

Instructional Program Review Report

Sierra College, 2018-19

Department/Program Name: Economics

Date Submitted: March 12, 2019

Submitted By: Stan Spencer

Please find attached the Economics Department Statistics Report (DSR) (ECON_DSR_Classic_2019.pdf), and related information from the Economics Department section of the dashboard (ECON_DASHBOARD_DSR_19.2.20.pdf).

1) Relevancy: This section assesses the program's significance to its students, the college, and the community.

1a) To provide context for the information that follows, describe the basic functions of your program.

The Economics Department offers two core courses (Econ 1A and 1B) and an Independent Study course (Econ 28). The department created an Associate in Arts in Economics for Transfer degree which first became available in the 2014-2015 academic year. Econ 1A and 1B are required courses for business majors transferring to a four-year school, as well as many Business students seeking a two-year degree. This is the fundamental reason why economics has been included as part of the Business and Innovation Interest Area (along with the Business Department and the Recreation Management Department). However, economics is one of the social science disciplines, and is part of the Liberal Arts Division. Economics courses are taken by students majoring in the full spectrum of other disciplines to help fulfill their general education requirements, and lifelong learners enroll in economics courses to expand their understanding of the discipline and the critical role it plays in our society. Finally, the department helps to serve the needs of the students, the college, and the community by offering its courses at the Rocklin, Nevada County, and Tahoe-Truckee campuses, as well as online.

1b) How does your program support the district mission, as quoted below?

“Sierra College provides an academic environment that is challenging and supportive for students of diverse backgrounds, needs, abilities, and goals with a focus on access, equity, student-centered learning, and achievement. The college is committed to practicing diversity and inclusion, and recognizes that a diverse and inclusive curriculum and workforce promotes its educational goals and values. Institutional learning outcomes guide the college’s programs and services, encouraging students to identify and expand their potential by developing knowledge, skills, and values to be fully engaged and contributing members of the global community. Sierra prepares students by offering Associate’s and transfer degrees, certificates, career and technical education, foundational skills, as well as lifelong learning and enrichment.”

The Economics Department in recent years has had one full-time faculty member and 8-10 part-time faculty members. The department's commitment to practicing and promoting diversity in our workforce is demonstrated by the seven new part-time faculty hired from the Spring 2017 semester through the Fall 2018 semester: Nashmiyeh Ali, Stacy Taylor, Asia Larkin, Gerald Blackwill, Zhicheng Liang, Yohan Jeong, and Preeti Tickoo. In terms of race/ethnicity, two of the seven are white, and the majority are female.

The Economics Program supports all four of Sierra College's Institutional SLOs.

The Communication ISLO is supported in all sections of Econ 1A and 1B through the reading of required textbooks, the use of active listening skills in classroom lectures and discussions, and a variety of writing assignments.

The Technology and Information Competency ISLO is supported primarily through the need for students to evaluate and examine information. More specifically, to succeed in the program students need to be able to filter information for relevance and accuracy, apply criteria to determine credibility, utilize data gathered to draw conclusions, and construct meaning from expanding and conflicting information.

The Critical and Creative Thinking ISLO is supported through exercising the students' ability to analyze the validity or relevance of arguments, distinguish fact from opinion, and develop interpretations with an awareness of different views and reasoning. Additionally, students are required to problem solve using sound reasoning to specify solutions and consequences using methods appropriate to the problem (such as the scientific method, mathematical reasoning, and principles of logic).

The fourth Institutional SLO of Citizenship is supported in all four of the sub-categories: Ethics, Diversity, Personal Responsibility, and Sustainability/Global Awareness. The Economics Program helps students: 1) develop and apply ethical reasoning and decision making skills, 2) recognize, understand, and respect diversity, 3) evaluate social justice issues and identify social responsibilities to elicit social change while recognizing the ethical implications of political, social, and economic institutions, and 4) accept personal responsibility by recognizing oneself as the principal cause for opportunities and experiences. The Economics curriculum is particularly applicable to this fourth ISLO as a result of the focus on individual choice and responsibility, environmental economics, globalization, poverty, and economic inequality.

The Economics Department serves a diverse student population including: 1) transfer students preparing for upper division course work in economics, social science and business at a four-year schools, 2) transfer and career and technical training students completing general education requirements, and 3) lifelong learners seeking to expand their understanding of the discipline and the critical role it plays in our society. The faculty and course offerings are centered on the modern student to present economics as an interesting and dynamic social science aimed at student development, success and retention, and engagement of students to assist them in becoming contributing members of society.

1c) Program offerings align with which of the following mission categories; check all that apply:

Transfer

Career Technical Education

Basic Skills

Personal Development/Enrichment

Lifelong Learning

1d) Please analyze your department's performance in supporting the mission categories marked in 1c above. Please provide evidence in support of this analysis, including data from the dashboard relevant to this evaluation; relevant data includes the equity and diversity goals of the department and College.

If any of the following apply to your program, please address them in your analysis.

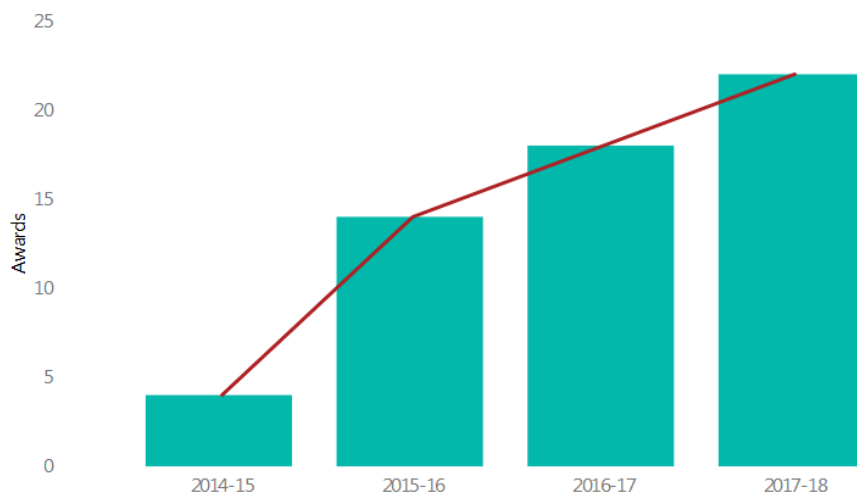
- Degrees, certificates, and/or licenses your department has generated:
 - The alignment of these awards with the district's mission and/or strategic goals. (See the district "Awards Data File, available from Research and Planning, for your numbers).
- Job placement or labor market information for your program's awards and licenses.
- The contribution your program makes to student transfer.
- Participation in basic skills programs.

Economics for Transfer AA-T Degree

The Economics Department's transfer degree has been in place for five years, and the number of students earning a degree has shown impressive growth:

Degrees & Certs by Year

Major Title ● Economics for Transfer ● Students



The department makes a huge contribution to student transfer by offering required lower-division courses for many students (including those in one of the largest transfer programs – business), as well as helping to fulfill general education requirements for many other transfer students. This contribution is demonstrated by the roughly 10-to-1 ratio of students enrolled in economics courses versus economics majors.

The department does not offer any certificates, and/or licenses, and therefore does not have any job placement or labor market information for awards and licenses.

The department does not offer any basic skills courses. However, both Economics 1A and 1B have two course prerequisites that likely contribute to large numbers of students taking advantage of our basic skills program offerings. This will be changing with the required implementation of AB 705. It is likely that the Economics 1A and 1B prerequisites will be eliminated, although we are waiting for clarification from the California State University system, which insisted on the implementation of prerequisites for economics students transferring into CSU Economics departments.

1e) Optional Additional Data: Describe any other relevant contributions of your program to the district mission, goals, outcomes, and values not incorporated in the answers above. Examples include but are not limited to contributions to student equity and success, diversity, campus climate, cultural enrichment, community ties, partnerships and service, etc. Include specific data and examples.

The Economics Department is proud to have one of our part-time instructors, Preeti Tickoo, on the Faculty Equity Task Force. Although the work of the task force is just getting started, Ms. Tickoo has agreed to give regular updates to the department on the work of the task force. She just returned from attending the 15th Annual ATD (Achieving The Dream) Conference in Long Beach.

2) Currency: This category assesses the currency of program curricula as dictated by Title 5 and the currency of efforts in meeting accreditation standards as well as improving pedagogy and engaging in professional development.

2a) Curriculum: Comment on the currency of your program's curricula, including discussion of any recent or projected changes. Please describe your process and the criteria, including state and/or professional mandates, for evaluating and revising curriculum, including the use of SLOs.

All of the economics courses have gone through curriculum review in the past 6 years. The curriculum for both Economics 1A and Economics 1B was modified to meet the recommendations of the working group that established the standards for Economics for Transfer degree programs.

Curriculum review is scheduled again for the department next year.

Curriculum is always on the agenda for discussion at every Economics Planning and Assessment meeting prior to the start of each fall and spring semester, and possible changes to the curriculum are discussed as part of our review of SLO assessment results. Small adjustments are made on an ongoing basis as part of our continuous assessment and evaluation process for our courses and our program.

Since our previous program review, the department has participated in numerous workshops related to the implementation of guided pathways and interest areas. This work has included collaboration with other departments and counselors in the creation of maps to assist our students in the successful and timely completion of their educational goals.

2b) Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: Analyze your program’s assessment of course outcomes, analysis of results, and improvements/changes made to the program as a result of this assessment. Please provide specific data and analysis in the space provided.

The Economics Department is conducting regular assessments of course and program outcomes. We have adopted a schedule: two of the five Economics 1A SLOs are assessed every fall semester on a rotating basis, and two of the five Economics 1B SLOs are assessed every spring semester. This schedule greatly exceeds the required minimum frequency of assessment.

Economics Planning and Assessment meetings at the start of every semester are dedicated to the discussion of course and program outcomes, the assessment of those outcomes, the analysis of assessment results, and measures to be taken to improve the assessment results.

We now have assessment results from every semester going back five years. The department has decided to limit assessment criteria results to either “proficient” or “unsatisfactory,” because we think it is inappropriate to describe student results in introductory courses as “mastery.” Our assessment results have been remarkably consistent for each of our SLOs. Our proficiency rates are different for each SLO, but they all have remained in the range from 80% to 91%. The differences we have seen are not significant enough to be able to draw any meaningful conclusions regarding the meaning of the change, particularly given that each assessment is from a completely different group of students. Lastly, there is no consensus as to whether the percentages are too low, too high, or generally appropriate.

Economics is a social science, and the department members are in agreement that our assessments and the results we have observed do not provide any compelling evidence that would warrant making large department-wide changes to our curriculum. The Economics Department honors diversity and academic freedom by allowing each instructor to determine the appropriate response to the assessment results, however, and department members regularly make small changes on a continuing basis as a result of our assessments. We make modifications in multiple areas, including: 1) presentation of topics (changes in style, method and relative emphasis), 2) use of homework assignments, problem sets, group projects, and student presentations, and 3) methods and content of assessments (changes to quizzes, exams, and other assessments). We do this, as we always have, as part of our efforts to continuously improve teaching and learning.

In the space below, please describe or attach the cycle you have developed for outcomes assessment.

		Econ 1A	C = completed, S = scheduled											
			Related PSLO	F 2013	S 2014	F 2014	S 2015	F 2015	S 2016	F 2016	S 2017	F 2017	S 2018	F 2018
CSLO 1	Analyze the basic principles underlying the economic way of thinking.	A			C					C				C
CSLO 2	List and distinguish basic economic terms.	B			C				C					
CSLO 3	Analyze the supply and demand model.	C			C						C			
CSLO 4	Apply critical thinking skills to evaluate the credibility of economic theories, concepts, and research.	D					C				C			
CSLO 5	Analyze Gross Domestic Product and critique its value as a measure of national output and economic well-being.	D					C						C	
		Econ 1B												
CSLO 1	Analyze the basic principles underlying the economic way of thinking.	A	C						C				C	
CSLO 2	List and distinguish basic economic terms.	B				C		C				C		
CSLO 3	Analyze the supply and demand model.	C	C					C						S
CSLO 4	Apply critical thinking skills to evaluate the credibility of economic theories, concepts, and research.	D				C				C				S
CSLO 5	Analyze marginal productivity theory.	A				C				C				

2c) Professional development: Please describe how your department's individual and group activities and professional development efforts serve to improve teaching, learning and scholarship.

Department meetings and planning and assessment meetings are usually attended by most members of the department faculty, all but one of whom are part-time faculty members. As stated above, the department devotes a significant portion of the meetings to the discussion of course and program outcomes. This discussion also includes the opportunity for each faculty member to share whatever they may have recently learned that they think might be beneficial to other department members in teaching their courses. Suggestions range across a wide variety of areas, including things learned through the reading of professional journals, attendance at workshops and conferences, networking with instructors at other colleges, and new approaches that they have tried in their classrooms.

Additional Economics Department professional development activities include:

- 1) subscribing to an extensive number of professional publications, covering a wide range of perspectives,
- 2) working regularly as economic consultants,
- 3) completing training on distance learning software and teaching methodologies, and
- 4) attending professional conferences and workshops.

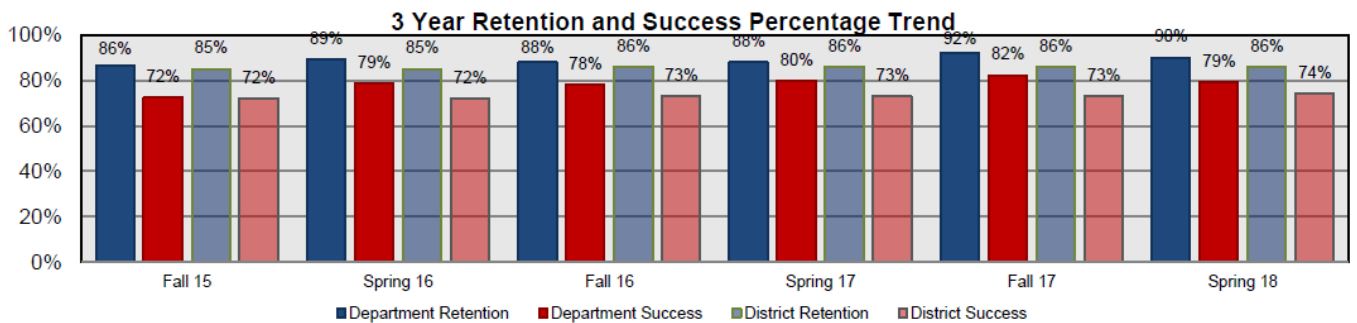
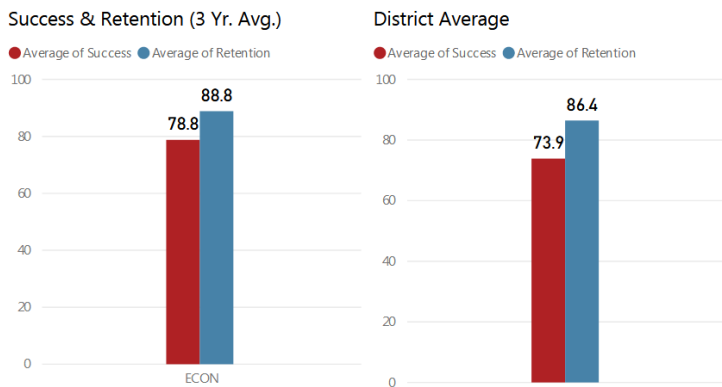
One department member has recently completed a book on the limits to economic growth. Another department member has just returned from the 30th Annual Teaching Economics Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This conference, co-sponsored by Robert Morris University & McGraw Hill Education, is designed to address the interests of teachers of college level economics.

Department members also regularly take advantage of the many opportunities made available to them through Sierra College's Professional and Organizational Development. Multiple department members attended the recent Equity Summit, and other workshops attended include "Addressing the Affective in the Classroom," and "Engaging, Student-Centered Powerpoints in the Classroom."

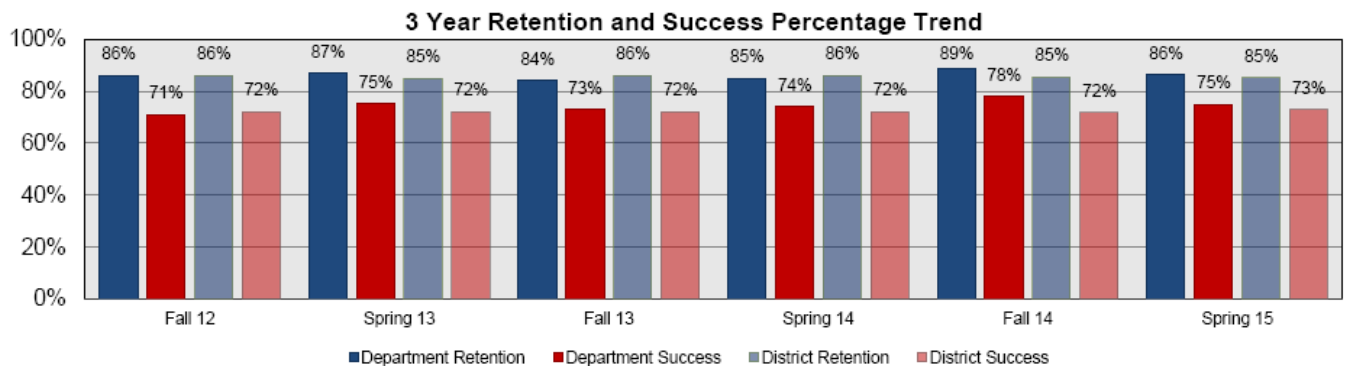
3) **Effectiveness:** This section assesses the effectiveness of the program in light of traditional measurements.

3a) Retention and Success: Assess and evaluate the three-year trends in your program’s data contained in the DSR and analyze any relevant information found in the data dashboard related to retention and success. Please include the results of any relevant outcomes assessments, as appropriate. Address separately the data for on ground and online courses, as well as the data for the campus or centers at which you operate. Please describe any challenges experienced by your program; if you determine that you need to improve the program’s performance, please describe how you plan to achieve this goal.

Retention & Success from the Economics 2019 DSR:



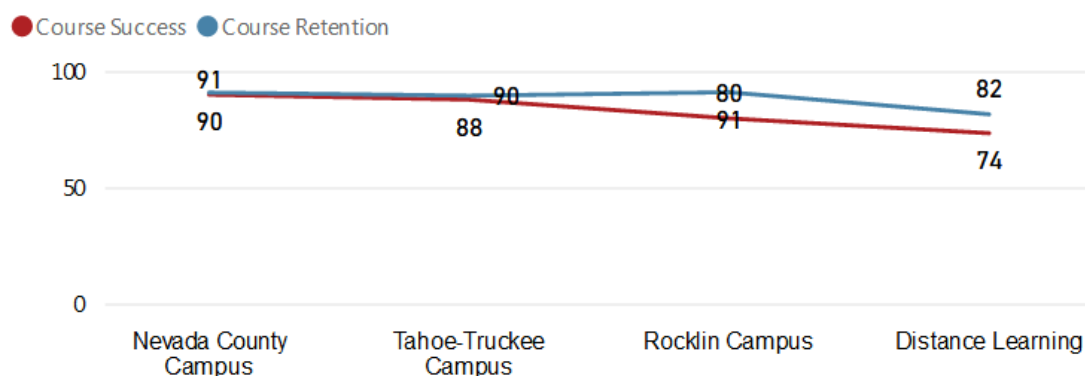
Retention & Success from the Economics 2016 DSR:



Economics Department retention and success numbers improved tremendously after the implementation of course prerequisites in the Fall 2010 semester. Department success numbers since then have exceeded the district-wide average, in a discipline that had traditionally produced numbers that were consistently below district-wide averages.

Relative to our last program review three years ago, the department has continued to improve. Overall retention for the last 3 years has improved from 86% to 88.8%, while overall department success for the last 3 years has improved from 74% to 78.8%.

Course Success & Retention (3 year avg.)



The department has also continued to improve in distance learning instruction. Online retention for the last 3 years is at 82% - a significant improvement since our prior program review, when online retention was at 74%. Online success is at 74%, which is also a significant improvement since our prior program review, when online success was at 64%. While we continue to have lower retention and success numbers for online sections compared to overall numbers, they may be an unavoidable consequence of the online mode of course delivery.

The retention and success numbers at the NCC and Truckee campuses are very good, but the sample size is very small because the number of course offerings is very limited. [The graph shown above from the DSR mistakenly flips the labels for the Rocklin campus (retention is 91%, success is 80%)].

- 3b) Enrollment Trends: Assess and evaluate the three-year enrollment trends in your program's DSR data. In addition, analyze any relevant information found in the data dashboard related to these trends. Include an analysis of fill rates, wait lists, course cancellations, program completion, and classroom use. Address separately the data for on ground and online courses, as well as the data for the campus or centers at which you operate. Please describe any challenges experienced by the program; if you determine that you need to improve the program's performance in any way, please describe how you plan to achieve this goal.

Economics Majors and Enrollment

There were 61 students who majored in economics in the Fall 2015 semester, and this increased to 90 economics majors by the Fall 2017 semester. However, the 2017-18 year was a difficult one for the department. We lost our primary online instructor just before the Fall 2017 semester, and had to cancel a section and reallocate the class assignments in a manner that negatively impacted the following semester as well. Due to the lack of qualified instructors, we were only able to offer

two online sections in the Spring 2018 semester, down from our typical five sections per semester. Additionally, we lost another part-time instructor just prior to the start of the semester who had been teaching three sections per semester for many years. We did manage to offer 19 sections (down from a typical 21 sections), but our total enrollment dropped from an average of 761 the previous two spring semesters to only 640 students in the Spring 2018 semester. This undoubtedly contributed to the decline in the number of economics majors from 90 in Fall 2017 to 67 in Spring 2018.

Program Majors

MajorDescription	2015...	2016...	2016...	2017...	2017...	2018...
Economics for Transfer	61	70	88	83	90	67

Economics Enrollment: Fall 2015 – Spring 2018:

Term SUBJ_CRSE_NO	201580		201640		201680		201740		201780		201840		Total	
	Enrollment	Sections	Enrollment	Sections	Enrollment	Sections	Enrollment	Sections	Enrollment	Sections	Enrollment	Sections	Enrollment	Sections
ECON 0001A	513	14	428	12	478	14	420	12	419	13	308	9	2566	32
ECON 0001B	300	8	340	9	280	7	334	9	292	8	332	10	1878	23

As the chart above shows, the number of sections offered declined from twenty-two per semester to nineteen across this span of six semesters, with a corresponding drop in enrollment. This downward trend is not due to declining student interest in economics courses. It is the result of the department's difficulties related to staffing. Six of the eight part-time instructors we had in the Spring 2014 semester are no longer teaching for us. Those six instructors taught 75% of our sections. In the subsequent semesters, we have evaluated an enormous number of part-time teaching applications, conducted a huge number of interviews, and hired ten new part-time faculty members, five of whom are currently teaching for us.

As we have scrambled to find instructors, we have been forced to reduce our number of sections offered, including reducing the number of online sections, which are in great demand. We also have had to list sections in the schedule as being taught by "staff" many times when we did not yet have an instructor to teach them. Our students have shown a great reluctance to enroll in these sections, which demonstrates intelligence on the students' part, because sections listed as "staff" are much more likely to be cancelled. We routinely have full waiting lists for sections that have an assigned instructor, while sections listed as "staff" have very low single-digit enrollments.

A comprehensive understanding of enrollment in the Economics Department requires a longer timeline than the three years represented in the latest DSR. In the years that culminated with the Spring 2010 semester, the department had two full-time instructors, and typically offered *at least twenty-five* sections each semester. At the end of that semester, Dave Auslam retired, and the department instituted two prerequisites for both Econ 1A and Econ 1B. The Fall 2010 semester was initially scheduled for twenty-six sections, but eight of those sections were cancelled due to the combination of depressed demand (due to the prerequisites) and the lack of available instructors.

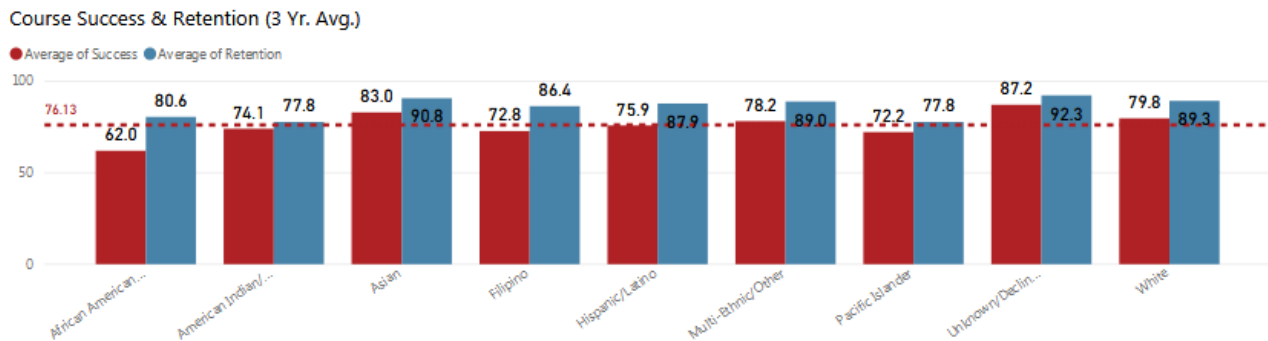
While the prerequisites have likely improved student retention and success, they have also continued to negatively impact enrollment, although it is very difficult to precisely quantify the effect. As stated earlier, with the implementation of AB 705 it is likely that the prerequisites will be eliminated. This will produce increases in enrollment, which will exacerbate the difficulties finding qualified part-time instructors.

On a final note related to enrollment trends, the Economics Department has participated fully in the development of maps, interest areas, and guided pathways. At this point in time, these developments have not had any significant impact on program planning and assessment. We look forward to seeing any useful data that might come from these areas and assist our program planning and assessment in the future.

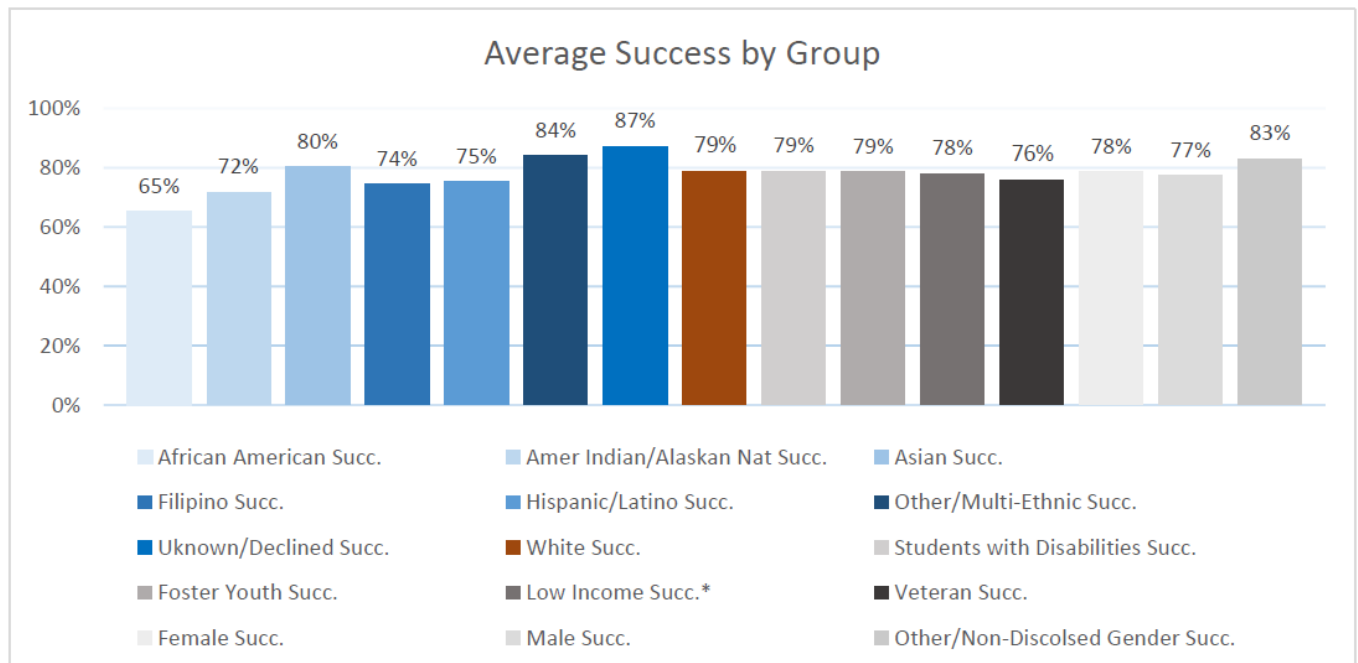
3c) Equity: Analyze and evaluate your program’s performance in promoting and/or achieving equity for at risk students and equity in general. Based on this analysis, describe any plans you have to sustain or improve the program’s contribution to student equity as a central component of student success.

One of the most disappointing aspects of the DSR used for the 2016 Economics program review was the data related to student equity and success. In particular, the Economics Department had a disturbingly low three-year average for African American success of 48%. The latest DSR shows considerable improvement to 62%:

From the current Dashboard (by Ethnicity):



Average Success from the Economics 2019 DSR:



Retention & Success from the Economics 2019 DSR (by Ethnicity):

Retention/Success by Ethnicity	Fall 15		Spring 16		Fall 16		Spring 17		Fall 17		Spring 18		3 Yr Avg
	Enr.	%	Enr.	%	Enr.	%	Enr.	%	Enr.	%	Enr.	%	
African American Ret.		70%		92%		73%		85%		91%		87%	84%
African American Succ.	10	60%	13	69%	30	43%	27	78%	33	79%	30	60%	65%
Amer Indian/Alaskan Nat Ret.		50%		100%		70%		87%		84%		76%	79%
Amer Indian/Alaskan Nat Succ.	4	50%	2	50%	10	60%	15	87%	19	79%	17	65%	72%
Asian Ret.		89%		91%		88%		89%		93%		88%	90%
Asian Succ.	70	76%	57	79%	73	78%	85	81%	60	88%	51	80%	80%
Filipino Ret.		88%		100%		92%		75%		80%		86%	86%
Filipino Succ.	16	81%	16	81%	25	88%	28	50%	10	80%	14	79%	74%
Hispanic/Latino Ret.		93%		86%		88%		85%		87%		89%	88%
Hispanic/Latino Succ.	123	72%	118	76%	130	78%	124	73%	107	73%	95	80%	75%
Pacific Islander Ret.		60%		83%		71%		71%					72%
Pacific Islander Succ.	5	60%	6	67%	7	71%	7	71%					68%
Other/Multi-Ethnic Ret.		100%		67%		100%		86%		96%		97%	94%
Other/Multi-Ethnic Succ.	6	100%	6	50%	5	100%	7	57%	25	84%	32	91%	84%
Unknown/Declined Ret.		100%		83%		100%		75%		100%		100%	92%
Unknown/Declined Succ.	10	100%	6	67%	6	83%	8	75%	5	100%	4	100%	87%
White Ret.		85%		90%		89%		90%		89%		90%	89%
White Succ.	570	72%	545	80%	475	80%	453	84%	454	80%	398	80%	79%
Disparate Threshold (Succ.)		57%		64%		64%		67%		64%		64%	63%

Retention & Success from the Economics 2019 DSR (by Equity Population):

Retention/Success by Equity Pop.	Fall 15		Spring 16		Fall 16		Spring 17		Fall 17		Spring 18		3 Yr Avg
	Enr.	%	Enr.	%	Enr.	%	Enr.	%	Enr.	%	Enr.	%	
Students with Disabilities Ret.		79%		91%		83%		87%		81%		95%	86%
Students with Disabilities Succ.	24	71%	32	88%	36	69%	37	84%	32	75%	38	84%	79%
Foster Youth Ret.		100%				100%				100%		100%	100%
Foster Youth Succ.	3	67%			4	50%			4	100%	3	100%	79%
Low Income Ret.*		88%		88%		85%		87%		89%		89%	88%
Low Income Succ.*	418	74%	374	78%	241	77%	255	80%	350	80%	280	80%	78%
Veteran Ret.		92%		100%		90%		78%		89%		80%	88%
Veteran Succ.	26	81%	24	96%	19	74%	36	69%	9	78%	15	53%	76%
Female Ret.		89%		90%		88%		88%		87%		90%	89%
Female Succ.	315	72%	311	81%	319	79%	319	82%	315	77%	266	80%	78%
Male Ret.		85%		88%		88%		87%		91%		90%	88%
Male Succ.	485	73%	452	77%	433	77%	422	78%	392	82%	369	79%	77%
Other/Non-Discolsed Gender Ret.		62%		100%		89%		92%		100%		100%	87%
Other/Non-Discolsed Gender Succ.	13	62%	6	83%	9	89%	13	85%	6	100%	6	100%	83%

In addition to improved numbers for African American success, the collective numbers for all of the identified groups have come closer together, with much less divergence from one group to another. Although it would be great to be able to point to departmental strategies and specific efforts that produced these improved numbers, the only significant change that we can identify is the department's success in creating more diversity in the makeup of our faculty. This might very well be a contributing factor, but the improved numbers could just as well have been caused by factors that came into play outside of anything that the department has done.

As stated earlier, multiple members of the department participated in the recent Equity Summit, and we are very excited to have one of our members on the Faculty Equity Task Force. We are looking forward to her regular updates to the department on the work of the task force, and whatever suggestions might come to improve the program's contribution to student equity, as the college moves forward in pursuit of the goal of eliminating the achievement gap.

3d) Optional information: Please describe and evaluate any additional relevant information supporting the evaluation of your program's success.

3e) Analysis and Planning: Referring to the analysis in 3a-d, to your ongoing planning and assessment documents, and to any relevant information from section 2 above, please describe your program's plans to maintain or increase its effectiveness and analyze and evaluate your efforts to achieve these goals. As relevant, please address your program's role in the development of MAPs, Interest Areas, and Guided pathways and the impact of these developments on program planning and assessment.

In general, the Economics Department has struggled in recent years to maintain its effectiveness largely due to its huge dependence on part-time faculty, and its inability to maintain a consistent and large enough group of faculty members. This has created considerable uncertainty in the planning of department course schedules, which has impacted enrollment due to the number of courses that are listed as "staff," and the number of sections that have been cancelled.

As was stated earlier, the Economics Department has participated fully in the development of maps, interest areas, and guided pathways. Each of these areas has produced frustration for the department due to the insistence on single paths. The Economics Department serves a wide spectrum of students, but the direction we have been given in the development of maps, interest areas, and guided pathways has been that multiple paths are antithetical to the purpose of these developments.

When we engaged in the creation of maps and guided pathways, the department felt that the only appropriate way to do this would be to create multiple maps and multiple pathways, in recognition of the fact that there are two fundamentally different types of economics majors: those who see economics as an adjunct to business, and those who see economics as a social science. We were told that this would not be allowed, and the single map and guided pathway that we ended up with as a result is in our view far from optimal.

When we moved on to the creation of interest areas, the same issue arose again. Economics was placed in the Business and Innovation Interest Area, along with the Business and Recreation Management departments. This is perfectly understandable given that the largest segment of students taking economics classes are business majors. However, this ignores the portion of economics majors whose study of economics is focused on the social sciences. For these students, economics should be part of the People, Culture and Society Interest Area along with the other social sciences: anthropology, history, political science, psychology, and sociology. One of the unfortunate impacts of this is that when a prospective student is asked to identify the interest area they want to follow, if they choose People, Culture and Society they do not see economics as one of the disciplines.

Furthermore, a very large segment of economics students are neither business nor economics majors. They come from the full spectrum of other majors and they take our classes to fulfill general education requirements. This makes it problematic for the Economics Department to focus on ways to integrate the department with the Business Department and the Recreation Management Department, because it ignores all the other students we serve.

The Economics Department is very unusual in that we are a medium-sized department that essentially offers only two classes, each of which is introductory. The overwhelming majority of economics students are not economics majors. This makes it difficult, and perhaps even inappropriate, for the department to be focused on our role as a "program." The reality is that we primarily provide a service to students in *other programs* who take our classes to meet a requirement of their major or to meet general education requirements. This is one reason why, at this point in time, the development of maps, interest areas, and guided pathways has not had any significant impact on program planning and assessment.

4) Resources: This category assesses the adequacy of current resources available to the program and describes and justifies the resources required to achieve planning goals by relating program needs to the assessments above.

4a) Please describe the future direction and goals of your program for the next three years in terms of sustaining or improving program effectiveness, relevance, and currency. Include any relevant analysis of equity goals and the development of MAPs, interest areas, and guided pathways. Please incorporate analysis of any relevant outcome or other data in this description, including any data from the dashboard.

As stated above, the Economics Department has struggled in recent years to maintain its effectiveness largely due to its huge dependence on part-time faculty, and its inability to maintain a consistent and large enough collection of faculty. Despite our staffing and scheduling difficulties, we have typically maintained a full-time equivalent faculty load over 4.0, with only one full-time faculty member.

Instructional FTEF by Load Type	Fall 15	Spring 16	Fall 16	Spring 17	Fall 17	Spring 18	3 Yr Avg
FT	0.80	0.80	1.00	0.80	0.80	1.00	0.87
PT	3.60	3.40	3.23	3.40	3.40	2.80	3.30
OV			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total FTEF	4.40	4.20	4.23	4.20	4.20	3.80	4.17

FT/PT Ratio (FT%)	Fall 15	Spring 16	Fall 16	Spring 17	Fall 17	Spring 18	3 Yr Avg
Dept	19%	20%	24%	23%	19%	26%	22%
Rocklin	29%	29%	33%	29%	27%	31%	29%
NCC	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
RC							#DIV/0!
TT	0%			0%	0%		0%
DL	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

The Economics Department full-time/part-time ratio has been exceptionally low since Dave Auslam retired after the Spring 2010 semester. There are some eccentricities to the method used to determine the official FT/PT number, but to put it in simple terms the number of course offerings taught by full-time faculty each academic year has been consistently less than one out of every five sections.

Our enrollments have declined slightly during a period when the largest group of students we serve – business majors – has grown in size. Because of this, we have been expecting that the guided pathways analysis would tell us that economics courses are a roadblock to student success because business majors have difficulty fitting them into their schedules. So far, however, no information has been provided regarding courses that are roadblocks to student success. Additionally, the Economics Department is expecting that there will be a significant increase in the demand for our courses when we eliminate our prerequisites. We are very concerned about our ability to maintain our program effectiveness with our ongoing staffing difficulties, given the expectation of increasing demand for our classes.

4b) Please describe and justify any projected requests for additional staff, new or augmented technology/equipment, and additional or remodeled facilities necessary to support these goals. Please incorporate any relevant data related to SLOs, student success, and equity.

Equipment/Technology:

The Economics Department does not have a need for additional or new equipment or technology, although all economics instructors will continue to require smart classrooms.

Facilities:

In recent years, enrollment in Economics Department courses offered on the Rocklin campus at 9:30am or 11:00am has produced fill rates typically at 120-125%, along with very long waitlists. Online sections are also typically full, and demand is usually strong for sections offered at 8:00am and 12:30pm. This has not been true with any consistency for sections offered at 2:00pm or later. As explained earlier, some of the low enrollment can be traced to the sections being listed in the schedule as taught by “staff.” However, there can be no doubt that student demand for our courses is focused on sections taught before 2:00pm and sections taught online. Therefore, to better serve the needs of our students, the department needs to be allowed to offer multiple sections at the times that students will enroll in them. Since the retirement of Dave Auslam, we have repeatedly been told that we are not allowed to offer multiple simultaneous sections at 9:30am, 11:00am or 12:30pm. We need more rooms available at those times.

Staff:

Prior to the Fall 2010 semester, the Economics Department had two full-time faculty members. Since Dave Auslam’s retirement after the Spring 2010 semester, the department has been operating with only one full-time faculty member. For many years, this worked reasonably well, in part because Mr. Auslam continued to teach a 60% load as an emeritus faculty member, and we had a group of long-term, part-time faculty who also taught 60% loads. In recent years however, this situation has deteriorated as multiple long-term, part-time faculty members have left the department. We have been desperately scrambling to find qualified individuals to teach the sections we need to offer to meet the needs of our students. This dysfunction is now bearing fruit with reduced section offerings, reduced enrollment, and fewer economics majors. This is happening at a time when the demand for sections is likely to be increasing due to increased numbers of business majors and the elimination of prerequisites for economics classes.

The Economics Department therefore desperately needs an additional full-time instructor.

4e) Please check the appropriate boxes in the chart below indicating the general reasons for the resource requests described above (please check all that apply):

Function/Role	Maintenance	Development	Growth	Safety	Outcomes	Other success measures	No Requests
X	X	X	X		X	X	

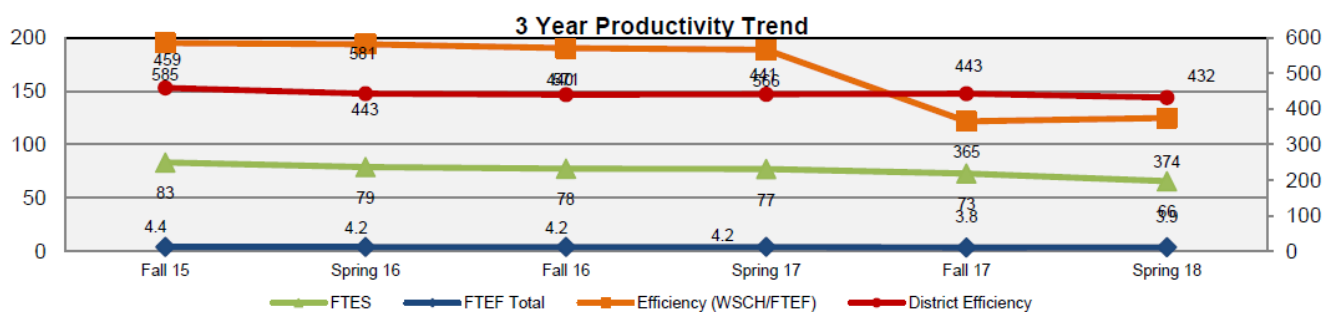
5) Summary/Closing

5a) Based on the analysis above, briefly summarize your program's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.

The Economics Program has a long history of providing two very significant courses to students from a wide variety of majors who have diverse backgrounds, needs, abilities, and goals. Until very recently, the department has done this while maintaining high numbers for efficiency, fill rate, and average class size. Student retention and success numbers were improved dramatically many years ago, and have continued to improve since then. Also, the creation of the Economics for Transfer AA-T Degree has resulted in a continuously growing number of economics majors earning degrees.

Since 2010, the department has operated with a very low full-time/part-time ratio, and only one full-time faculty member. The difficulties inherent in this situation were masked for many years due to a carry-over effect from having a large number of long-term part-time faculty members who taught with maximum loads. The loss of most of these faculty members in recent years has exposed a serious weakness in the department. The unavailability of experienced, qualified instructors has negatively impacted scheduling, enrollment, efficiency, and other measures of department success.

ECON	Fall 15	Spring 16	Fall 16	Spring 17	Fall 17	Spring 18	3 Yr Avg
FTES	83	79	78	77	73	66	76
FTEF Total	4.4	4.2	4.2	4.2	3.8	3.9	4.1
Efficiency (WSCH/FTEF)	585	581	571	566	365	374	506.9
Fill Rate	95.8%	93.2%	92.0%	93.0%	77.0%	81.0%	88.7%
AveSize	37.0	36.6	36.2	35.9	33.5	32.8	35.3
# of Sections	22	21	21	21	17	17	20
Department Retention	86%	89%	88%	88%	92%	90%	89%
Department Success	72%	79%	78%	80%	82%	79%	78%
Online Retention	73%	80%	77%	81%	77%	89%	80%
Online Success	63%	70%	67%	74%	71%	83%	71%



The district-wide push for improvements in student success, the expansion of other departments that rely on the availability of economics classes, and the elimination of prerequisites for economics courses should all contribute to the opportunity for the Economics Department to expand the number of sections offered and grow enrollment.

The overwhelming challenge faced by the department is that it is not in a position to be able to take advantage of this opportunity. Due to staffing limitations, it has recently been unable to even maintain the number of sections offered in previous semesters.

The Economics Department needs a second full-time instructor.

5b) How has the author of this report integrated the views and perspectives of stakeholders in the program?

This report was written by the one full-time faculty member in the department, who is, by default, the department chair. Over the course of the three previous years, the status of the Economics Program, its future, and the needs of the college regarding what the program provides have been discussed with an expansive group of stakeholders. In addition to part-time members of the department, these discussions have included college administrators, faculty members from other departments, counselors, tutors, and students. These discussions have happened in formal settings including department meetings, guided pathways workshops, mapping workshops, interest area workshops, and equity workshops. Additionally, department members have been asked for input via email and in private discussions. There have also been many informal discussions with the other named stakeholders at various places and times.