



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

Mihaylo College of Business and Economics

Office of the Dean

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To: Dipankar Purkayastha, Chair
Department of Economics

From: Morteza Rahmatian, Dean
Mihaylo College of Business and Economics

Subject: PPR College Response

Thank you for your time and effort in completing the PPR for your department. Program Performance Review is a valuable process to provide a better understanding of the department and how in which the college and the department can work together. I would like to thank the member of external and internal PPR committees for their exhaustive work in identifying the department's concern.

In what follows, I will address the items listed in the department of the economics PPR external report. Clearly, resources should be directed to address these concerns. The department is asking for additional assigned time above and beyond what has already been allocated. Please review my comments below and I would like to arrange for a meeting to finalize our commitments. Furthermore, table 15-A in your report, do you know why in 2016-17, the total expenditure dropped by nearly \$2,000,000.00? I am having some difficulty with understanding the numbers and look forward to further discuss these matters with you.

Thank you again and look forward to following up with you on this report.

THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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Suggestions from PPR External Reviewers	CSUF Economics Chair's Comments	Dean's Response
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.	This will certainly help with planning.
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.	One option would be to work with career services since part of their operation is internship as well.
3. Assess SLOs not courses, 2 SLOs by AY, for a random sample.	The ad-hoc assessment committee will implement this in coordination with the Dean's office.	The College assessment coordinator will be happy to help.
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.	Great idea, please proceed.
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.	Please keep the option open.
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.	Econ is the only department which supports their graduate students. Other departments do not have such luxury. One option would be to have your graduate students be available for college-wide responsibilities such as tutoring, large classes and research assistants for other departments as well.
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.	I recommend you find ways to actively recruit graduate students as well.
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. The 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 assigned time per year for outreach coordinator.	Your outreach coordinator can work with career services to accomplish this task. Once three units assigned time is given, there is no matrix for accountability. I recommend using the department OE&E for this purpose and cover the cost as the service is rendered. I am not sure giving three units of assigned time will do the task. I will be happy to support expenses as it occurs.

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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.	Great idea, please Proceed.
10. Host a "What is Economics" night.	We will proceed with this. Need funds to host this event.	Find an alum to support the program or use the OE&E budget.
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.	Given the size of the Majors, the undergraduate advisor can work closely with the MCBE advising unit and outsource some of their advisings
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.	Is this one time or ongoing? Can we prepare some online modules for Math and other software training?
13. Restructure MA degree to focus more on private and government careers, while providing additional options for students geared towards a Ph.D.	This will require more intensive departmental discussion. We will look into this next fall.	We need to move with the market. The size of the program is a major concern. The department needs to have a solid strategy to increase the enrollment in the graduate program.
14. Shorten the MA program to one year, requiring the 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.	Please be careful when you use the word "blended." The chancellor's office imposes additional restrictions when we offer a blended program. I will be happy to help.
15. Exposure to more econometric/statistical software (SAS, R, Python, SQL) and create a new required course in Computational Economics.	Need funding for software and workshops for faculty, students, and for recruitment in related fields.	This is a great idea, and the Dean's office is happy to support this new course.
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.	We can redirect some of the future recruitment positions into this area, and the Dean's office can certainly help.

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17. STEM classification and Bachelor of Science classification.	We will explore this.	Good idea. This classification should help with graduate program recruitment.
18. Hire faculty to teach global courses; add ladder faculty in this area.	Funding needed for recruitment.	The FTES and enrolment growth determine faculty lines.
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.	HR can certainly help with this study, and the Dean's office will be happy to provide any assistance needed. We are very much in line with all CSUs, and in fact, the compensations and the teaching load is by far ahead of all CSUs.
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.	Journal list is being revised every five years. For the next cycle of review, please make sure your journal review representative is fully aware of these concerns, and the committee is open for any revision. Furthermore, I am aware of A+ inequity in your department, and the department needs to have a strategy to correct this inequity.
21. Reduce course load for new faculty beyond the initial three 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 a 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.	New faculty, demand high salaries plus startup funds. Extended reduced teaching load will be too expensive for the college. A worst-case- scenario, faculty will have 3 and 3 teaching load in year 3, 4 and 5. During these years, however, faculty can reduce their teaching load either by internal grants or publications. Ultimately, MCBE has 10,000 students that need to be taught.
22. Reconsider the adjustment for publications with coauthors.	We will explore this.	What is the goal here? Please work with your representative at the college research committee.
23. Give more workload credit (course release) for: Chair, Vice-Chair, Steering Committee	The Vice-Chair should have 3+3 units assigned time.	The Chairs unanimously admitted that the Vice Chair compensation is too generous. The Chair is only 0.25 for the semester. If the workload for the Vice-Chair and Chair, demands additional compensation, this should be discussed at the Deans and Chairs meeting.
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.	Given the size of your program, I recommend that we blend this into one position and then we can justify 3 and 3 units assigned time per AY. It appears that currently, we have only 4 MSA students are planning to attend in Fall 2018.
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.	The graduate coordinator needs to accept additional responsibilities. The size of the program is shrinking, and the future of the program may be uncertain.

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26. Give more workload credit (course release) for Assessment leadership.	The Dean's Office already funds C4.	In addition to C4 for each department, the college also has an assessment coordinator who is willing to assist all departments.
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 to the committee members.	What happened to the service commitment? The college is currently renaming the "research assigned time" to "college assigned time" to incentivize more equitable distribution of service. The college is currently working on this issue, and I expect a more equitable outcome.
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 the 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.	Nowhere in the entire university, assigned time is given to any faculty serving on the search committees. This includes faculty and administrative searches. The college is currently revising the "research assigned time" to "college assigned time" to incentivize more equitable distribution of service. The college is currently working on this issue, and I expect a more equitable outcome.
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.	The Associate Director of Development David Roman is assigned to the Centers, and I expect all Centers to work closely with David to be involved with the community and successful fundraising.
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.	The college is currently reviewing this policy. The idea is if a faculty maintains his/her AACSB academic standard, then, three units of assigned time should be awarded to the faculty.

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.