



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
**FULLERTON**

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To: Dean Dr. Morteza Rahmatian

From: Dipankar Purkayastha, Economics Chair *Dipankar Purkayastha*

Subject: Economics PPR External Report

Date: May 7, 2018

We have now completed a comprehensive review of our department. The Internal PPR Report and the External PPR Report demonstrate that the department has performed exceedingly well in many areas but there are some areas of concern. Both the external report and the internal report have much in common. The areas of concern mostly relate to serious resource constraints. I have listed below thirty points - all raised by the external review committee (first column) - and I have given my opinion on how we should address these issues (second column). I hope we will be able to address these soon and close the resource gap.

We are extremely grateful to our department PPR committee (Professors Kristin Kleinjans (Chair), Denise Stanley, Mira Farka and Maria Casanova) for writing the exhaustive report. I am also grateful to the external review committee (Professors Kelly Bedard, Kathleen Preston and Aric Shafran) for their very insightful and helpful comments.

Suggestions from PPR External Reviewers	CSUF Economics Chair's Comments
1. Provide course schedule one year in advance to allow advanced planning by students. Better course sequencing for 400-level courses.	This is already being done.
2. Add internship component to Econ 490.	We will do this as part of Econ 495. Funding requested to support three sections of Econ 495 every year.
3. Assess SLOs not courses, 2 SLOs by AY, for a random sample.	The ad-hoc assessment committee will implement this in co-ordination with the Dean's office.
4. "Close the loop" by splitting Econ 340 into two courses, reconsider sequencing and prerequisites of upper-division courses to ensure sufficient preparation of students.	We will proceed with this. Tentative launch in Fall 2020.
5. Create a "Teaching in Economics" course where undergraduate classroom assistants (UCA) are trained while earning course credit.	This may be difficult to carry out. We may not have a sufficiently large number of interested students. However, we will explore this.
6. Allow graduate students to earn elective course credit when serving as course GAs.	Course credits may be problematic as thesis students have very few free electives to take. They can serve as GA in many classes and get paid for it. GA budget should be increased to 200 hours/week to attract and support good graduate students.
7. Create interdisciplinary tracks, attract minors, actively recruit pre-majors and majors.	We will proceed with this. The department will come up with a more detailed strategy.
8. Improve communication and partner with college advisors to highlight major and career opportunities and clarify responsibilities.	An outreach coordinator can communicate with college advisors, community partners and employers. Outreach coordinator will develop relationships with alums and employers to create knowledge on how to improve career outcomes for our students through a better understanding of skills needed. We are requesting three units

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	assigned time per year for outreach coordinator.
9. Create a “Peer Mentors” group of undergraduate and graduate students to provide outreach and mentoring to students for course credit.	We will explore this. The outreach coordinator can coordinate this.
10. Host a “What is Economics” night.	We will proceed with this. Need funds to host this event.
11. Additional support for the Undergraduate advisor at the college and department level. UG Advisor should interface with advisors at the college level.	Increase funding for UG advisor from 3+0 to 3+3 units Assigned Time per year.
12. Offer more electives and training in math, and workshops on computer packages like SAS or R.	This will require funding. We have identified faculty who can organize workshops in these areas.
13. Restructure MA degree to focus more on private and government careers, while providing additional options for students geared towards a PhD.	This will require more intensive departmental discussion. We will look into this next fall.
14. Shorten the MA program to one year, requiring offering of at least one if not more summer courses (Econ 441, Econ 440); Consider a “blended” 4+1 program.	This will require more intensive departmental discussion. We will look into this next fall.
15. Exposure to more econometric/statistical software (SAS, R, Python, SQL) and create a new required course on Computational Economics.	Need funding for software and workshops for faculty, students, and for recruitment in related fields.
16. Preparation for Big Data/Data Analytics, for example by introducing interdisciplinary programs as proposed in the PPR.	We are moving forward with an interdisciplinary program with ISDS (already on Curriculog) and will be exploring joint programs with finance and other departments. We need funding to hire faculty in related fields.

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17. STEM classification and Bachelor of Science classification.	We will explore this.
18. Hire faculty to teach global courses; add ladder faculty in this area.	Funding needed for recruitment.
19. Conduct rigorous salary survey of starting salary and teaching loads for peer and aspirational institutions to ensure that recruitment offers are competitive.	The department will appreciate it very much if a rigorous salary/teaching load survey of aspirational institutions is conducted. The Dean can also fund the department to conduct this survey.
20. Journal list: reconsider ranking criteria, including to facilitate research published in highly regarded interdisciplinary journals not on the journal list (such as Nature or Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences).	The Dean's Office may want to revise the journal list to address this concern. We feel that the current journal list and related Assigned Time Policy is somewhat biased against the economics department.
21. Reduce course load for new faculty beyond the initial 3 years through tenure or at least year 5; Removing teaching reductions early seems punitive.	We support this. Note that the new faculty now get only two years of 2+2 teaching load followed by much higher teaching loads. All TT faculty should at least have 2+2 load in the first two years followed by a 3+2 load in years 3, 4 and 5. Additional Summer funding needed for new hires.
22. Reconsider the adjustment for publications with coauthors.	We will explore this.
23. Give more workload credit (course release) for: Chair, Vice-Chair, Steering Committee	The Vice-Chair should have 3+3 units assigned time.
24. Give more workload credit (course release) for Undergraduate program leadership.	As mentioned above, the UG Advisor should have 3 +3 units Assigned Time per year. The UG Advisor will coordinate with the Outreach Coordinator.
25. Give more workload credit (course release) for Graduate program leadership	Grad Advisor should have 3+3 units Assigned Time per year and will coordinate with the Outreach Coordinator.

<b>Suggestions from PPR External Reviewers</b>	<b>CSUF Economics Chair's Comments</b>
26. Give more workload credit (course release) for Assessment leadership.	C4 is already funded by the Dean's Office.
27. Give more workload credit (course release) for Academic personnel leadership.	The DPC and DPRC Committees have heavy workloads. These two committees together should get three courses of assigned time each year. The department will decide how to allocate the assigned time within the committee members.
28. Give more workload credit (course release) for Academic personnel leadership.	The Recruitment Committee has a very heavy workload. The Recruitment Committee (if there is recruitment of two or more faculty positions) should get three courses of assigned time for each recruitment cycle. The department will decide how to allocate the assigned time within this committee.
29. Use Centers to raise community awareness and provide public service, increased fundraising and support for graduate students.	The outreach coordinator will coordinate with the Center Directors, the UG Advisor and the Graduate Advisor.
30. Funding for additional teaching release for deserving tenured faculty.	The College should encourage research activities for faculty who are just shy of AACSB accreditation thresholds. Assigned Time should be given to faculty who are able to maintain AACSB accreditation.

To sum up, in addition to recruitment, workshop and software/hardware funds, we are requesting extra funding (Assigned Time) for internship courses, new faculty retention, AACSB-oriented research, outreach coordination, DPC/DPRC service, Recruitment Committee service, Vice Chair's service, and Undergraduate/Graduate advising. We are also requesting an increase in the GA budget.

The funding requests above are justified because Economics Department is one of the most well-run and inexpensive departments in the College with very low administrative costs and with some of the best instructors who also have excellent research output. As the external PPR report points out, we are an aspirational department. I think we have a great opportunity to build on our existing strengths.

The tables below (reproduced from our PPR report) show that the economics department is a cost-saving department for the College as a whole: compared to other departments, *\$/FTES is significantly lower* in economics. The cost to educate an econ FTES is *at least \$1800 less* compared to the cost to educate non-econ FTES in the rest of the College. At almost 900 Econ FTES, the economics department thus saves a significant dollar amount every year on behalf of the College. The department respectfully urges the Dean's and the Provost's office to provide us with a fair share of College resources. More resources will allow us in hiring and retaining dedicated faculty and to serve our students with more focused programs and activities outlined above.

TABLE 15-A. DEPARTMENT AVERAGE VARIABLE COST

Academic Years	Total Expenditure	FTES	FTEF	\$/FTES	\$/FTEF
2012-13	\$ 3,979,029	N/A	33.5	N/A	118,777
2013-14	\$ 4,162,600	822	34	5,065	122,429
2014-15	\$ 4,384,470	805	32.5	5,444	134,907
2015-16	\$ 4,674,967	836	33.8	5,593	138,313
2016-17	\$ 2,771,083	883	34	3,138	81,502

TABLE 15-B. MCBE DEPARTMENTS' AVERAGE VARIABLE COST (INCL. ECONOMICS)

Academic Years	Total Expenditure	FTES	FTEF	\$/FTES
2013-14	\$30,700,806	4,746	N/A	\$6,469
2014-15	\$34,037,532	4,828	N/A	\$7,050
2015-16	\$35,520,639	5,054	N/A	\$7,028
2016-17	\$38,157,640	5,347	N/A	\$7,136
2017-2018	\$39,608,806 (projected)	5,488	N/A	\$7,217

TABLE 15-C. MCBE DEPARTMENTS' AVERAGE VARIABLE COST (EXCL. ECONOMICS)

Academic Years	Total Expenditure	FTES	FTEF	\$/FTES
2013-14	\$26,721,777	3,924	N/A	6,810
2014-15	\$29,874,933	4,023	N/A	7,426
2015-16	\$31,136,170	4,218	N/A	7,382
2016-17	\$35,386,558	4,464	N/A	7,927

We are looking forward to having a productive conversation on these issues.

Thank you.