

Annual Program Report 2024-2025

(For programs not using Planning & Self Study software for the annual report)

The report(s) should be inclusive of all levels, degrees (i.e. certificates, bachelor's and master's), modalities and locations.

Department: EHPS

Department Chair: Paul Weizer

Department Assessment Committee Contact: Adem Elveren, Christa Marr, Ozge Ozay

This document is to be kept in the department and an electronic file is due to the AVP of Institutional Research and Planning by June 1, 2024.

Section I: Program Assessment (please complete this section for each program in your department)

Program: Economics

A. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) (Educational Objectives)

I. List of PLOs and the timeline for assessment

PLO #	PLO – Stated in assessable terms	Where are the learning outcomes for this level/program published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	Timing of assessment (annual, semester, bi-annual, etc.)	When was the last assessment of the PLO completed?

1.	Students will be able to critically analyze and evaluate issues in local, national, and global economic life using evidence-based arguments	Course Catalog	Annual	Spring 2024
2.	Students will be able to articulate economic models in a multidisciplinary context	Course Catalog	Annual	Spring 2024
3.	Students will be able to demonstrate understanding key economic concept through quantitative reasoning and through written communication	Course Catalog	Annual	Spring 2024
4.	Students will be able to apply economic theory through experiential learning	Course Catalog	Annual	Spring 2024
5.	Students will be able to communicate economic ideas effectively through the use of statistical analysis, through the use of writing, and through the use of oral skills	Course Catalog	Annual	Spring 2024
6.	Students will be able to identify assumptions and assess implications of diverse economic perspectives	Course Catalog	Annual	Spring 2024

- II. **PLO Assessment** (Please report on the PLOs assessed and/or reviewed this year. Programs should be assessing at least one each year.)

Using the table below, list and briefly describe the **direct method(s)** used to collect information assessing whether students are learning the core sets of knowledge (K), skills (S) and attitudes (A) identified as essential.

PLO # (from above)	Assessment description (exam, observation, national standardized exam, oral presentation with rubric, etc.)	When assessment was administered in student program (internship, 4th year, 1st year, etc.)	To which students were assessments administered (all, only a sample, etc.)	What is the target set for the PLO? (criteria for success)	Reflection on the results: How was the “loop closed”?
#1) Students will be able to critically analyze and evaluate issues in local, national, and global economic life using evidence-based arguments	Even academic years: Senior Seminar Paper/Presentation Odd Academic Years: International Economics and/or Public Finance and/or Economic Development Course Materials TBD	2nd, 3rd or 4th year of study	Economics majors and/or minors	At least 75% of the students developed or highly developed in skill based on AAC&U rubric	Assessment results are discussed and reflected on in a program meeting of faculty members. Changes to assessment, if any, are considered during this time.
#2) Students will be able to articulate economic models in a multidisciplinary context	Even academic years: Senior Seminar Paper/Presentation Odd Academic Years: Economic Development and/or Public Finance Course Materials TBD	2nd, 3rd or 4th year of study	Economics majors and/or minors	At least 75% of the students developed or highly developed in skill based on AAC&U rubric	Assessment results are discussed and reflected on in a program meeting of faculty members. Changes to assessment, if any, are considered during this time.

#3) Students will be able to demonstrate understanding key economic concept through quantitative reasoning and through written communication	<p>Even academic years: Senior Seminar Paper/Presentation</p> <p>Odd Academic Years: International Economics and/or Public Finance Course Materials TBD</p>	2nd, 3rd or 4th year of study	Economics majors and/or minors	At least 75% of the students developed or highly developed in skill based on AAC&U rubric	Assessment results are discussed and reflected on in a program meeting of faculty members. Changes to assessment, if any, are considered during this time.
#4) Students will be able to apply economic theory through experiential learning	<p>Even academic years: Senior Seminar Paper/Presentation</p> <p>Odd Academic Years: International Economics Course Materials TBD</p>	2nd, 3rd or 4th year of study	Economics majors and/or minors	At least 75% of the students developed or highly developed in skill based on AAC&U rubric	Assessment results are discussed and reflected on in a program meeting of faculty members. Changes to assessment, if any, are considered during this time.
#5) Students will be able to communicate economic ideas effectively through the use of statistical analysis, through the use of writing, and through the use of oral skills	<p>Even academic years: Senior Seminar Paper/Presentation</p> <p>Odd Academic Years: Economic Development and/or Public Finance and/or International Economics Course Materials TBD</p>	2nd, 3rd or 4th year of study	Economics majors and/or minors	At least 75% of the students developed or highly developed in skill based on AAC&U rubric	Assessment results are discussed and reflected on in a program meeting of faculty members. Changes to assessment, if any, are considered during this time.

#6) Students will be able to identify assumptions and assess implications of diverse economic perspectives	Even academic years: Senior Seminar Paper/Presentation Odd Academic Years: Public Finance and/or International Economics and/or Game Theory and/or Economic Development Course Materials TBD	2nd, 3rd or 4th year of study	Economics majors and/or minors	At least 75% of the students developed or highly developed in skill based on AAC&U rubric	Assessment results are discussed and reflected on in a program meeting of faculty members. Changes to assessment, if any, are considered during this time.
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You may use this comment box to provide any additional information, if applicable:

We will determine the specific artifacts from our elective courses used in our Annual Program Assessment Report in Fall 2026. Next year we will resume assessing our program using the paper/presentation from ECON4000: Economics Senior Seminar.

Summary of Findings: Briefly summarize the results of the PLO assessments reported in Section II above combined with other relevant evidence gathered and show how these are being reviewed/discussed. How are you “closing the loop”?

Reflection Prompt	Narrative Response
Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course,	In even academic years, we use a senior seminar (capstone course) to determine that graduates have achieved our program learning outcomes

portfolio review, licensure examination)	
Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)	The three economists (Drs. Ozay, Elveren, and Marr) interpret the data by each reading the artifacts and independently completing the associated rubric(s). We will meet annually to discuss the findings.
What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence? (close the loop)	We have identified more courses that can be used to assess our program learning outcomes. We are working to evolve the capstone assignment in ECON4000.

B. Assessment Plan for Program/Department

- I. Insert the program or department Assessment Plan (This is an independent plan from what is reported in this document).
See attached.

- II. Explain any changes in the assessment plan including new or revised PLOs, new assessments that the program/department plans to implement and new targets or goals set for student success.

Updates to ECONOMICS ASSESSMENT PLAN

In the even academic years (i.e. AY25-26), we will assess the economics program using ECON4000: Senior Seminar. We will be able to assess all six program learning outcomes in the projects (paper/presentation) created in that course.

In the odd academic years (i.e. AY24-25), we will assess the economic program using upper level economic elective courses. We have mapped economics courses that meet the program learning objectives below and are focusing on courses that are (1) offered every year and (2) meets multiple program learning objectives to assess the economics program. Currently, we are looking to use ECON2500: Economic Development, ECON2600: Public Finance, and ECON3550: International Economics in the odd academic years. However, we have several alternative options for assessment for each program learning outcome.

1. Students will be able to critically analyze and evaluate issues in local, national, and global economic life using evidence-based arguments
 - ECON2010: Political Economy of Gender (every two years)
 - ECON2400: Money and Banking (every year)
 - ECON2500: Economic Development (every year)
 - ECON2600: Public Finance (every year)
 - ECON3550: International Economics (every year)
 - ECON3100: Economic Geography (every two years)
2. Students will be able to articulate economic models in a multidisciplinary context
 - ECON2005: Game Theory (every year)
 - ECON2010: Political Economy of Gender (every two years)
 - ECON2500: Economic Development (every year)
 - ECON2600: Public Finance (every year)
 - ECON3100: Economic Geography (every two years)
3. Students will be able to demonstrate understanding key economic concept through quantitative reasoning and through written communication

- ECON2005: Game Theory (every year)
- ECON2400: Money and Banking (every year)
- ECON2600: Public Finance (every year)
- ECON3002: Basic Data Skills (every two years)
- ECON3550: International Economics (every year)
- ECON3550: Intermediate Macroeconomics (every year)
- ECON3650: Intermediate Microeconomics (every year)
- ECON3700: Econometrics (every two years)

4. Students will be able to apply economic theory through experiential learning

- ECON2005: Game Theory (every year)
- ECON3002: Basic Data Skills (every two years)
- ECON3003: Fed Challenge (at least once in every two years)
- ECON3700: Econometrics (every two years)
- ECON3550: International Economics (every year)

5. Students will be able to communicate economic ideas effectively through the use of statistical analysis, through the use of writing, and through the use of oral skills

- ECON2005: Game Theory (every year)
- ECON2400: Money and Banking (every year)
- ECON2500: Economic Development (every year)
- ECON2600: Public Finance (every year, every three semesters)
- ECON3000: History of Economic Thought (every year)
- ECON3002: Basic Data Skills (every two years)
- ECON3550: International Economics (every year)
- ECON3550: Intermediate Macroeconomics (every year)
- ECON3650: Intermediate Microeconomics (every year)
- ECON3700: Econometrics (every two years)
- ECON3003: Fed Challenge (at least once in every two years)

6. Students will be able to identify assumptions and assess implications of diverse economic perspectives

- ECON2010: Political Economy of Gender (every two years)

- ECON2500: Economic Development (every year)
- ECON2600: Public Finance (every year)
- ECON3000: History of Economic Thought (every year)
- ECON3100: Economic Geography (every two years)
- ECON3550: International Economics (every year)

III. If you do not have a plan, would you like help in developing one? ____Yes

C. Program Review Action Plan or External action Letter/Report

Annual Reflection/Follow-up on Action Plan from last Program Review or external accreditation (only complete the table that is appropriate for your program)

I. Programs that fall under Program Review:

i. Date of most recent Review: Spring 2022

ii. Insert the Action Plan table from your last Program Review and give any progress towards completing the tasks or achieving targets set forth in the plan.

Specific area where improvement is needed	Evidence to support the recommended change	Person(s) responsible for implementing the change	Timeline for implementation	Resources needed	Assessment Plan	Progress Made this Year
#1) Provide additional resources, including in the form of faculty course releases and a physical space, to ensure the consolidation of the FLIP initiative started by the economics faculty.	Economists tried to get the FLIP initiative off the ground in the last 4 years with creating research collaboration opportunities with students majoring and minoring in Economics, doing background work for a Field Lab course and reaching out	Dr. Marr and Dr. Ozay plan to compile a list of courses to create FLIP concentration. In 2023-24 AY, all economists plan to reach	2022-2023 and 2023-2024 AYs	None	Yearly internal meeting among economists to assess the progress of action plan in May	FLIP has been on hold since 2023-24 AY. Other initiatives have taken precedence in the last few years, most importantly the launch of a Bachelor of Science in Finance. In 2024-25 AY, the Economists prepared the foundation for the Finance major by submitting an AUC

	<p>to stakeholders in the community. Without being granted any resources (space, course release etc.), we couldn't meet the goals laid out in our initial proposal. We plan to start to make FLIP part of our identity with our student population by (1) creating a FLIP concentration that includes interdisciplinary coursework centered around the theme of inequality (i.e. sociology courses, history course, political science courses, statistics for social justice) and faculty and student research projects and (2) creating the Field Lab course (Please see #4 below)</p> <p>We also plan to identify a computer on which we can download our STATA License which our technology department has confirmed we acquired.</p>	out to various programs to create the concentration.			of 2023 and May of 2024.	proposal and drafting a Letter of Intent to be submitted to the DHE. This new major, closely related to Economics, will support our enrollments in Economics courses due to the overlapping curricula.
#2) Hire an additional full-time economics faculty member. In particular, and related to the next recommendation on this list, hiring a faculty member with a	Both our external evaluator report and anecdotal evidence provide evidence that we have lost Economics majors in the past because of the lack of variety of upper-level courses that we offer. In addition, 3 faculty members	Administration for the new tenure track person	Open	Funding for a new tenure track position	NA	We have voiced the need for hiring a finance faculty member while promoting the finance major to the Board of Trustees this winter and while presenting the new program proposal to AUC Curriculum and AUC. This

background in monetary and financial economics would be greatly complementary to the existing needs of the program and could contribute to attracting and retaining new economics majors.	have difficulty offering all the required courses within 2-year cycle. Therefore, economists agree that the program needs an additional faculty member. One course that is required by Internal Business and Economics concentration hasn't been offered in the last 6 years. We think with a new faculty member specialized in International Finance and other finance courses that we can have a joint position in the Business Program.					need for the new hire is also written in the proposal itself.
#3) Explore the creation of programmatic offerings related to Finance.	We plan to create a Finance Economics concentration housed in the Economic program since we already routinely offer Money and Business and Public Finance courses every year.	In 2022-23 AY, Dr. Marr and Dr. Ozay will explore what such a Financial Economics concentration looks like at other institutions and prepare a proposal using courses from our existing program as well as those from the Business and/or other	2022-2023 and 2023-2024 AYs	None	Yearly internal meeting among economists to assess the progress of action plan in May of 2023 and May of 2024.	As mentioned in #1 above, as a result of a collaboration between EHPS and Business Programs, we are launching a Bachelor of Science in Finance, which will begin enrolling students in Fall 2026. This academic year, we submitted the AUC proposal and drafted the Letter of Intent for this new program.

		<p>existing programs at Fitchburg State.</p> <p>In 2023-24 AY, all economists plan to reach out to Business Program to create concentration in Finance.</p>				
#4) Collaborate with Career Services to streamline internship and post-graduation job opportunities.	<p>Our external evaluator cited that students were interested in being exposed to more <i>economic</i> internship opportunities. More so, students “felt that the program would greatly benefit from providing internship and job information <i>early on</i> during their academic career.”</p> <p>Our evaluator recommended that we use FLIP as a vehicle to further develop internship opportunities within the university and/or community.</p>	<p>In 2022-23 AY, Dr. Marr and Dr. Ozay will reach out to Career Services with an email to Susan Beddes to see whether there are resources (i.e. a website, a handout, an individual) to help our students gain information about internships and career opportunities. We have kept information about alumni and internships</p>	2022-2023 and 2023-2024 AYs	Support from Career Services and Website Coordinator .	Yearly internal meeting among economists to assess the progress of action plan in May of 2023 and May of 2024.	<p>In order to develop an internship database for the Finance program, Dr. Ozay has sent out a survey to local businesses and is in the process of compiling the results. Economists will be able to use this database for Economics internship opportunities as well.</p>

		as a department (EHPS				
#5) Expand opportunities for student interactions outside the classroom to create an economics identity.	The size of the program and the realities of our students (working part-time or full time in addition to being a full-time student etc.) and the limited time they spend in the university interfered with our efforts of creating a community of Economics students.	<p>Dr. Ozay will offer a Fed Challenge course as a topic course in Fall 2023. Economists then plan to rotate the offering amongst themselves every subsequent Fall to engage our students in and outside of the classroom with economics.</p> <p>Dr. Marr will create a Field Lab course in the next two years with a focus on data collection and analysis in the city of Fitchburg. We hope this course will provide an opportunity for community</p>	2022-23 and 2023-24 AYs	Potential funding to attend the Fed Challenge	Yearly internal meeting among economists to assess the progress of action plan in May of 2023 and May of 2024.	<p>We could not offer Fed Challenge due to low enrolment in Fall 2024. It will be offered in Fall 2025.</p> <p>We have also increased the frequency of our experiential courses. For example, Dr. Marr offered Basic Data Skills in this academic year. New courses that have the potential to be engaging and relevant to our students have also been incorporated to our curriculum, for example, Dr. Elveren's Health Economics course.</p>

		<p>engagement and be a consistent vessel for meeting the goals of FLIP as a community facing and focused "project".</p> <p>The economists plan to have an economics "Open House" around the advising period in October 2022. Based on student feedback, this is something we could continue to host each semester to interact with our students outside of the classroom.</p>				
#6) Make Senior Seminar a requirement	We will not make Senior Seminar a requirement at this point. The proposal has been written, but it is not a priority as we struggle to find enrollment for the course and compromise the progression	None	NA	None	None	None

	of our minors. We will continue to offer it as an elective to minors and majors every other year.					
#7) Update the website	This is something that the department has discussed needing attention and we will be a part of the quest to update our course offerings, faculty profiles, and include other details of interest to current and prospective students	Drs. Ozay, Marr and Elveren will work with our department chair, Dr. Lieberman, to update the department website	By the end of AY 23-24.	Assist from our university's website coordinator	Yearly internal meeting among economists to assess the progress of action plan in May of 2023 and May of 2024.	As mentioned above, we prioritized other initiatives this year.

iii. If you do not have an action plan, would you like help in developing one based on your last program review and needs of the program? _____Yes

II. Programs with external Accreditation:

- i. Professional, specialized, State, or programmatic accreditations currently held by the program/department.
- ii. Date of most recent accreditation action by each listed agency.
- iii. Date and nature of next review and type of review.

List key issues for continuing accreditation identified in accreditation action letter or report.	Key performance indicators as required by agency or selected by program (licensure, board or bar pass rates; employment rates, etc.) (If required.)	Update on fulfilling the action letter/report or on meeting the key performance indicators.
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Section II - Departmental Outcomes

A. Departmental Strategic Initiatives

Accomplished Initiatives AY24-25 Add more rows as needed	Corresponding Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3	Indicate (X) if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal

Planned Initiatives for AY 25-26 Add more rows as needed	Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3	Indicate (X) if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal

B. Departmental Accomplishments and Reflection:

Take this section to reflect on--

1. *24-25 Accomplishments not captured above*
2. *Initiatives that you may be considering for 25-26 academic year that you did not already capture above*
3. *Any other thoughts or information that you would like to share*