

1. Executive Summary

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ECON enrollments are essentially flat. This is probably a function of the strengthening California economy. I anticipate this trend to continue as the economy further improves. This trend, along with TMC implementation will continue to limit new course offerings in economics. On a positive note, the algebra requirement is now in place and did not appear to negatively impact enrollments as was feared. In a reversal of a few years ago, students seem to be taking fewer late afternoon classes. Student rates of success and retention are somewhat lower than The College's "institutional goals." Economics confirmed the most AS degrees of any of the social sciences in the most recent data.

2. Program Context

1. Mission: How does your program align with the college's mission? If your program has a mission statement, include it here.

It is the mission of this economics department to ensure that students from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to achieve their educational goals by providing quality education in general education/core transfer material in the area of economics. The discipline serves both transfer students (GE, Econ Bus) as well as serving workforce, primarily in the certificated areas of business. Per the College's request, the Economics Discipline is aggregated into the greater "Social Sciences" program. This grouping recognizes both the natural connections that all social sciences along with the reality that at Canada College, the social sciences are made up of almost exclusively one full time faculty per social science discipline.

2. Articulation: Describe how your program's articulation may be impacted by changes in curriculum and degree requirements at high schools and 4-year institutions. Describe your efforts to accommodate these changes.

The economics professors are unaware of any changes in curriculum and degree requirements at high schools that would impact the discipline. The CSU's continue to desire that transfer students follow the economics AD-T pathway. Both CSU's and UC's are stressing ever more math as a recommended prerequisite work. All compliance with AD-T work is done to ensure as smooth as possible a transition for our transferring students

3. Describe how changes in community needs, employment needs, technology, licensing, or accreditation affect your program. CTE programs: identify the dates of your most recent advisory group meeting and describe your advisory group? recommendations for your program.

The discipline of economics primarily draws on transfer students. Economics courses, therefore, should be looked at as courses that primarily, general education, business and economics majors take. Students do not "major" in economics, graduate with an AA or ADT and then get a job in anything remotely akin to what a student graduating with a BA/BS in economics or business would find. As mentioned before, economics at any community college is a lower division GE course for all students. As such, community and labor needs do not impact the discipline in any material or measurable way.

3. Looking Back

4. Curricular Changes: List any significant changes that have occurred in your program's curricular offerings, scheduling, or mode of delivery. Explain the rationale for these changes.

No significant changes have been made in the last year, nor do we anticipate many new offerings.

This is due, in part, to the nature of the subject matter-it doesn't change that much that quickly. It is also due to the fact that our economics program has, in addition to the traditional campus offerings, also created online and honors offerings. In addition, as will be repeated throughout this program review, the following "macro" trends all point toward keeping course offerings where they are for the foreseeable future:

Enrollment patterns of The College and The Economics Department have not changed significantly since the last program review. The advent of TMCs severely limits what the CSU's will accept as a transfer class for purposes of a degree in economics. In addition, The District is now "basic aid," thus, the urge to grow the student body must be looked at in a different light.

5. (A) Progress Report-IPC Feedback: Provide your responses to all recommendations received in your last program review cycle.

Feedback...

Plan to execute curricular offering ideas...done.

PLO data not included in tract....done

(B) Progress Report-Prior Action Plans: Provide a summary of the progress you have made on the strategic action plans identified in your last program review.

Proposed Actions (italics)and the progress made:

1) Developing longitudinal SLO evidence. As a result, the program will again assess the same course level, program level and institutional level SLO's to see if any trends emerge.

Ongoing, however due to curriculum committees interpretation of ed code, two SLOs in ECON 100 and 102 required revision. This will set back longitudinal data collection. Effort ongoing.

2) Ask the college researcher to examine the SLO, PLO and ILO efforts to determine if they have an efficacy level commensurate with the current allocation of time and energy by this department and the SS's in general.

Have made several requests, albeit in the context of a broader college request, to look at several historical metrics used to evaluate courses (e.g. retention, success) pre SLO and post SLO to probe my action/question--as yet nothing has been provided by the office of research. Requests will continue.

3) Ask the college researcher to provide aggregated data around the SS PLO's, something that was promised to us three years ago but has yet to be delivered.

Done, as yet not seen. Will continue to request.

4) Attend economics conferences to stay current in the field and to speak to peers to see what they are doing in this very important area of assessment.

Did not find economics conferences to accomplish this but, with the help of the Honors Program, I did attend NCHC conference and attended several symposiums on this topic.

5) Responding to the TMC for economics, expected to be finalized in Feb of 2014. Attend NCHC conference to present on innovative honors classes.

Done and done.

6. (A) Impact of Resources Allocation: Describe the impact to-date that new resources (equipment, facilities, research) requested in prior years' program reviews have had on your program. If measurable impacts on student success have been observed, be sure to describe these and include any documentation/evidence. If no resources have been recently requested, please write not applicable.

The following trends/policies all suggest prudence in the creation of new sections and new courses in economics:

Enrollment patterns of The College and The Economics Department have not changed significantly since the last program review. The advent of TMCs severely limits what the CSU's will accept as a transfer class for purposes of a degree in economics. In addition, The District is now "basic aid," thus, the urge to grow the student body must be looked at in a different light. Finally, as The College's data shows that most of students enrolling in economics courses are general education students.

All of these factors point toward the likelihood that no significant changes or requests will be expected.

(B) Impact of Staff Changing: Describe the impact on your program of any changes in staffing levels (for example, the addition, loss or reassignment of faculty/staff). If no changes have occurred, please write "not applicable"

The following trends/policies all suggest prudence with respect to adding new staff.

Enrollment patterns of The College and The Economics Department have not changed significantly since the last program review. The advent of TMCs severely limits what the CSU's will accept as a transfer class for purposes of a degree in economics. In addition, The District is now "basic aid," thus, the urge to grow the student body must be looked at in a different light. Finally, as The College's data shows that most of students enrolling in economics courses are general education students.

With respect to current faculty in economics we have one full time faculty member and two part-time. One part-time person, who teaches all the online courses, just got a full time job so it may be that down the road we will need to find another person to pick up those online courses. However, absent this last scenario occurring, most factors point toward the likelihood that no significant changes in staffing will be requested

4. Current State of the Program

7. (A) Connection & Entry-Observation: Observation: Describe trends in program and course enrollments, FTES, LOAD and Fill Rates. Cite quantitative data and identify the specific tables from the data packets. If other sources of data are used, please upload these documents or provide URLs.

Census Enrollment headcount in Econ is flat over the period 2011-2015. End of Term Head Count is currently at its highest point, covering 2011-2015. The same is true for enrollments per section.

Econ Department efficiency (FTES, WSCH, Load, fill rates) Are all remarkably constant over the period of 2012-15. They also do not appear deviate materially from the overall college metrics in these areas. All measures of efficiency are, likewise, down dramatically from the 2011 period. This is probably most likely due to the bettering California economy which translates into fewer students and thus falling rates of efficiency. Again, this trend in ECON mirrors the trend across the college. As the economy has improved the averages have regressed to their longer run means.

(B) Connection & Entry-Evaluation: Evaluation: What changes could be implemented, including changes to course scheduling (times/days/duration/delivery mode/number of sections), marketing, and articulation that may improve these trends in enrollment? NOTE: If you intend to implement any of these changes, you should create Action Plans in the Planning module of SPOL. Doing so will also allow you to request resources that may be required for successful implementation.

As students move back to a more historical pattern of taking classes (i.e. 8am-1pm and then evening with the afternoon more difficult to induce students to stay), I have discussed with my dean moving my few later afternoon start classes into that 8am-1pm block). This has already been accomplished (implemented) thus, I will NOT need to be creating an "ACTION PLAN". Moreover, Marketing of Social Sciences has been discussed with the marketing team at Canada College. We await their proposals. No further work deemed necessary at this time.

8. (A) Progress & Completion-Observation: Observation: Describe trends in student success and retention disaggregated by: ethnicity, gender, age, and enrollment status, day/evening. Cite quantitative data and identify specific tables from the data packets. If other sources of data are used, please upload these documents or provide URLs.

In general, average student success and retention rates in Econ continue to be below the college average. While improving in recent years, both rates continue to be below the college stated percentage "goals". Without getting into the merits of how, why or where those "goals" came from AND if they are or are not appropriate or applicable in every department in the same way, the rates of success/retention in economics do not appear to be materially outside the college norm. Explanations are like opinions, everyone is entitled to at least one, the following is an ex post analysis of what might explain ECON's deviation from the college goals:

Both may be explained by the fact that economics, traditionally, incorporates both a level of math and reading that is difficult for many of our students. As most of our students test into developmental courses in both English and math it's not surprising that many, even with remediation, might find economics courses somewhat challenging to compete and succeed in.

Additionally, as economics is a relatively small department with many fewer offerings than other departments any courses offered in ways that materially improve or material harm the "average rates" shown in the data packets will alter the economics data more dramatically as compared to larger programs (remember how the relationship between numerators and denominators work!) In the case of economics, a program with a relatively few offerings, the offerings that we have added in the online area, while improving access, have contributed negatively to the average rates of success and retention (see next section for analysis of online). This is not surprising given the rates of success/retention in online classes writ large.

In terms of the categories of race/ethnicity and gender: No pattern worth discussing appears in the gender data or day/evening. With respect to the ethnicity data, some numbers are too small (e.g. Black, Filipino, Native American) to draw any conclusions that possess any statistical merit. The groups that do (white, hispanic and unknown) show the greatest rates of retention and success alternates between whites and unknown, with hispanics having slightly lower rates of both success and retention.

- (B) Progress & Completion Online-Observation: Observation: For online courses describe any significant differences in the success and retention of students who are taking online courses compared to face-to-face courses.

Rates of success and retention in economic do materially differ relative to those same measures in the face to face courses; with the online rates significantly lower than the in class rates. Rates in both categories both hover between 60% and 33%. This is not surprising since, as noted before, our student body tests into remedial classes at fairly high rates. This can only complicate the rates of success/retention when taking a class that has no/little face to face interaction and little way to gain tutorial services. In addition, since our college has little in the way of vetting mechanisms that might ferret

out those students who are least likely to succeed or persists in online environments these rates are not surprising.

Again, these results are to be expected regardless how robust the "alternative" communication mechanisms are in the online classes. Finally, as a single person department serving on multiple committees and advisor to campus clubs there is really very little time and or resources I can devote to puzzling out this problem that I am sure exists in one way or another in most of our online only course offerings. This is bigger than me.

(C) Progress & Completion-Evaluation: Evaluation: Based on these trends, what do you feel are significant factors or barriers influencing student success in your courses and program? What changes (e.g. in curriculum, pedagogy, scheduling, modality) could be implemented to improve these trends? NOTE: If you intend to implement any of these changes, you should create Action Plans in the Planning module of SPOL. Doing so will also allow you to request resources that may be required for successful implementation. This prompt presupposes to facts that may or may not be in existence with respect to the programs being examined:

First, it presupposes a trend that is negative (positive trends hardly need addressing--correct?)

Second, if a negative trend does exist, the prompt presupposes that either I or the institution, or both, can develop a response that can materially effect that negative trend in positive way.

These premises may not be, in every case, true. Be that as it may, as far as economics is concerned, the only materially negative trends I might point to are the efficiency rates and the rates of success and retention. I will take each, one at a time:

Efficiency: These trends, as noted before have not changed much over the last three years and are not materially different than the colleges over all rates in the same areas. Much of efficiency improvement lies outside the scope of any one person department. Simply put the demands of data compliance, curricular compliance, committee compliance etc limit any work that can be done to materially alter efficiency. What I can do, I have done (i.e. discussed moving class times, offering more online sections) beyond that the college will need to consider institutional solutions.

Success and retention: Again, while the college "goals" presuppose some institutional norm that are often hard for me to fathom, I will accept these norms here for the sake of discussion. As stated elsewhere in the document, econ's rates are not materially below the College's goals. To the extent that they are they can be, ex post, explained by the difficulty of the material, the population of generally underprepared students we draw and the fact that the online sections weigh more heavily (and in a negative way) in the overall calculations of these rates. Again, I will continue to monitor these rates, develop more ways for students to be tutored as means of ameliorating the problems that produce these negative results--but I am just one person

9. (A) SLO Assessment-Compliance: Are all course SLOs being systematically assessed at least once every 4 years? Describe the coordination of SLO assessment across sections and over time

Coordination is difficult and time consuming effort given economics is a one person department and there is virtually no way to compel part timers to turn in SLO results in a timely manner. That being said, here are the coordination steps we (I) employ:

Every semester a spread sheet is prepared and distributed to all those individuals teaching economics

The spreadsheet has the SLO to be tested for that semester (SLOs are rotated each semester to ensure all are covered within the prescribed time frame).

The spreadsheet, completed by each faculty member, is collected at the end of the semester. The spreadsheet documents: the slo covered; the results of success or failure; the method used to capture the data and a brief reflection.

I aggregate the results and post them after the semester's end.

(B) SLO Assessment-Impact: Summarize the dialogue that has resulted from these course SLO assessments. What are some improvements in your courses that have been implemented through SLO assessment? How has student learning been improved by changes in teaching? Cite specific examples
Conclusions drawn are weak for the following reasons:

The variety of methods employed to collect the data do not allow for statistically valid aggregation. Requiring the same method of data collection would raise serious questions around academic freedom-- thus the differing methods is not something that can be easily changed

The numbers are simply too small to draw much confidence around. Moreover, the accrediting requirement that all SLO's must be measured within a certain timeframe makes the collection of longitudinal data problematic.

That being said, faculty have noted where their successes and failures have occurred and have:

1) Altered their methods of assessment (e.g. open book, multiple choice, essay, etc....) in an effort to improve performance.

2) Talked with other faculty in other disciplines about what they use to measure/improve student performance

There is ABSOLUTELY NO WAY, WITH ANY STATISTICAL CERTAINTY, TO ASCERTAIN IF THESE CHANGES HAVE LED TO ANY DOCUMENTED IMPROVEMENT IN STUDENT PERFORMANCE.

Anyone who claims otherwise probably also knows: What happened in area 51 (Roswell/Aliens) and can tell you how many angels can dance on the head of pin.

I can tell you that the "idea of SLO's" does ask me, as the instructor, to think about whether or not my efforts in class are connected to the SLO's as documented. That, on balance, is probably not a bad thing.

10. (A) PLO Assessment-Plan: Describe your program's Program Learning Outcomes assessment plan. Please specify whether you are using direct or indirect measurements of assessment.

The Social Sciences consists of nine departments: anthropology, communication studies, economics, geography, history, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology, and have three PLOs. Mostly these are one full-time person departments. In order to assess the PLOs efficiently, the Social Science faculty have created a general analytic rubric to be used across the departments to directly measure student writing assignments as a program (note: an analytic rubric is a rubric that provides descriptive feedback along several dimensions or parts, and a general rubric is one that can be used across assignments and/or disciplines). Each department brought 5 ungraded student writing samples selected

by lot from one assignment administered during the semester to create a pool of assignments to draw from (the writing prompt was also attached to each of the samples). The rubric was then used to score a random sample of student writing assignments from the program as a whole. All faculty scored student writing assignments outside of their disciplines.

Rubric scoring. The rubric was organized into three rows, one row for each PLO, and into three columns that included descriptive feedback for each level of competency: "Incomplete", "Acceptable", and "Accomplished". When evaluating the student writing assignments, the faculty selected one of the five scoring options (0, 0.5, 1, 1.5, or 2) for each row of the rubric to indicate the students' level of competency ("incomplete" was represented by the scores 0 and 0.5, "acceptable" by 1 or 1.5, and accomplished by a 2). An average score of 1.0 ("acceptable") was desired.

(B) PLO Assessment-Impact: Summarize the major findings of your program's PLO assessments. What are some improvements that have been, or can be, implemented as a result of PLO assessment? NOTE: If you intend to implement any of these changes, you should create Action Plans in the Planning module of SPOL. Doing so will also allow you to request resources that may be required for successful implementation. This past semester, 27 papers and exams were assessed. 85% (23/27) of the papers/exams received at least a 1 "acceptable" score. The average was 1.44, an increase from the previous assessment. The criterion was met. This was the second year the rubric was used to assess student competency. During the first year, one major area of concern that was discussed during the scoring of the samples: there was some difficulty identifying the social science theories that the writing assignments were targeting (although faculty attached the writing prompt). During the second year, there was some confusion with sampling methods. A few faculty members did not use random sampling to select their examples. This probably altered the results. It was decided all examples need to be randomly selected next semester. Also, faculty discussed a benefit to using the rubric as a way to improve instruction. The general analytic rubric was viewed as a tool to share and learn from each other, which was viewed as refreshing given the diversity of the social sciences program.

5. Looking Ahead

11. Program Improvement Initiatives: How will you address the opportunities for improvement that you identified throughout the prior sections of this Program Review? What research or training will you need to accomplish these plans? What supplies, equipment, or facilities improvements do you need? Please do not include a written response here. Rather, use the Planning module of SPOL to create your Strategic Action Plans.

First of all, it's important to remember that Economics is NOT a program at Canada, it is a discipline within the "Social Sciences" program which consists of nine departments: anthropology, communication studies, economics, geography, history, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology. Mostly these are one full-time person departments. With this in mind, I will distinguish between discipline needs (economics) and program needs (social sciences writ large)

Economics

Training: The need money to attend economics conferences to discuss teaching and content trends in economics and to stay current with the literature is ever present. Additionally, money to support honors courses and conferences would also benefit the social sciences program by keeping abreast of changes in teaching as it relates to honors courses. Additionally, the move to CANVAS necessitates training.

Supplies: Need new pull down screen in 13-116—old one is filthy. Pencil sharpeners in all the rooms

Facilities: none

Social Sciences

1) We need to maintain a specific, identifiable space on campus where social science students can gather and events may occur. Currently we have a space in the library, we should maintain that space.

2) Coordination time for the social sciences remains problematic. Sometimes time is allocated, other times it is not or it is reduced. The college needs to decide if it wants SS to do things beyond teaching classes and keeping curriculum current, if so then coordination time needs to be found.

3) Marketing of the SS disciplines has been less than successful, at least in the eyes of some social science faculty members. Continuing discussions as well as concrete plans and evidence of the execution of any plans needs to come from those on campus who are responsible for marketing duties

4) With the exception of History all social science disciplines are managed by a single full time person. These resources continue to limit what can be done in each of disciplines.

5) Conversations about program efficiencies should be on going at the college so that everyone has a better awareness of the goals and objectives as well as the means to effectuating those goals and objections.