Academic Program
Plan for Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes
The University of New Mexico

A. College, Department and Date

1. College: *Arts & Sciences/Main Campus*
2. Department: *Department of Economics*
3. Date: *May 15, 2008, Revised January 15, 2009*

B. Academic Program of Study[1]

B.A. Economics

C. Contact Person(s) for the Assessment Plan

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D. Broad Program Goals & Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

See attached summary of our BA assessment plan (*Econ BA Strategy.doc*).

E. Assessment of Student Learning Three-Year Plan

All programs are expected to measure some outcomes annually and to measure all priority program outcomes at least once over two consecutive three-year review cycles. Describe below the plan for the next three years of assessment of program-level student learning outcomes.

1. Student Learning Outcomes

Relationship to UNM Student Learning Goals (insert the program SLOs and check all that apply):

University of New Mexico Student Learning Goals				
Program SLOs	Knowledge	Skills	Responsibility	Program SLO is conceptually different from university goals.
A1. Students explain, graph and manipulate key economics models including any of the following: supply and demand, theory of the firm, comparative advantage, game theory, externalities, public goods, consumer theory, compensating wage differentials.	X			
E1. Students effectively communicate economic ideas in writing.		X		
F1. Students formulate informed opinions on policy issues and recognize the validity of opposing viewpoints.			X	

[1] Academic Program of Study is defined as an approved course of study leading to a certificate or degree reflected on a UNM transcript. A graduate-level program of study typically includes a capstone experience (e.g. thesis, dissertation, professional paper or project, comprehensive exam, etc.).

2. How will learning outcomes be assessed?

A. What:

SLO	Means of Assessment	Criteria for Success
A1	a. Review student exams in 300 and 400 level courses. [DIRECT]	Based on a rubric, 75% score "acceptable or better."
	b. Survey of graduating seniors will include self-assessment of this knowledge. [INDIRECT]	75% rate themselves proficient.
E1, F1	a. Review student papers in 300 and 400 level courses. [DIRECT]	75% score "acceptable or better" on separate rubrics for B1, D1, E1 and F1.
	b. Administrative review of syllabi and student course sequencing for 300 and 400 level courses to determine which require written assignments (E1) and economic citizenship (F1), how many of our graduating seniors have taken these courses, the order in which they have taken them. [INDIRECT]	50% of 300-level and 400-level courses require writing assignments and all graduating seniors have participated in at least 2 classes with writing assignments.

B. Who:

Our primary assessment of students will be through a review of portfolios they assemble prior to graduation to include evidence of learning in each SLO, including exam questions, papers and other written assignments. Every student who declares an Economics major on or after August 15, 2008 will prepare a portfolio before graduation. Faculty members will develop assessment rubrics for each SLO and a graduate student supervised by the Assessment Coordinator will perform the assessment on every graduating major.

In each of the first two years of the program, before most of the graduating seniors will have been required to compile a portfolio of their work, we will conduct direct assessments of exams and papers for a sample of all majors drawn from at least two classes, for a sample of 50-60 students. As we have between 200 and 250 majors, this cover 20-25 per cent of them, enough to make valid inferences about the outcomes we measure.

All graduating seniors will fill out a survey to include self-assessment of the Student Learning Outcomes, contact information, and immediate and long-term career plans and goals. The contact information will allow us to track the job placements and advanced academic work of our alumni.

Our administrative review of courses completed by our majors will include all majors.

3. **When will learning outcomes be assessed? When and in what forum will the results of the assessment be discussed?**

YEAR	Semester	Actions
	Summer 08	Plan implementation of Portfolio requirement.
ONE	Fall 08	Plan and begin administrative assessment. Write rubrics for Student Learning Outcome A1. Create and pilot survey instrument.
	Spring 09	Continue administrative assessment. Perform assessment of A1 using term papers. Write rubrics for Student Learning Outcomes E1 and F1. Conduct survey of graduating seniors.
	Summer 09	Perform assessment of E1 and F1 using Spring 09 term papers. Prepare 2009 Assessment Report for August discussion by program faculty.
TWO	Fall 09	Special meeting of Undergraduate Committee (Undergraduate Assessment Workshop) to discuss Assessment Report and make recommendations to the faculty. Full faculty considers recommendations. Conclude administrative assessment.
	Spring 10	Pilot first portfolio seminar for graduating seniors. Conduct survey of graduating seniors.
	Summer 10	Perform assessment of A1, E1 and F1 using Spring 09 term papers and portfolios. Prepare 2010 Assessment Report for August discussion by program faculty, which will include a description of program changes (if any) in response to 2009 report.
THREE	Fall 10	Special meeting of Undergraduate Committee (Undergraduate Assessment Workshop) to discuss Assessment Report and make recommendations to the faculty. Full faculty considers recommendations.
	Spring 11	Collect portfolios from graduating seniors. Conduct survey of graduating seniors.
	Summer 11	Perform assessment of A1, E1 and F1 using portfolios. Prepare 2011 Assessment Report for August discussion by program faculty, which will include a description of program changes in response to 2010 report.

4. What is the unit's process to analyze/interpret assessment data and use results to improve student learning?

A. Who

The Assessment Coordinator will have the primary responsibility of creating the assessment rubrics in consultation with other faculty, gathering student work, making assessments and interpreting the data. The Assessment Coordinator will prepare an Annual Assessment Report which will include the result of the previous Academic Year's assessment, assessment instruments and recommendations. The Assessment Coordinator will convene the annual Undergraduate Assessment Workshop.

The Department will provide a Graduate Assistant to help with this considerable charge. The Department Academic Advisor will also provide assistance to the Assessment Coordinator.

The Undergraduate Committee, in an Assessment meeting open to all faculty in August, will review the Assessment Report for the previous Academic Year and make recommendations to the faculty as a whole.

B. Revising assessment instruments, curriculum and pedagogy to improve student learning

The annual Assessment meeting described above will consider the assessment instruments and the Assessment Coordinator will review the instruments on an ongoing basis (see timeline above).

The annual Assessment meeting will make recommendations regarding curriculum design and pedagogy in response to the findings in the Annual Assessment Report.

C. How, when, and to whom will recommendations be communicated?

Prior to the Fall semester each year, the Assessment Coordinator will prepare an Assessment Report summarizing the assessment from the previous academic year. The Undergraduate Director will call a meeting of the Undergraduate Committee and all other interested faculty members in August to discuss the Assessment Report and suggest modifications to the program. The Assessment Report and the suggested program modifications will be presented to the entire faculty at a Department meeting.

BA in ECONOMICS at UNM

	LEARNING GOALS	STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
KNOWLEDGE	A. THEORY: Mastery of basic economic theory	A1. Students explain, graph and manipulate key economics models including any of the following: supply and demand, theory of the firm, comparative advantage, game theory, externalities, public goods, consumer theory, compensating wage differentials.
	B. INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT: Familiarity with institutions that shape economic behavior	B1. Students produce written or oral reports that consider the economics and institutional arrangements of specific regions, countries, organizations, localities, industries or firms.
SKILLS	C. DATA ANALYSIS: Familiarity with data methods, tools and sources	C1. Students generate and interpret summary statistics and regression models.
		C2. Students perform primary research on data they retrieve from original surveys, or official and industry sources.
		C3. Students manage data in Spreadsheets and Statistical software packages.
	D. CRITICAL THINKING: Ability to apply, evaluate and critique economic models	D1. Students evaluate public policy and other economic issues using economic models and data analysis and identifying underlying assumptions of the models and limitations of the data.
		D2. Students distinguish between positive and normative claims.
	E. COMMUNICATION	E1. Students effectively communicate economic ideas in writing and in oral presentations.
VALUES	F. ECONOMIC CITIZENSHIP	F1. Students formulate informed opinions on policy issues and recognize the validity of opposing viewpoints.

ASSESSMENT OF OUTCOMES

Each year prior to the Fall semester, the Assessment Coordinator will prepare an Assessment Report summarizing the assessment from the previous academic year. The Undergraduate Director will call a meeting of the Undergraduate Committee and all other interested faculty members in August to discuss the Assessment Report and suggest modifications to the program. The Assessment Report and the suggested program modifications will be presented to the entire faculty at a Department meeting.

In our first three-year plan, we will employ four assessment methods as follows.

The first method provides direct assessment of student work through review of exams and papers from a sample of upper-division courses. This measure will be replaced by a portfolio review of all graduating seniors, beginning in year two and fully implemented by year three.

The second method is a review of student records and course syllabi to determine which courses our majors are taking in what sequence and what these courses require. We will use this review to determine how many of our majors are taking the most challenging courses and whether they are following the recommended sequence of classes.

The third method is our main assessment tool and will require graduating students to prepare a portfolio of their coursework, including exams and papers, that demonstrate each of the Student Learning Outcomes. This requirement will cover students who declare an Econ major after August 15, 2008. Faculty members and graduate assistants will assess portfolios according to rubrics developed for each Student Learning Outcome.

The department will also conduct a Survey of graduating seniors to include self-assessment on the program's main learning goals, general feedback on the program and immediate and long-term career plans.