

***Online Assessment Tracking Database***

Sam Houston State University (SHSU)  
*2014 - 2015*

**Economics BBA**

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| Goal                                     | <p><b>High Quality Program In Economics</b> 🔑</p> <p>For a program in economics to be considered as "High Quality", it should provide students with the foundation of knowledge necessary to interpret the economic events happening around them.</p>  |
| Objective (L)                            | <p><b>Students Should Be Familiar With Macroeconomic Concepts And Tools</b> 🔑</p> <p>Macroeconomics is the economics sub-field of study that considers aggregate behavior, and the study of the sum of individual economic decisions. Macroeconomics can be used to analyze how best to influence government policy goals such as economic growth, price stability, full employment and the attainment of a sustainable balance of payments. Graduates will be able to use their skills to influence government policy goals.</p>                        |
| Indicator                                | <p><b>Intermediate Macroeconomics Final Exam</b> 🔑🔑</p> <p>Intermediate Macroeconomics is a course required of all economics majors. Performance on the final exam is an indicator of how well students understand the key concepts of macroeconomics.</p>   |
| Criterion                                | <p><b>Average Score On Selected Questions From Intermediate Macroeconomics Exam</b> 🔑</p> <p>The average subscore on the selected questions will be at least 70%.</p>  |
| Indicator                                | <p><b>Macroeconomic Assessment Questions</b> 🔑🔑</p> <p>Areas where student performance was short of our department goals tend to be related to operations of a monetary system/policy (questions 1, 10, 11, and 12). The average of these four areas was 56.5%. Attention will be required to address this area.</p> <p>Areas addressing fiscal policy (questions 2, 6, 7 and 8) averaged 73.8%. These averages exceeded our departmental objectives.</p>  |
| There are no actions for this objective. |  |
| Objective (L)                            | <p><b>Students Should Be Familiar With Microeconomic Concepts And Tools</b> 🔑</p> <p>Microeconomics is a branch of economics that studies how individuals, households, and firms make decisions to allocate limited resources, typically in markets where goods or services are being bought and sold. Microeconomics has been called "the bottom-up view of the economy", or "how people deal with money, time, and resources." Graduates will be able to use money, time, and resources effectively in both their professional and personal lives.</p> |
| Indicator                                | <p><b>Microeconomics Principles Assessment</b> 🔑🔑</p> <p>A set of 10 questions was administered to students in 5 different sections of ECON 2302 (Principles of Economics).</p>  |
| Criterion                                |  |

### Average Score On Microeconomics Principles Assessment 🔑

The average score on the Microeconomics Principles Assessment should at least 70%.

#### Finding

#### Elasticity Concept Assessment 🔑

Questions covering elasticity concepts indicates weaknesses in student understanding/Mastery of the concept. student performance did not reach our standard of 70%. Also students did not reach our standard on the concept of derived demand.

#### Action

#### Fall 2015 Plans 🔑

In the fall 2015 faculty meeting, copies of all microeconomics questions that we have used in assessment since 2008 will be available for review and discussion. The department members will assemble a body of questions to draw from that focuses on shortcomings, weaknesses and strengths of our current curriculum approach. New approaches and modifications will be implemented. The weakness area dealing with elasticity indicates added resources are required to enhance our students' quantitative skills. This will require added class time devoted to this concept. Some instructors have committed to additional assignments on this concept. In addition, more activities will assigned in the quantitative classes (Business Analysis). Faculty members are commitment to preparing students with stronger skill sets. This is consistent the university's list of skill sets outline by our university president (see "Attributes of SHSU Graduates"). Assessment indicators will be reviewed in 2015-2016 period.

#### Objective (L)

#### Students Should Be Able To Analyze Data 🔑

Data analysis is an integral part of the research process. We examine the data using different lenses to answer different questions – to describe a phenomena or event or population, to capture the development of skills and characteristics, or to determine differences based on a proscribed set of variables. We examine, define, conceptualize, and quantify the data in order to answer our questions about who, what, when, where, why, how and how much. Data analysis is a crucial tool that can be used to improve business decisions and help students become better citizens. Graduates will be able to use developed skills to conduct data analysis.

#### Indicator

#### Economics - Data Analysis Assessment Indicator 🔑

The average of the data analysis assessment indicator of those students who take ECON 3357 and ECON 4357.

#### Criterion

#### Average Score On Data Analysis Assessment 🔑

The average assessment score will be greater than 70%.

#### Action

#### Fall 2015 Plans 🔑

In the fall 2015 faculty meeting, copies of all microeconomics questions that we have used in assessment since 2008 will be available for review and discussion. The department members will assemble a body of questions to draw from that focuses on shortcomings, weaknesses and strengths of our current curriculum approach. New approaches and modifications will be implemented. The weakness area dealing with elasticity indicates added resources are required to enhance our students' quantitative skills. This will require added class time devoted to this concept. Some instructors have committed to additional assignments on this concept. In addition, more activities will be assigned in the quantitative classes (Business Analysis). Faculty members are committed to preparing students with stronger skill sets. This is consistent with the university's list of skill sets outlined by our university president (see "Attributes of SHSU Graduates"). Assessment indicators will be reviewed in the 2015-2016 period.

### Objective (L)

#### Students Should Understand How International Issues Affect The Economy 🔑

International economics describes and predicts production, trade, and investment across countries. Wages and income rise and fall with international commerce even in large rich developed economies like the US. A firm understanding of how international issues affect individuals, firms, and the government is increasingly necessary in our global economy. Graduates will be able to use international economics in product production, trade, and investments across countries.

### Indicator

#### International Issues Assessment Indicator 🔑

Economics students in ECON 4340 (International Economics) were asked, on their final exam, questions covering five key areas of international economics. These areas are as follows:

- 1) Determining the pattern of comparative advantage
- 2) How welfare changes through trade
- 3) Effects of a tariff on trade
- 4) Consequences of global economic integration
- 5) Trade implications of changes in international monetary exchange rates

### Criterion

#### Average Score On International Issues Assessment 🔑

The average assessment score will be at least 70%.

There are no actions for this objective.

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### Previous Cycle's "Plan for Continuous Improvement"

During the 2014-2015 academic year, the faculty intend to complete the curriculum review process. As a consequence, a decision must be made as to how to fit another quantitative skills class into the 120 credit hour major. Decisions also need to be made about how to integrate Excel or any other data processing software into the curriculum.

Please detail the elements of your previous "Plan for Continuous Improvement" that were implemented. If elements were not implemented please explain why, along with any contextual challenges you may have faced that prevented their implementation.

Moving forward, the Economics program review committee recommends the following changes in the Economics curriculum:

- 1) Inclusion of a quantitative requirement.
- 2) In addition to ECON 4365, the committee proposes another quantitative course in basic econometrics (ECON 4362: Econometrics for Business).
- 3) The students will have more flexibility in choosing electives.
- 4) In consultation with the Department of Mathematics, the committee proposes to create a mathematics minor that includes courses that are consistent with American Economic Association's recommended courses. Students who would like to go to graduate school will have the option to take mathematics minor.

These are the major findings and recommendations.

**Plan for Continuous Improvement - Please detail your plan for improvement that you have developed based on what you learned from your 2014 - 2015 Cycle Findings.**

1. In addition to ECON 4365, the committee proposes another quantitative course in basic econometrics (ECON 4362: Econometrics for Business). Discussion for providing an additional quantitative course with the department of mathematics has continued through 2015. Issues with the overlap with their department course offerings have been discussed. The mathematics department is concerned that our proposed econometrics class overlaps with their regression class. Our view is that econometrics classes are more narrowly focused on approaches and techniques used in the economics research areas. Other economics programs (of our size and scope) typically have a separate econometrics offering (our survey of schools found 80% offered such a class). Another difficult issue is the problem of generating enough student enrollment to justify offering the course. No final outcome has occurred.

2. Our department continues with a seminar series where SHSU faculty present their on-going research and outside scholars come to campus to present their research. Our undergraduate students are encouraged to attend these presentations. For example, a presentation dealing with environmental economics would be appropriate for students currently enrolled in Econ 3352 (Energy and Environmental Economics). Over the 2014-2015 period, 25 students participated in this program. The department will continue and enhance this successful program. Student feedback will be assessed during the 2015-2016 period.

3. Faculty members will strengthen our collaboration outreach with the Economic Education Program at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. One outcome will be to bring speakers to the

classrooms.

In the past, there has been regular interaction with the people in charge of this program and our economics faculty through the participation in the Economic Scholars Program (ESP) Annual Conference. Professor Nath has mentored two students in Honors projects over the 2014-2015. These research projects resulted in student presentations at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas special program for student research.

This student centered activity will continue (and be expanded) during the 2015-2016 period. However, it is difficult for many students to attend the conference in Dallas (or Houston) and, therefore, having a speaker from the Federal Reserve Bank on campus to speak to the students in our economics classes will be a more effective way of making them aware of the Fed and its role in the economy. This will enhance our program for economics majors.

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