

**Department of Economics and Business
Hendrix College
2019 Departmental Assessment Report**

1. Rubric - initially developed during Fall Faculty Conference 2018; completed spring 2019

As explained in our 2018 Assessment Report, competency in using Excel is necessary for student success in data analysis, problem solving, and communication. Employers expect applicants to be well-versed in using Excel. Therefore, we designed a rubric to assess our success in using Excel to fulfill our learning goal, “Learn technology skills appropriate for use in economic and business analysis.”

Attached is the rubric with a course mapping onto the three categories and three levels of competency. Our goal is for students to reach at least the level of “Competent” through completing assignments in our courses. The methods of assessing the success of this goal are explained later in this document.

From our informal discussion, we recognize that many of our students know and use Excel at the Exemplary level. These students tend to be the ones who perform best in our courses anyway. Most of the rest of our students are at the Competent level. But, we also recognize that some of our students, usually those who perform lower in general, do not take advantage of the benefits of using Excel. We will continue discussions on how to best bring that group of students to a higher level of knowledge in Excel.

2. Student Assessment Plan

Departmental Learning Goals - Bachelor of Arts with a major in Accounting, Economics, and Economics and Business:

In fulfilling the requirements for a major in the Economics and Business Department, students:

1. Master the foundations of accounting principles and economic theories.
2. Develop the depth of knowledge appropriate to their choice of specific major and master the fundamental tools necessary to succeed in graduate and professional school as well as in a career.
3. Understand the fundamentals of business and economic problem solving with application to contemporary social and political issues.
4. Employ discipline specific tools of critical analysis and problem solving.
5. Learn technology skills appropriate for use in economic and business analysis.
6. Effectively communicate economic and/or financial information orally and in writing to people with various levels of business acumen.

The department provides opportunities for students to:

7. Learn experientially through activities such as simulations, internships, and undergraduate research in order to apply the theories they have learned in the classroom.
8. Develop networks and relationships with alumni and local business leaders and participate in seminars and round table discussions.

Departmental Learning Goals - Master of Arts in Accounting:

In fulfilling the requirements for the MA in Accounting degree from the Economics and Business Department, students will:

1. Master deep knowledge of accounting principles and related economic theories
2. Develop research skills to analyze accounting and business problems
3. Develop high-level critical thinking and analytical skills useful in managerial decision-making
4. Work effectively in solving business problems both independently and collaboratively as team members
5. Develop strong written and oral communication skills
6. Demonstrate professional judgment
7. Develop enhanced capabilities for employment opportunities
8. Acquire necessary credentials qualifying them to sit for the CPA exam in Arkansas

Attached are the curriculum mappings for the undergraduate and graduate learning goals.

Plans for Gathering Information

Forms of Direct Assessment

- * Final exam grades in core courses
- * From the Corporate Strategy capstone experience
 - simulation and final presentation grades
 - have audience fill out rubric
- * From the Economic Research and Baker Prize capstone experience
 - final paper and presentation grades
- * From the Comprehensive Exam capstone experience
 - grade
- * Grades on writing assignments in W-2 courses on applying economic and business reasoning
- * Excel rubric assessment in capstone courses
- * Rubric for capstone courses (to be developed)
- * Internship sponsor evaluation

Forms of Indirect Assessment

- * Senior survey at graduation
- * MA student survey at graduation

Planned cycle for assessment of learning goals

2018-2019 - The learning goal “Employ discipline specific tools of critical analysis and problem solving” was studied to determine the effect of removing the pre-requisite of MATH 120/130 for ECON 200 Microeconomic Theory and ECON 210 Macroeconomic Theory. This learning goal will continue to be studied over the next

several years as we gather information on students' performance.

The learning goal "Learn technology skills appropriate for use in economic and business analysis" was studied by developing a rubric for Excel processes and functions. This learning goal will continue to be studied over the next several years as we gather information on students' performance.

2019-2020 - The two learning goals from 2018-2019 will continue to be studied this year. On the MATH pre-requisite study, we will still be collecting data for several more years. In addition, all students in ECON 200 Microeconomic Theory will complete a survey about their math background and their comfort with math-related topics in class. Their ultimate grades in economics courses and capstones will also be analyzed. A survey will be completed in ECON 210 Macroeconomic Theory in the next year.

On the Excel study, professors will use the newly developed rubric to assess student learning in each of the categories (organization, analysis/interpretation, and presentation/communication) as students complete required assignments in Excel. Likewise, students' level of expertise will be evaluated in the capstone courses based on required assignments.

2020-2021 - Initial study of the learning goal "Effectively communicate economic and/or financial information orally and in writing to people with various levels of business acumen" will begin.

Also, a rubric on capstone requirements will be developed and an initial study will begin. We will assess the level of success of the capstone experiences in demonstrating student learning based on the learning goals of the department.

Lastly, a plan will be developed to begin assessing the learning goals of the Master of Arts in Accounting program.

In future years, we will continue to rotate through the learning goals. Also, given that we completely revised our major requirements this year, we will develop an assessment plan to determine the effectiveness of those changes. We will consider success in capstones and watch enrollment numbers in our courses.

3. Response to Targeted Feedback

The request in the targeted feedback was for us to provide more information about our Action Plan for the MATH pre-requisite study and the Excel rubric.

The MATH pre-requisite study will take several more years of data collection before the data can be fully analyzed. We will survey students in ECON 200 this year and ECON 210 next year regarding their background in math and their comfort in topics

presented in class. This year's seniors will be the first class to graduate under the catalog that did not require a math course as a pre-requisite for ECON 200 and ECON 210. Last year, we removed the requirement of a math course for a major in Accounting and in Economics and Business, but added the requirement of MATH 130 Calculus I for a major in Economics. Data (grades and survey responses) from the next few years will include students graduating under the new requirements. Once all of that data is collected, it can be analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the change in math requirements for our courses and majors.

We completed the rubric for Excel this past spring. Over the next few years, we will gather data based on student grades on required assignments that use Excel. Also, we will survey graduates regarding their self-assessed knowledge and comfort level on various aspects of Excel.