

**Outcomes Assessment
Department of Economics
Graduate Studies Program
October 2004**

Structures

There are several individuals and committees within the Graduate Program that guide the planning and evaluation of outcomes. These various structures work together to insure that students as individuals and the program as a whole continue to strive for academic excellence. Following are the individuals and committees overseeing the process and a brief description of the role each plays in the process.

1. Director of Graduate Studies (DGS): This position, filled by a tenured member of the faculty of the department, has overall responsibility for program direction and guidance. He/she oversees the development and implementation of the assessment plan in relation to departmental goals.
2. Graduate Curriculum Committee: Consisting of several Economics faculty members as well as two graduate students, this committee acts as an advisory board for the Director of Graduate Studies providing input on all matters related to the Graduate Programs. In addition, this committee is responsible for oversight of degree requirements. Based upon committee recommendation, proposals for degree requirement changes are prepared and presented to full faculty for approval.
3. Microeconomics Qualifying Exam and Macroeconomics Qualifying Exam Committees: These committees oversee the assessment of Ph.D. students' knowledge of economic theory and are responsible for the administration of the theory examinations. Each student's examination is assessed by committees of three or more faculty.

Assessment of Desired Outcomes in the Graduate Program

Ph.D. Program Outcomes

The overall goal of the Ph.D. program is to provide rigorous mathematical, logical and economic training to students, enabling them to become active researchers within their chosen field of specialization.

Intended Outcome	Relevant Experiences	Measures	Results	Changes Based on Results
Sound knowledge of economic theory (micro and macroeconomics)	16 credit hours of economic theory coursework required	Microeconomic & Macroeconomic Qualifying Examinations	Students successfully completing examinations continue with the Ph.D. course sequence. Students that do well (3.3 or higher) in the core classes continue to have the greatest success passing the qualifying exams.	Students are clearly informed of their options and timeline for completion of M.S. if they do not pass exams. Documents outline testing time frame as well as options for appealing examination results.
Knowledge in 2 fields of specialization	Minimum of 6 graduate economics	Field qualifying examinations or a grade of B+ or better	Almost all students unable to obtain B+ grades chose to take	Field exams are being phased out.

	courses required in addition to the core courses	in the field courses.	classes for a different specialization rather than field exam. Students successfully completing classes with B+ or better are allowed to continue to the Preliminary Oral Examination for the Ph.D. degree.	
Development of dissertation research	Student completes 3 rd year paper	Econ 590 for 3 credits. Satisfactory evaluation by major professor and one other professor	Students are prompted to get a good start on their dissertation work. Students are more prepared for their preliminary exam in line with normal progress guidelines.	Student's assistantship funding may be reduced if paper is not completed. The third year paper is relatively new and is still in the process of being evaluated.
Qualitative methods including mathematical and econometric knowledge	Completion of 12 credit hours of mathematical coursework	Minimum of "B-" grade in each course	Demonstrated competence in mathematical modeling and statistical tools to facilitate research methods	
Develop research presentation skills	Attendance at Department workshops. Presentation of research at one of the workshops	Econ 693 – 3 credits. Satisfactory evaluation by professor in chosen field of specialization.	Students gain experience in presenting research information by giving a workshop, and also from attending workshops given by their peers and professionals in their field.	Specific sections of the workshop class (Econ 693) are used for fields of specialization.
Development of sound research skills	Completion of 9-14 credit hours of research under the direction of a major professor	"S" grade for all hours of research	Research thesis evaluated by POS committee during the final oral examination.	Ongoing tracking by the Graduate Studies office of examination results.
Development of sound research skills	Research assistant duties	Satisfactory performance of duties as evaluated by research supervisor	Evaluations were not always consistently submitted and did not always provide the necessary information. Some students do not have RA assignments.	Questions were revised and evaluation forms have been put online to reduce time needed to prepare, complete, and return forms. Allows evaluators to be more candid.
Timely completion of Ph.D.	Students are informed of normal progress guidelines for each year.	Normal Progress Guidelines	Students need to be monitored each semester for meeting normal progress guidelines	Time limitations for assistantship funding were put in place.

M.S. Program Outcomes

The overall goal of the M.S. program is to provide sound training in economic theory and application which will lead to industry oriented careers or the pursuit of further training.

Intended Outcome	Relevant Experiences	Measures	Results	Changes Based on Results
Sound knowledge of economic theory	Completion of economics core and elective course requirements	Completion of a minimum number of Econ courses; Minimum of "B-" grade in each course	Review of POS forms indicated inconsistent number of hours of economics coursework completed.	Degree requirements now include completion of at least 17 credit hours of economics coursework exclusive of research or creative component credit.
Ability to apply economic theory	Research assistant duties	Satisfactory performance of duties as evaluated by research supervisor	Evaluations were not always consistently submitted and did not always provide the necessary information.	Evaluation forms have been revised to ask more specific questions and put online for ease in completion and analyzing. Allows evaluators to be more candid.
Research skills	Completion of creative component or thesis.	Satisfactory performance in 2 credits of Econ 599 for CC or satisfactory performance in 3 credits of Econ 699 for thesis.	Students were allowed to take the CC only with the approval of the DGS and special conditions.	Department reviews guidelines for choices of CC or thesis options periodically.

In addition to the above indicated measures, the Director of Graduate Studies of the Department of Economics provides annual evaluations for all Ph.D. and M.S. students. These evaluations indicate to each individual student what has been accomplished during the past academic year and what should be completed during the upcoming year. Each student is made aware of the criteria which need to be met in order to be considered within the guidelines of normal progress as based upon degree requirements.