<p style="text-align: center;"><u>**LINKING ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT**</u>
<u>**BA ECONOMICS**</u></p>

I.   PROGRAM

B.A. in Economics

II.   PROGRAM MISSION

The Economics Department at San Francisco State University seeks to prepare each student to effectively participate as an informed citizen in the affairs of our society, and to contribute productively in their careers using knowledge learned during their study of economics. The department assists its students in acquiring knowledge of current modes of economic thought central to the discipline of economics, as well as in developing an understanding of the role played by economic institutions in our society. In addition, the Economics Department helps its students master the ability to collect, process, and draw conclusions from economic information, as well as an ability to effectively communicate economic ideas both orally and in writing. These goals are achieved on a continuing basis through formal classroom and laboratory instructions, economics seminars organized on a regular basis, as well as informal interaction between students and Economics faculty members.

III.   PROGRAM GOALS

Students graduating with a B.A. in Economics should be able to use economic theory and methods to explain economic phenomenon, analyze economic problems, and evaluate economic policy solutions. They are expected to learn how to collect quantitative economic information, process it using rigorous modeling techniques, and draw conclusions from it. They should be able to effectively communicate economic ideas in writing and through verbal communication.

IV.   ASSESSING STUDENT ATTAINMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The department's assessment plan focuses on assessing how well students can synthesize and apply materials learned in our capstone, senior seminar course, Econ 690 offered in both Fall and Spring semesters. This course is required for all our majors.

Overall Student Learning Outcomes in Economics

Professor Michael Potapan, who has been teaching this class on a regular basis since fall of 2007, collected data on overall student learning outcomes in our capstone senior seminar course, Econ 690 – Economic Inquiry and Analysis. This course is designed to see how well economics majors are able to master general concepts and methods in the economics discipline.

He assessed how many students in his class were able to master specific learning objectives linked to learning goals identified in the department's assessment plan. He grouped students into three broad categories according to how well they mastered a particular learning objective:

Fully mastered the objective
Partially mastered the objective
Did not master the objective

Broad Student Learning Objectives
The following specific objectives were developed by the department and were linked to specific assessment in Economics 690:

1. Students can intelligently analyze a particular public policy issue that is presented to them (e.g.: impact of CAFÉ standard on auto emission, Macroeconomic forecasts, the Federal Reserve's interest rate policy to address home value appreciation, etc.) using conventional economic reasoning.
2. Students can identify and explain the importance of various economic institutions such as the Federal, State, and the local governments in general, Federal Reserve, the International Monetary Fund, trade unions and the AFL-CIO, trade and industry associations, etc.
3. Students can collect economic data from the various sources, such as the library, the Internet, governmental agencies, international organizations, process the data into a form that conveys meaningful economic information, analyze that data using standard economic and econometric techniques, and draw conclusions from their analysis of the data.
4. Students can speak clearly and in an organized manner before peers, instructors, strangers in effectively communicating economic ideas.
5. Students can write clearly and in an organized manner to effectively convey economic ideas.

All students in the course are given assignments that were linked to the above five objectives. The course instructor determines how many students are able to fully master, partially master, or not master each of the learning objectives. The findings are shown in the tables below. We note that the results reveal significant improvement in most of the learning objectives over the previous year. Noticeable among them is the learning objective under "data collection and analysis". Compared to 2008 - 09 when only 16% could fully master this specific skill, in 2010 – 11 about 62% mastered this skill. This remarkable improvement is due to the new departmental policy, which requires students to take the quantitative modeling technique course, Economics 312: Econometrics I, prior to taking the capstone course Economics 690. However, the test of their verbal presentation skills was not conducted in 2010 - 11. In the future offerings of the capstone course, we plan to assign group oral presentations to help the students improve their presentation skill.

Inventory of Program Assessment Activities for Academic Year 2010 - 2011

This grid offers a model for simplifying departmental assessment endeavors on an annual basis as part of a cycle of academic program review or accreditation. The program's assessment plan should be structured in such a way as to assess all of the program's key learning objectives in the time period between program review or accreditations by concentrating on a subset of objectives each year.

On the grid, the first column identifies **all** of the key learning objectives anticipated for students completing the program. The second column lists the year a particular objective was or will be assessed. The third column indicates the strategies employed in a given academic year to assess student attainment of that subset of objectives chosen for review that year. The fourth and fifth columns summarize the results of the year's assessment endeavors and show how those results are being used to enhance program quality.

College: **Business**

Program: ____Economics_____, **Degree** ___B.A.____   **Date: December 16, 2011**
[Create a separate inventory for each degree, program, and concentration.]

Key Learning Objectives for this Program	Academic Year Objective was/will be Assessed	Methods/Strategies Used to Assess Given Year's Chosen Objectives	Summary of Findings About Student Learning	Use of Findings to Enhance Program Quality
1. Analyze Public Policy Issues	2010-11	Evaluation of written exercises in Skill Set Assignments in 690	43% mastered 36% partially mastered 21% did not master	More focus on analyzing policies in elective courses.
2. Explain Economic Institutions	2010-11	Evaluation of written exercises in Skill Set Assignments in 690	40% mastered 38% partially mastered 22% did not master	Create new skill set assignment for institutions in 690.
3. Collect, Analyze, Interpret Data	2010-11	Evaluation of data research projects in 690	62% mastered 25% partially mastered 13% did not master	Identify specific statistical techniques to cover in 312.
4. Oral Presentation	2010-11	No Oral Presentations during 2010-2011		Assign group oral presentations in future 690 classes.
5. Written Presentation	2010-11	Evaluation of writing quality in final report of data research project in 690	42% mastered 46% partially mastered 12% did not master	Create new skill set assignments for literature review & modeling in 690.

V.   PROGRAM

M.A. in Economics

VI.   PROGRAM MISSION

The Economics Department at San Francisco State University seeks to prepare graduate students for jobs in the public and private sectors as economic analysts, to prepare students for further graduate study, and to further civil discourse in public policy as informed citizen in the affairs of our society. The department trains its students by imparting knowledge of current modes of economic thought central to the discipline of economics, particularly in the use of quantitative methods used in economics. In addition, the Economics Department helps its students master the ability to collect, process, and draw conclusions from economic information, as well as develop skills to effectively communicate economic ideas both orally and in writing. These goals are achieved on a continuing basis through formal classroom and laboratory instructions, economics seminars organized on a regular basis, as well as informal interaction between students and Economics faculty members.

VII.   PROGRAM GOALS

Students graduating with an M.A. in Economics should be able to use economic theory and quantitative methods to analyze economic problems and to evaluate economic policy solutions. They should know how to collect economic information, process it at a sufficiently high level of expertise, and draw conclusions from it. They should be able to effectively communicate economic ideas in writing and speaking at a level greater than the undergraduate student.

VIII.   ASSESSING STUDENT ATTAINMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The department's assessment plan focuses on assessing how well students can synthesize and apply material learned in our capstone, graduate seminar course, Econ 890 offered in Spring semester and required for all of graduate students.

Overall Student Learning Outcomes in Economics

Professor Sudip Chattopadhyay, who regularly teaches the class, collected data on overall student learning outcomes in the Econ 890 course. Part of the reason for this course is to see how well our graduate students are prepared for future careers in the economics profession and to assess how well graduate students mastered the four major learning objectives identified by the department as critical outcomes for the program.

He assessed the percentage of students in his class who were able to master specific learning objectives linked to learning goals identified in the department's assessment plan. He grouped

students into three broad categories according to how well they mastered a particular learning objective:

> Fully mastered the objective
> Partially mastered the objective
> Did not master the objective

Broad Student Learning Objectives

The following specific objectives were developed and were linked to specific assessment tasks given to students in Economics 890:

1. Students should be able to focus on a research topic of their interest or suggested by the instructor that has direct public policy relevance to the local, state, national, or the global economy, and in which economic intuitions, tools, and concepts have an integral role to play.
2. Students should be able to formulate a set of research questions specific to the topic, carry out an in-depth study of the existing literature on economic and policy issues relevant to the specific topic.
3. Students should be able to gather data from published sources to empirically test the research questions they plan to address.
4. Students should be able to apply relevant econometric modeling techniques they have learnt in the previous courses, to the data they gather to empirically test the validity of the research questions.
5. Students should be able to address the issues in a scientifically organized manner, using state-of-the-art modeling techniques, bring out the major findings, understand the strengths and limitations of the research, and finally provide possible pathways for future direction of the research.
6. Students should be able to write a full-length, journal style research article and make a power point presentation in class. Performance in the report is judged primarily based on (i) presentation of the key policy issues, (ii) clarity of objectives, (iii) effectiveness in handling the issues to achieve the goal of the project, (iv) written and oral presentation style, (v) effectiveness in summarizing.

Inventory of Program Assessment Activities for Academic Year 2010 - 2011

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On the grid, the first column identifies **all** of the key learning objectives anticipated for students completing the program. The second column lists the year a particular objective was or will be assessed. The third column indicates the strategies employed in a given academic year to assess student attainment of that subset of objectives chosen for review that year. The fourth and fifth columns summarize the results of the year's assessment endeavors and show how those results are being used to enhance program quality.

College: Behavioral and Social Sciences

Program: ____Economics_____, Degree   __M.A.____   Date: December 16, 2011
[Create a separate inventory for each degree, program, and concentration.]

Key Learning Objectives for this Program	Academic Year Objective was/will be Assessed	Methods/Strategies Used to Assess Given Year's Chosen Objectives	Summary of Findings About Student Learning	Use of Findings to Enhance Program Quality
1. Analyze Public Policy Issues	2010-11	Examination of projects in 890	80% mastered 20% partially mastered 0% did not master	
2. Collect, Analyze, Interpret Data	2010-11	Examination of projects and papers in 890	80% mastered 20% partially mastered 0% did not master	Improvement from the past. However, there is still scope for improvement.
3. Oral Presentation	2010-11	Examination of final presentation in 890	60% mastered 40% partially mastered 0% did not master	Improvement from the past. However, there is more scope for improvement. More oral presentations in other graduate seminars may be necessary.
4. Written Presentation	2010-11	Examination of papers in 890	80% mastered 20% partially mastered 0% did not master	Improvement from the past, because compared to the past practices, more courses now require written presentation.