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| **Assurance of Student Learning Report**  **2020-2021** | |
| *Gordon Ford College of Business* | *Economics* |
| *Business Economics BS 724* | |
| *Dr. Alex Lebedinsky, Chair* | |

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| ***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. | | | |
| **Instrument 1** | Direct: Analysis of Capstone Project/Research Paper | | |
| **Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.** | | **Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Student Learning Outcome 2:** Students will demonstrate ability to convey economic research using oral communication. | | | |
| **Instrument 1** | Direct: Capstone Project Presentation | | |
| **Based on your results, check 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 microeconomics. | | | |
| **Instrument 1** | Direct: Microeconomics Exam | | |
| **Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.** | | **Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Student Learning Outcome 4:**  Students will demonstrate knowledge of key principles of macroeconomics. | | | |
| **Instrument 1** | Direct: Macroeconomics Exam | | |
| **Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 4.** | | **Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Student Learning Outcome 5:**  Upon completion of the program, students will demonstrate the skills necessary for conducting a job search in business economics careers. | | | |
| **Instrument 1** | Direct: Analysis of Resumes | | |
| **Instrument 2** | Direct: Job Search Assignment | | |
| **Instrument 3** | Direct: Mock Interview | | |
| **Based on your results, check whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 5.** | | **Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Program Summary (Briefly summarize the action and follow up items from your detailed responses on subsequent pages.)** | | | |
| The current assessment cycle signaled improvments in some areas and some moderate declines in others. The students performend markedly better on SLO 1 (90% met the goal vs. 72.7% in 2019-2020) but did worse on SLO 2 with 70% meeting the goal vs. 83.3%. There was mixed performance on SLOs 3 and 4 with a reversal compared to last year: Students perofmed worse on the macroeconomics exam but better on the microceconomics exam. Students continued to peroform well on SLO 5.  We plan to reassess the same SLOs during the next year with the same instruments to examine whether uneven performance was due to the the pandemic or if there are deeper structural issues that need to be addressed on the program level. | | | |

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| **Student Learning Outcome 1** | | | | | |
| **Student Learning Outcome** | Students will demonstrate ability to conduct economic research. | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 1** | DIRECT measures of student learning: Students in the Business Economics major (724) 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.  Papers are evaluated on the following criteria:  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 Inquiry and Analysis* rubric. | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | 80% or more students should meet the criteria for student success outlined above | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 90% (9/10) | |
| **Methods** | Direct artifacts were collected from all students in the senior assessment course (ECON 499). The data cover the entire population of 2020-21 graduates of the program (N=0 in the fall of 2021 and N=10 in the spring of 2021). 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 Inquiry and Analysis* rubric items (1) Topic Selection, (2) Existing Knowledge, Research and/or Views, (3) Design Process, and (4) Analysis. The rubric is attached below. For each paper, evaluators recorded the scores for each item in the rubric. An average score for each paper was computed 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 scores was computed for each student. | | | | |
| **Based on your results, highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 1.** | | | | **Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Actions** (Describe the decision-making process and actions for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.) | | | | | |
| The data collected during assessment indicated that students executed their research projects well (percent of the students achieving the target on items 2-4 is between 80% and 90%) but they struggle with choosing appropriate topics – only 70% of the students met the target and most of those who did received the score of 3 out of 4 on the first criterion.  To address this, upper-level electives will include greater number of examples demonstrating how research questions are formulated and tested using real-world data. | | | | | |
| **Follow-Up** (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.) | | | | | |
| During the next assessment cycle, we will continue to use the same instruments as they have provided us with actionable intelligence and allowed us to identify the areas that need improvement. Our plan for achieving the goals is as follows: During the 2021-22 asseemsnt cycle we will measure whether greater integration and discussion of economic research in the curriculum helped students with development of their own research topics. If there is no notable improvement, the curriculum map will be revised with the goal of introducing the basics of economic research earlier in the curriculum and reinforcing that knowledge in the upper-level classes. | | | | | |
| **Next Assessment Cycle Plan** | | | | | |
| We plan to continue using the same assessment method next year as it yields consistent and informative data which allows us to track progress and make adjustments.  The artifacts will be collected by the instructor of the Senior Asesssment Semiar (ECON 499) and analyzed by the faculty committee. | | | | | |

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| **Student Learning Outcome 2** | | | | | |
| **Student Learning Outcome** | Students will demonstrate ability to convey economic research using oral communication | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 1** | DIRECT measures of student learning outcomes: Students in the Business Economics major (724) 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:  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 *Oral Communication* rubric. | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | 80% or more students should meet the criteria for student success outlined above | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 70% (7/10) | |
| **Methods** | Normally, the data are based on direct observations of poster presentations. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the student conference could not take place, so each student recorded their presentation. Three faculty members served as the assessment committee tasked with evaluating all of the recorded presentations to ensure consistency of measurement.  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 *Oral Communication* rubric items (1) Organization, (2) Supporting Material, (3) and Language. The rubric is attached below. 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. | | | | |
| **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.) | | | | | |
| The data revealed that students did well on individual criteria but not enough students did well enough on all three: 80% of the students met the goal on the first and second criteria and 90% met goal in the third criterion but only 70% did well enough on all three. | | | | | |
| **Follow-Up** (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.) | | | | | |
| Performance on this learning outcome could have been affected by COVID. Normally, students have a number of one-on-one meeting sharing their research results with faculty and discussing how to present them. During 2021-2022, there were much fewer of these interactions, so students didn’t receive as much coaching on how to present their research results. No changes are planned during the next assessment cycle, but if the problem persists, it will be addressed in the Senior Assessment Seminar by placing greater focus on developing presentations skills. | | | | | |
| **Next Assessment Cycle Plan** | | | | | |
| We plan to continue using the same assessment method as it yields consistent and informative data which allows us to track progress and make adjustments.  If the social distancing restrictions are lifted during the 2021-22 academic year, this SLO will be measured using a face-to-face poster session instead of recorded presentations. | | | | | |

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| **Student Learning Outcome 3** | | | | | |
| **Student Learning Outcome** | Students will demonstrate knowledge of key principles of microeconomics. | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 1** | DIRECT measures of student learning: Students in the Business Economics major (724) are required to complete a capstone course at the end of the program. During the course, students have two 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 curses; 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 70th percentile or higher compared to the national sample of economics principles students. | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | 75% of the students | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 77.8% | |
| **Methods** | The test used as an instrument is 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 a microeconomics principles course as well as in the rest of the upper-level courses of a typical economics program. The test consists of 30 multiple-choice questions. Based on the national sample of 3,255 college and university students who took these tests the score of 14 corresponds to a 67-th percentile and a score of 15 corresponds to 74th percentile. The tests were administered to all of the students in the senior assessment seminar.  Out of 9 students who took the exam, 13 students scored 9 points or higher, which amounts to 77.8% of all students. The average score was 19.33. | | | | |
| **Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.** | | | | **Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Actions** (Describe the decision-making process and actions for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.) | | | | | |
| The students in the program are currently performing at the national average.  We will continue to monitor performance during the next assessment cycle. | | | | | |
| **Follow-Up** (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.) | | | | | |
| Continue to monitor students’ performance during on the microeconomic exam.  Use the fall 2021 Senior Assessment class as a mid-cycle gauge. | | | | | |
| **Next Assessment Cycle Plan** (Please describe your assessment plan timetable for this outcome) | | | | | |
| No changes are planned in the assemsnet mechanism. The exam provides a consistent and robust tool for measuring student performance.  The exams will be administered again during the fall 2021 and spring 2022 semesters. | | | | | |

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| **Student Learning Outcome 4** | | | | | |
| **Student Learning Outcome** | Students will demonstrate knowledge of key principles of microeconomics. | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 1** | DIRECT measures of student learning: Students in the Business Economics major (724) are required to complete a capstone course at the end of the program. During the course, students have two 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 curses; 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 70th percentile or higher compared to the national sample of economics principles students. | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | 75% of the students | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 60% | |
| **Methods** | The test used as an instrument is 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 a macroeconomics principles course as well as in the rest of the upper-level courses of a typical economics program. The test consists of 30 multiple-choice questions. Based on the national sample of 3,255 college and university students who took these tests the score of 16 is the 69th percentile and 17th is 74th percentile. The tests were administered to all of the students in the senior assessment seminar.  The results were the same as the microeconomics test in SLO 3: Out of 10 students who took the exam, 6 students scored 16 points or higher, which amounts to 60% of all students. The average score was 18.35. It’s not clear whether the drop can be attributed to pandemic or could be simply a result of small sample. | | | | |
| **Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.** | | | | **Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Actions** (Describe the decision-making process and actions for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.) | | | | | |
| The students in the program are currently performing at the national average.  We will continue to monitor performance during the next assessment cycle. | | | | | |
| **Follow-Up** (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.) | | | | | |
| Continue to monitor students’ performance during on the microeconomic exam.  Use the fall 2021 assessment class as a mid-cycle gauge. | | | | | |
| **Next Assessment Cycle Plan** (Please describe your assessment plan timetable for this outcome) | | | | | |
| No changes are planned in the assemsnet mechanism. The exam provides a consistent and robust tool for measuring student performance.  The exams will be administered again during the fall 2021 and spring 2022 semesters. | | | | | |

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| **Student Learning Outcome 3** | | | | | | | |
| **Student Learning Outcome** | Upon completion of the program, students will demonstrate the skills necessary for conducting a job search in business economics careers. | | | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 1** | Direct: Analysis of Resume. Students in the Business Economics major (724) are required to complete a capstone course at the end of the program. During that course, students have to complete a series of assignments targeted at increasing their success on the job market, and one of these assignments was to create a resume. | | | | | | |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | Students should be able to compile a professional resume that is rated 4 or 5. | | | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | | 80% | | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | 100% (10/10) | |
| **Methods** | Resumes were collected from each of the students in the class and assessed by the course instructor for content, clarity, and quality of presentation. The quality of resumes was rated on the scale of 1(lowest) to 5(highest). The rating of 5 represents a resume that is ready to be used in the job search without any changes. The rating of 4 represents a resume that is ready for a job search with minor changes. | | | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 2** | Direct: Job Search Assignment. During the capstone course, students are required to complete an assignment where they have to find five jobs for which they should be qualified. To complete the assignments, students have to create a matrix listing the job titles, company names, job descriptions, experience requirements, minimum qualifications, and educational requirements. | | | | | | |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | The jobs should match student qualifications listed in their resumes. | | | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | 80% of the students should complete the assignment with the score of 4 or higher | | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | | 90% (9/10) | |
| **Methods** | Assignments were collected from each of the students in the class and assessed by the course instructor. Students’ resumes were matched to job descriptions to assess how well students’ qualifications meet those of the jobs. The score was assigned based on how well the students conducted the job search: If all 5 jobs were within the students’ qualification set, they received a score of 5, if four jobs matched, then the score was 4 etc. | | | | | | |
| **Measurement Instrument 3** | Direct: Mock Interview. During the capstone course, they students are required to conduct a mock interview with the one of the staff members of the Center for Career and Professional Development. The interviewer provides a ranking of students’ professionalism, preparedness, general interview questions, and specific job questions. | | | | | | |
| **Criteria for Student Success** | Students should be able to demonstrate their ability to conduct a job interview by attaining a score of 40 or higher (out of 50 possible points) on their mock interview assessment. | | | | | | |
| **Program Success Target for this Measurement** | | 80% or more | | **Percent of Program Achieving Target** | | 100% (9/9) | |
| **Methods** | Prior to the interview, students are given information about a real job posting. When they arrive to the interview, they are expected to dress professionally, bring their resumes, and to be able to demonstrate knowledge of the company and the job requirements of this position. During the interview, the interviewer ranks students’ performance on the scale from 0 to 50. The score is determined based on specific measurable characteristics or actions such as “Arrived ahead of time”, “Supporting documents are organized and presented in a professional manner” etc. During the 2020-21 academic year, the interviews were conducted via Zoom. | | | | | | |
| **Based on your results, circle or highlight whether the program met the goal Student Learning Outcome 3.** | | | | | | **Met** | **Not Met** |
| **Actions** (Describe the decision-making process and actions for program improvement. The actions should include a timeline.) | | | | | | | |
| No changes are planned. Feedback from student surveys indicates that these assignments are a much needed “kick in the pants” to get started on the job search and that the feedback they receive on resumes and especially the mock interview helps them in their job search. | | | | | | | |
| **Follow-Up** (Provide your timeline for follow-up. If follow-up has occurred, describe how the actions above have resulted in program improvement.) | | | | | | | |
| Continue to assess students job readiness skills. | | | | | | | |
| **Next Assessment Cycle Plan** (Please describe your assessment plan timetable for this outcome) | | | | | | | |
| No changes are planned in the assemsnet mechanism.  The instruments will be administered again during the fall 2021 and spring 2022 semesters. | | | | | | | |

Rubric for SLO 1

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|  | **Capstone** | **Milestones** | | **Benchmark** |
|  | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| **Topic selection** *LEAP Inquiry and Analysis* | Identifies a creative, focused, and manageable topic that addresses potentially significant yet previously less explored aspects of the topic. | Identifies a focused and  manageable/doable topic that appropriately addresses relevant aspects of the topic. | Identifies a topic that while manageable/doable, is too narrowly focused and leaves out relevant aspects of the topic. | Identifies a topic that is far too general and wide-ranging as to be manageable and doable. |
| **Existing Knowledge, Research, and/or Views** *LEAP Inquiry and Analysis* | Synthesizes in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches. | Presents in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches. | Presents information from relevant sources representing limited points of view/approaches. | Presents information from irrelevant sources representing limited points of view/approaches. |
| **Design Process** *LEAP Inquiry and Analysis* | All elements of the methodology or theoretical framework are skillfully developed. Appropriate methodology or theoretical frameworks may be synthesized from across disciplines or from relevant subdisciplines. | Critical elements of the methodology or theoretical framework are appropriately developed, however, more subtle elements are ignored or unaccounted for. | Critical elements of the methodology or theoretical framework are missing, incorrectly developed, or unfocused. | Inquiry design demonstrates a misunderstanding of the methodology or theoretical framework. |
| **Analysis** *LEAP Inquiry and Analysis* | Organizes and synthesizes evidence to reveal insightful patterns, differences, or similarities related to focus. | Organizes evidence to reveal important patterns, differences, or similarities related to focus. | Organizes evidence, but the organization is not effective in revealing important patterns, differences, or similarities. | Lists evidence, but it is not organized and/or is unrelated to focus. |

Rubric for SLO 2

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|  | **Capstone** | **Milestones** | | **Benchmark** |
|  | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| **Organization** *LEAP Oral Communication* | Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable and is skillful and makes the content of the presentation cohesive. | Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable within the presentation. | Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is intermittently observable within the presentation. | Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is not observable within the presentation. |
| **Language** *LEAP Oral Communication* | Language choices are imaginative, memorable, and compelling, and enhance the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience. | Language choices are thoughtful and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience. | Language choices are mundane and commonplace and partially support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience. | Language choices are unclear and minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is not appropriate to audience. |
| **Supporting Material** *LEAP Oral Communication* | A variety of types of supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that significantly supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic. | Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or  analysis that generally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic. | Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that partially supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic. | Insufficient supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make reference to information or analysis that minimally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic. |