

# Economics (Business Program)

## 2019 Program Review

### MJC Program Review 2019

Modesto Junior College's Program Review process is divided into 3 sections:

- Program Analysis (SWOT Analysis)
- Goal Setting and Activities
- Resource Request

### Program Analysis

#### Internal Strengths

##### **1. What strengths does the analysis of student data reveal?**

The Business program has done an exceptional job of having students who complete the program earning a living wage. The percentage of students who completed the business program that earn a living wage is 77% compared to the college wide percentage of 54% for all programs. The other thing that stands out is the volume of students passing through the business program. The program supports close to 2000 students and awards roughly 90 degrees each year, one third of these degrees are completed within 3 years.

For the economics department, students success rates are very strong relative to the college average. Additionally, success rates for historically underrepresented groups are very strong relative to the division and college averages.

##### **2. Are there specific aspects of the program that are exemplary or could serve as a model?**

The economics department has seen dramatic growth in the program since hiring Dr. Erick Peterson in Fall 2014. The number of sections has grown substantially which negatively impacted fill rates in the first couple years. In recent years the fill rates have increased and we may be poised to increase the number of sections again.

The macroeconomics courses teach a section on financial literacy that teaches students how to use the stock market to save for retirement. Several students have started their own individual retirement accounts (IRA) after taking the Econ 101 course. Dr. Peterson utilizes a program offered by TD Ameritrade where students can create a stock trading account endowed with \$10,000 of paper money (fake money) where they can practice investing in

stocks and index funds. They can see how their investments perform over the course of the semester and compare their performance to that of their classmates, and other classes across the country.

We offer zero-cost textbook courses for at least one section of all three distinct online courses offered within the economics department. Additionally, Dr. Peterson offers low cost textbook options for all of his face to face sections of Econ 101 and Econ 102.

All economics faculty are student centered in their approach to teaching. We participate in community networking and student outreach including participating in the Civic Engagement Project and Meet the Faculty Night. We attend professional development opportunities focused on student success and equity, as well as improving our online courses.

### **3. What do others see as the program's strengths?**

Economics department serves a large number of students with only one full-time faculty member. We teach the same number of sections and FTES as other programs/departments with three full-time faculty members.

The business program simply moves a huge number of students through their program and those students are highly successful in terms of student success and SLO data compared to the other programs at MJC. The faculty are all super dedicated to not only their own courses but to the program as a whole. I believe other faculty and programs look at the business program as a model of how a high volume high efficiency program can be run while still prioritizing the students experience and success.

### **4. How well are students meeting program learning outcomes, skills, or competencies; and how are they relevant to careers in your discipline or industries for which you help prepare students?**

Students in the Business Program are meeting Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) at a rate of 84.7% overall, while individual CLO to PLO percentage rates range from the high 70s to the low 90s. PLOs are relevant to both transfer and immediate career oriented students obtaining terminal awards. Local employers express satisfaction with student preparedness for the workforce

For the economics department there are no program learning outcomes at there is no award for economics at MJC. However, our GELO and ILO numbers are roughly in line with those of the business department as a whole.

## **Internal Weaknesses**

### **5. What gaps are observed by reviewing the student data?**

For the business department the enrollment rates for African American Students and Hispanic students are below the rates for the student population as a whole. Additionally, success and retention rates were consistently lower than those of white/non-Hispanic

students. 64% overall success rate for the program as a whole versus a 60% success rate for Hispanic students and 49% for African-American students.

For the economics department the results are similar but skewed upwards. Success rates for all economics courses are 80% while success rates for Hispanic students are 77% and African American students have a 70% success rate.

For modality the success rates for business are consistent at 66% for face to face versus online courses. For the economics department the success rates are higher for face to face classes relative to online 85% versus 73% respectively.

## **6. What disproportionate gaps need to be addressed?**

For the business department as a whole they feel that the data on equity is inaccurate, reflected in the same section on their program review. For economics we need to address the gap in the data for success rates in face to face classes relative to online courses.

## **7. What are areas in which the program could improve? (curriculum, scheduling, modality, other?)**

For the business program they can look at developing a path for a fully online AS/AST degree in business administration. They could also look at block scheduling in 8-week block format to improve student success.

For economics, we could also explore adding a block schedule for Econ 101 and 102 that could potentially increase student success and retention rates. Additionally, we can look for professional development opportunities that aim to improve teaching online courses in economics and/or improve student success and equity in online courses.

## **8. Where are there gaps in the program on how students are meeting learning outcomes, skills, or competencies?**

Reading comprehension, basic writing skills, and basic math skills for many students falls short of what is required for college level coursework. For economics this primarily impacts Econ 115 as Econ 101 and Econ 102 have a pre-requisite of Math 29/30 which mitigates the impact.

## **External Opportunities**

## **9. Where are potential opportunities for expansion, improvement, or new program development?**

For business they could add new programs such as entrepreneurship, small business organization and management, and/or social media marketing. Implementing a fully online AS/AST degree in Business Administration.

For economics we could continue to increase the number of online courses to capture more working students. Schedule new sections of face to face courses to increase access. Implement a block schedule of two back to back 8 week courses of Econ 101 and Econ 102. Explore developing an associates degree for transfer in economics. Any of the above

initiatives that would involve adding courses would also necessitate an additional full time faculty member for the department.

**10. What are some industry or disciplinary trends that could enhance the program?**

For business, the demand for accountants with data analytics skills is growing rapidly. As the business community moves to less office work and more connected work from home nurturing an online business program could capture current trends in student and employer preferences for online correspondence.

For economics the modern labor market is highly skewed in favor of careers that require strong quantitative and analytic skills. Economics courses help develop these skills that are in high demand in todays labor market.

**External Threats**

**11. How are changing resources, technology, employer, or transfer requirements affecting the program’s ability to serve students?**

For business, strict transfer requirements limit students choice of business courses.

**12. What are some current industry or disciplinary trends that could have a negative impact on the program?**

For business, Private, for-profit, and online universities responsiveness to program and student scheduling demands can possibly lead to decreased enrollment as students choose courses at other universities. Increase in reporting expected by government and society limits faculty's time available to focus on student success. The recent shift in focus on numerical achievement vs. qualitative achievement could potentially impact the way faculty teach their courses steering them away from real-world applications that can help the students succeed professionally versus less practical outcomes that can be easily measured and reported.

**13. What other obstacles does the program face?**

We have yet to see how guided pathways will impact enrollment in economics courses. Another big factor is faculty morale. For economics it is difficult to recruit and retain talented faculty.

**Goal Setting and Activities**

**Goals**

Program Goal	Mission Alignment	Area of Focus
Increase the number of online course offerings for Econ 101 and Econ 102 to increase student access and improve completion times for students pursuing a business degree.	Innovative Education	Program Design

Improve success rates for distance education courses in Economics to bring them closer to success rates for face to face courses, this should increase the number of students who successfully complete the business degree.	Workforce Needs	Professional Development
Improve success rates for disproportionately impacted groups and reduce equity gaps, this should lead to increased completion of business degrees for underrepresented student populations.	Equity	Professional Development

## Activities

Activities	In Support of Goal #	Outcome or Deliverable
Add Econ 101 to the online course exchange that allows MJC to capture students from other districts looking to add economics courses.	Goal #1	Increase the number of online course offerings for Econ 101 and Econ 102 to increase student access and improve completion times for students pursuing a business degree.
Add more authentic assessments in economics courses to allow students to relate course material to situations they encounter in their everyday lives.	Goal #2	Improve success rates for distance education courses in Economics to bring them closer to success rates for face to face courses, this should increase the number of students who successfully complete the business degree.
Incorporate more small group assignments in courses to allow students to see material from different perspectives.	Goal #3	Improve success rates for disproportionately impacted groups and reduce equity gaps, this should lead to increased completion of business degrees for underrepresented student populations.
Build stronger relationships with support specialists and assigned counselors	Goal #3	Improve success rates for disproportionately impacted groups and reduce equity gaps, this should lead to increased completion of business degrees for underrepresented student populations.
Develop and implement department standards for dropping students after census for non-participation.	Goal #3	Improve success rates for disproportionately impacted groups and reduce equity gaps, this should lead to increased completion of business degrees for underrepresented student populations.

## Resource Requests

Category	Request	Activity	Estimated
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		#	Cost
Prof. Devel.	ASSA conference fees	2	1400
Equipment	Wireless mouse and keyboard for department laptop	2	179
Equipment	External monitor for department laptop.	2	299
Equipment	Second monitor for faculty office FH 160N	3	199
Technology	40 iPad tablets	2	13160
Personnel	Additional full-time faculty member	1	110000
Personnel	Additional part-time faculty	1	4000