



**SAN FRANCISCO
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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS
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Date: December 10, 2018

TO: Provost Jennifer Summit, Dean Yim-Yu Wong, Dean Lori-Beth Way, Dean Sophie Clavier and APRC members

FROM: Anoshua Chaudhuri, Chair, Economics *Anoshua Chaudhuri*

SUBJECT: Department of Economics' Response to External Review Report of Economics Seventh Cycle Program Review

We are grateful for the Seventh cycle program review that provided us an opportunity to reflect on our identity, mission, goals and value as well as make plans to continue to offer a program at the cutting-edge of the discipline. In this memo, we will provide a response to the external review report by highlighting the activities that we have already undertaken, our acknowledgement of pending action items, items that we need more help with as well as feedback on items that may not seem relevant and feasible at this time.

Suggested activities already undertaken

In the section on Graduate Education in Economics, external reviewers suggested exploring ways to increase enrollments, 'rebranding', renaming our program to convey our uniqueness and value.

Response: We have already started looking into changing the name of our degree from MA to MS in Quantitative Economics, to accurately reflect the nature and value of our existing program. We have started marketing campaigns through presentations in the GWAR class, tabling at graduate fairs, in order to attract current undergraduate students. We have started offering flexible time frame to graduation depending on the level of preparation and motivation of students with the possibility of graduating in 1 year, 1.5 years, 2 years or 2+ years. We are exploring collaborations with international universities to increase the pipeline of students for our program. Finally, we are exploring offering a graduate certificate in applied economics that may attract students interested in micro-educational and continuing educational opportunities.

External reviewers suggested that teaching related seminars/workshops/brownbags should be offered in the discipline.

Response: This was already identified as an area of weakness. We have done lecturer orientations within the department. Faculty members have mentored current lecturers. There has



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been an effort to coordinate teaching material, syllabi, course outlines, etc. We will continue to find ways to support our faculty and lecturers in teaching pedagogy through workshops, brownbags, etc.

Suggested activities that we agree to do

Under program planning, external reviewers suggested surveying local employers to obtain feedback from employers.

Response: We agree that this will be extremely valuable. Conducting a survey of potential employers would be a valuable exercise. However, a more sustained way to remain connected with the industry can be by constituting a Department Advisory council of 6-7 members representing local employers, alumni, a current graduate and a current undergraduate student and one or two emeritus faculty.

Suggested activities that we need help with

Under Student Learning and Achievement as well as Graduate education in Economics, external reviewers spoke with students and found that students need more communication about the scope for Economics in the job market, more support in career resources.

Response: We try to invite speakers to give research seminars to expose our students to hands-on research. We have tried to sponsor one alumni event per year to allow current students to network with alumni. We encourage our Economics Student Association to organize field trips to potential employer sites. We will continue to support these activities. However, we do not have resources to offer career placement services to our students. Individual faculty have volunteered their time to mentor students by reading their resumes, offering mock interviews, writing recommendations, making connections to potential employers, etc. We urge the college and campus to invest in these services for our students.

External reviewers suggested that our General Education courses (also our introductory courses) should be taught by experienced tenure-track faculty for better student retention, student success and to attract new students into the major.

Response: Currently, with a growing number of majors, we are stretching our TT faculty to offer the core intermediate and core graduate classes. Sometimes we have to hire lecturers to teach our elective courses as well. Our courses are 100% enrolled. We need more TT faculty to support our growing program.



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Suggested activities that are not feasible

The external reviewers suggested offering Masters courses in the downtown center.

Response: Our MA students pay a lower price (which makes it more competitive) than MBA students who are charged a downtown center facilities fee. We do not think we can compete if we start charging our MA students this fee, hence at this time, I think it is not feasible for us to teach at the downtown center.

In summary, we are already in the process of addressing Recommendations #1, #4 and #6. We understand the value of recommendation #2 and will plan for it, in the manner mentioned above. We need help and additional resources with recommendations #3 and #5.

We believe that the college of business can support us with their already existing marketing team, a career office as well as innovative programs such as the Fellows program, Innovation lab, etc. We hope that the marketing team can provide us with more support in meeting our needs. We hope that our students will be provided other ancilliary support. We hope our faculty will be asked to be involved in the recruitment of students for these opportunities. Also, if Economics department faculty want to take on special initiatives (such as looking into ways to improve student success and graduation rates), we hope to get the necessary incentive and support to successfully carry out these activities.

We have been challenged with carrying out inclusive faculty hiring with a small budget that runs out and falls on the department to pay for. With its limited budget, we will be forced to look for faculty in the local area or stop going to national meetings. Finally, our students have been challenged with insecurities around housing, food, travel time and cost that has affected their academic success. We believe our graduate enrollments have dropped due to challenges faced around high cost of living. Graduate tuition waivers and graduate teaching opportunities will provide much need relief and help us become more competitive. A lot of our URM and underserved students are also the ones working multiple jobs. Scholarship opportunities and more funding for URM students would help with retention and successful on-time graduation.