selection) and 84% met the target for the second item (Existing Knowledge, Research and/or Views). Students struggled with (3) Design Process (64% met the target), but were closed to meeting the goal on the fourth item in the rubric (Analysis - 76%). It's worth noting, however, that most of the statistical analysis students perform for their senior papers occurs in the second half of the semester. During that stage of the senior projects, frequent interaction with faculty is crucial for students' success on the projects. Because majority of the observations came from the Spring 2020 semester, it is possible that students' performance was adversely affected by COVID-19 pandemic as they no longer were able to meet with the faculty face-to-face. For the near future, no additional actions are proposed.			
Follow-Up (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.)			

At the end of the Fall 2020 semester, a follow up assessment will be conducted to examine whether lower than expected performance on SLO1 was due to COVID-19 pandemic or if there is a deeper underlying cause resulting in students' inability to meet this SLO.