

Annual Assessment Report to the College 2008-2009

College: COBAE

Department: Economics

Program: B.A. in Economics

Liaison: Leah Marcal

1. Overview of Annual Assessment Project(s)

1a. Assessment Process Overview: In general, program assessment activities are coordinated by the College Assessment Director who is also a member of the Economics Department. Faculty members teaching 300 and 400-level courses design and collect course embedded measures. All assessment results are distributed to and reviewed by the Department at the start of the fall semester. More specifically, this year, 11 (out of 12) program learning goals were directly assessed with course embedded measures in seven upper-division courses.

1b. Implementation and Modifications: No unplanned modifications.

2. Student Learning Outcome Assessment Project:

2a. Which Student Learning Outcome was measured this year?

Quantitative skills

2b. What assessment instrument(s) were used to measure this SLO?

Course embedded measures were used in ECON 401 (fall only), 412 (spring only), and 433 (spring only). Students' quantitative skills were assessed with essay exam questions where they had to conduct a formal (graphical) treatment of a complex problem. Extensive use and knowledge of economic models is required for students to perform well in these essay exam questions.

2c. Describe the participants sampled to assess this SLO:

Exam answers of all students enrolled in two sections of ECON 401 (fall only), 412 (spring only), and 433 (spring only) were assessed.

2d. Describe the assessment design methodology: Cross-sectional samples which provide a snapshot of the student population, at one point in time.

2e. Assessment Results & Analysis of this SLO:

ECON 401: on average, 30% of students' work deemed not good enough. However, 31% was good enough and 37% was very good.

ECON 412: 20% of students' work deemed not good enough. However, 56% was good enough and 24% was very good.

ECON 433: 29% of students' work deemed not good enough. However, 48% was good enough and 24% was very good.

2f. Use of Assessment Results of this SLO: None this year.

2a. Which Student Learning Outcome was measured this year?

Communication skills

2b. What assessment instrument(s) were used to measure this SLO?

Students' writing skills were assessed in ECON 401 (fall only) and 433 (spring only) with an essay exam question; and in ECON 412 (spring only) with a term paper. Additionally, students oral presentation skills were assessed in ECON 405 (spring only).

2c. Describe the participants sampled to assess this SLO:

The work of all students enrolled in one section of ECON 401 (fall only), 405 (spring only), 412 (spring only), and 433 (spring only) were assessed.

2d. Describe the assessment design methodology: Cross-sectional samples which provide a snapshot of the student population, at one point in time.

2e. Assessment Results & Analysis of this SLO:

ECON 401: 28% of students' writing deemed not good enough; while 72% deemed good enough or very good.

ECON 405: 0% of students' presentation skills deemed not good enough; while 100% deemed good enough or very good.

ECON 412: 16% of students' writing deemed not good enough; while 84% deemed good enough or very good.

ECON 433: 19% of students' writing deemed not good enough; while 81% deemed good enough or very good.

2f. Use of Assessment Results of this SLO: None this year.

<p>2a. Which Student Learning Outcome was measured this year? Understand why there are gains from trade</p>
<p>2b. What assessment instrument(s) were used to measure this SLO? Students' understanding of why there are gains from trade was assessed with a question on the ECON 405 midterm.</p>
<p>2c. Describe the participants sampled to assess this SLO: Exam answers for students (i.e., 18) enrolled in the 405 class.</p>
<p>2d. Describe the assessment design methodology: Cross-sectional samples which provide a snapshot of the student population, at one point in time.</p>
<p>2e. Assessment Results & Analysis of this SLO: Some 66% of the students' work did not meet the learning goal and 17% barely met the goal. Additionally, only 17% did meet the goal.</p>
<p>2f. Use of Assessment Results of this SLO: None this year.</p>

<p>2a. Which Student Learning Outcome was measured this year? Understand the importance of opportunity cost</p>
<p>2b. What assessment instrument(s) were used to measure this SLO? Students' understanding of opportunity cost was assessed in ECON 411 with an exam question.</p>
<p>2c. Describe the participants sampled to assess this SLO: Exam answers for 24 students enrolled in the 411 class.</p>
<p>2d. Describe the assessment design methodology: Cross-sectional samples which provide a snapshot of the student population, at one point in time.</p>
<p>2e. Assessment Results & Analysis of this SLO: Some 29% of the students' work did not meet the learning goal and 46% barely met the goal. However, 25% did meet the goal.</p>
<p>2f. Use of Assessment Results of this SLO: None this year.</p>

<p>2a. Which Student Learning Outcome was measured this year? Understand why some economies are wealthy and others are not</p>
<p>2b. What assessment instrument(s) were used to measure this SLO? Students' understanding of why some economies are wealthy and others are not was assessed with an essay question on the final exam in one section of the ECON 401 class (fall only).</p>
<p>2c. Describe the participants sampled to assess this SLO: Some 42 students enrolled in one section of the ECON 401 class during the fall semester.</p>
<p>2d. Describe the assessment design methodology: Cross-sectional samples which provide a snapshot of the student population, at one point in time.</p>
<p>2e. Assessment Results & Analysis of this SLO: Roughly 39% of students' work deemed not good enough; while 22% deemed good enough and 39% was very good.</p>
<p>2f. Use of Assessment Results of this SLO: None this year.</p>

<p>2a. Which Student Learning Outcome was measured this year? Understand key macroeconomic measures of economic activity</p>
<p>2b. What assessment instrument(s) were used to measure this SLO? Course embedded measures were used in ECON 401 (fall only) and 405 (spring only). Students' understanding of key macroeconomic measures was assessed with essay exam questions.</p>
<p>2c. Describe the participants sampled to assess this SLO: All students enrolled in one section of ECON 401 (fall only) and ECON 405 (spring only).</p>
<p>2d. Describe the assessment design methodology: Cross-sectional samples which provide a snapshot of the student population, at one point in time.</p>
<p>2e. Assessment Results & Analysis of this SLO:</p> <p><u>ECON 401</u>: 8% of students' work deemed not good enough. However, 60% was good enough and 32% was very good.</p> <p><u>ECON 405</u>: 65% of students' work deemed not good enough; and only 35% was very good.</p>
<p>2f. Use of Assessment Results of this SLO: None this year.</p>

<p>2a. Which Student Learning Outcome was measured this year? Understand the role of markets as an organizer of economic activity</p>
<p>2b. What assessment instrument(s) were used to measure this SLO? Course embedded measures were used in ECON 410 and 412. Students' understanding of the role of markets was assessed within an essay question on the final exam.</p>
<p>2c. Describe the participants sampled to assess this SLO: All students enrolled in ECON 410 (spring only) and ECON 412 (spring only).</p>
<p>2d. Describe the assessment design methodology: Cross-sectional samples which provide a snapshot of the student population, at one point in time.</p>
<p>2e. Assessment Results & Analysis of this SLO: <u>ECON 410</u>: 12% of students' work deemed not good enough; while 28% deemed good enough and 60% was very good. <u>ECON 412</u>: 36% of students' work deemed not good enough; while 28% deemed good enough and 36% was very good.</p>
<p>2f. Use of Assessment Results of this SLO: None this year.</p>

<p>2a. Which Student Learning Outcome was measured this year? Express economic concepts both intuitively and more formally</p>
<p>2b. What assessment instrument(s) were used to measure this SLO? Course embedded measures were used in ECON 401 (fall only), 409 (fall only), and 410 (spring only). Students' abilities were assessed with a 10-page research paper in 409; and with essay exam questions in 401 and 410.</p>
<p>2c. Describe the participants sampled to assess this SLO: All students enrolled in one section of ECON 401 (fall only), 409 (fall only), and 410 (spring only).</p>
<p>2d. Describe the assessment design methodology: Cross-sectional samples which provide a snapshot of the student population, at one point in time.</p>
<p>2e. Assessment Results & Analysis of this SLO: <u>ECON 401</u>: on average, 33% of students' work deemed not good enough. However, 50% was good enough and 17% was very good. <u>ECON 409</u>: only 4% of students' work deemed not good enough. However, 88% was good enough and 8% was very good. <u>ECON 410</u>: 20% of students' work deemed not good enough. However, 30% was good enough and 50% was very good.</p>

2f. Use of Assessment Results of this SLO: None this year.

2a. Which Student Learning Outcome was measured this year?

Use and interpret economic data and statistics effectively

2b. What assessment instrument(s) were used to measure this SLO?

Course embedded measures were used in ECON 409 (fall only) and 410 (spring only). Students' abilities were assessed with questions from the final exam in ECON 409 and with a research paper in ECON 410.

2c. Describe the participants sampled to assess this SLO: All students enrolled in ECON 409 (fall only) and ECON 410 (spring only).

2d. Describe the assessment design methodology: Cross-sectional samples which provide a snapshot of the student population, at one point in time.

2e. Assessment Results & Analysis of this SLO:

ECON 409: Roughly 24% of the students' work was deemed not good enough. However, 60% was good enough and 16% was very good.

ECON 410: 15% of the students' work was deemed not good enough. However, 43% was good enough and 42% was very good.

2f. Use of Assessment Results of this SLO: None this year.

2a. Which Student Learning Outcome was measured this year?

Understand the impact of monetary and fiscal policies on macroeconomic variables

2b. What assessment instrument(s) were used to measure this SLO?

Course embedded measures were used in one section of ECON 401 (fall only) and 405 (spring only). Students' understanding was assessed with essay exam questions. Extensive use and knowledge of economic models is required for students to perform well in these essay exam questions.

2c. Describe the participants sampled to assess this SLO: Some 42 students enrolled in one section of ECON 401 during the fall semester and 18 students enrolled in ECON 405 during the spring semester.

2d. Describe the assessment design methodology: Cross-sectional samples which provide a snapshot of the student population, at one point in time.

2e. Assessment Results & Analysis of this SLO:

ECON 401: 33% of students' work deemed not good enough. However, 28% was good enough and 39% was very good.

ECON 405: 47% of students' work deemed not good enough. However, 24% was good enough and 29% was very good.

2f. Use of Assessment Results of this SLO: None this year.

2a. Which Student Learning Outcome was measured this year?

Evaluate the significance of market failure for public policy

2b. What assessment instrument(s) were used to measure this SLO?

Course embedded measures were used in ECON 433. Students' abilities were assessed within an essay exam question on the midterm.

2c. Describe the participants sampled to assess this SLO:

Some 21 students enrolled in ECON 433 during the spring semester.

2d. Describe the assessment design methodology: Cross-sectional samples which provide a snapshot of the student population, at one point in time.

2e. Assessment Results & Analysis of this SLO:

Roughly 33% of the students' work was deemed not good enough. However, 38% was good enough and 29% was very good.

2f. Use of Assessment Results of this SLO:

None this year.

3. How do your assessment activities connect with your department's strategic plan?

Recent assessment findings indicated that students taking ECON 401—a required course for the economics major—were weak on certain economics fundamentals. We altered our strategic plan to remedy this situation. The change (in fall 2007) involved making a lower-level economics course (i.e., 311) a new prerequisite for ECON 401. Subsequent assessment results suggest that our students have a better understanding of fundamental economic concepts before enrolling in ECON 401.

4. Overall, if this year's program assessment evidence indicates that new resources are needed in order to improve and support student learning, please discuss here.

A need for increased resources was not indicated by this year's assessment data. However, additional full-time faculty would facilitate a more complete offering of economics elective courses.

5. Other information, assessment or reflective activities not captured above.

None.

6. Has someone in your program completed, submitted or published a manuscript which uses or describes assessment activities in your program? Please provide citation or discuss.

No.