**Bakersfield College**

**Program Review – Annual Update 2015**

**I. Program Information:**

Program Name: Economics [AA‐T Degree]

Program Type:  Instructional  Student Affairs  Administrative Service

***Bakersfield College Mission****:* Bakersfield College provides opportunities for students from diverse economic, cultural, and educational backgrounds to attain Associate and Baccalaureate degrees and certificates, workplace skills, and preparation for transfer. Our rigorous and supportive learning environment fosters students’ abilities to think critically, communicate effectively, and demonstrate competencies and skills in order to engage productively in their communities and the world.

Describe how the program supports the Bakersfield College Mission:

The Economics AA‐T program at Bakersfield College supports this mission by its focus upon providing educational opportunities for students from an

increasingly diverse population to attain degrees or prepare for transfer to 4‐year colleges: all while fostering critical thinking skills and academic

competencies.

The Economics AA‐T Program at Bakersfield College offers classes in Economics, which are transferrable to private universities and both the UC and CSU

systems. Economics AA‐T classes are part of Bakersfield College’s General Education Pattern D.2. The Economics AA‐T classes meet the CSU General

Education Breadth D.2. The Economics AA‐T classes meet the Inter‐segmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) Area 4 requirements.

Program Mission Statement:

The mission of the Economics Program at Bakersfield College focuses upon three main points. First is fostering the development of critical thinking skills within the discipline of Economics among an ethnically and socio‐economically diverse population. Second is creating an environment to cultivate

academic success within our diverse student population, in the context of general education programs that allow achievement of transfer or degree

attainment. Third is to develop student understanding of the paths of knowledge required for higher degrees in the fields of Economics, Public Policy,

Business, Law, and other fields for which a strong foundation in Economics is imperative.

In the process of studying scarcity, market equilibrium, cost theory, market structures, monetary policy, international economics, and similar

characteristics of a well‐developed Economics education, we strive to develop our students’ academic abilities and their understanding of the world. We

strive to develop an understanding among all students of not just the critical core academic skills of analysis, critical thinking, application of theory,

evaluation of market trends, written communication and reading/writing competencies. We also strive to develop within our students an understanding

of the diversity of our community [micro and macro], of the necessity of the student’s achieving agency over their own lives, and of the importance of

acceptance of others who come from different backgrounds.

This is more difficult in our programs, but we attempt to do this by analyzing market trends and how they are affected by different factors such as

gender, ethnicity, religious group, and socio‐economic status: both domestically and applying these concepts to international economics, when appropriate. Our program utilizes the field of economics to achieve these goals, while preparing students for transfer or degree attainment.

**II. Progress on Program Goals:**

1. List the program’s current goals. For each goal (minimum of 2 goals), discuss progress and changes. If the program is addressing more than two (2) goals, please duplicate this section.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Program Goal** | **Which institutional goals from the Bakersfield College Strategic Plan will be advanced upon completion of this goal? (select all that apply)** | **Progress on goal achievement**  **(choose one)** | **Comments** |
| 1. Improve Student Success | 1: Student Learning  2: Student Progression and Completion  3: Facilities  4: Oversight and Accountability  5: Leadership and Engagement | Completed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)  Revised: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)  Ongoing: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Date) | This category of student success is measured by the passing rate of students in our courses. |
| 2. Improve Student  SLO/PLO/ILO achievement | 1: Student Learning  2: Student Progression and Completion  3: Facilities  4: Oversight and Accountability  5: Leadership and Engagement | Completed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)  Revised: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)  Ongoing: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Date) | This category relates to how students succeed in each SLO, as opposed to overall passing grades for the course. |
| 3. Increase involvement in  campus leadership  positions. | 1: Student Learning  2: Student Progression and Completion  3: Facilities  4: Oversight and Accountability  5: Leadership and Engagement | Completed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)  Revised: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)  Ongoing: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Date) | Professor Stowers has taken on Curriculum Committee, and Prof . Harvath has moved into Union leadership positions this year. |

1. List new or revised goals (if applicable)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **New/Replacement Program Goal** | **Which institutional goals will be advanced upon completion of this goal? (select all that apply)** | **Anticipated Results** |
|  | 1: Student Learning  2: Student Progression and Completion  3: Facilities  4: Oversight and Accountability  5: Leadership and Engagement |  |

**III. Trend Data Analysis:**

Highlight ***any significant changes*** in the following metrics and discuss what such changes mean to your program.

1. Changes in student demographics (gender, age and ethnicity).

* The ethnic diversity of our nation [and state/county] continues to change. Over the past 10 years, that has been reflected in higher education in Kern County, specifically in comparing enrollments from 5 or 10 years ago to today’s demographics.
* The most noticeable change has been the increase in Hispanic/Latino/a students in education [both in absolute numbers and in terms of percentage of students enrolled], and the corresponding decrease in the number of White students [in absolute numbers and in terms of percentage of students enrolled].
* The Economics Program finds it interesting that the trend data for student enrollments demonstrates a generally mild disparity in enrollments compared to the campus‐wide averages.
  + The largest disparity is found in gender ratios.
    - Despite the college‐wide gender ratio of 54/45 F/M, the Economics Program is almost the exact opposite, with a ratio of 45/55 F/M in our classes [which is a 2% larger gap than last year].
  + Despite a trend to have 28% of our college students at the age of 19 or younger, the Economics Program has a ratio of 35% enrolled who are 19 or younger. [2% smaller than the previous year.]
  + Despite a college‐wide trend of 22% of all students being aged 30 and over [1% smaller than previous year], the Economics Program has a ratio of only 9% in that age bracket [1% higher than the previous year].
  + When comparing ethnic diversity between the collegewide average and the Economics Program, there is a 3% difference [or less] in each ethnic group, with the exception of Hispanic, which is actually 4% lower than the average [66% vs 62%].
* At first glance, it might seem that the introduction of prerequisites played a role in this disparity.
* However, a review of the previous 5 years of program student demographics demonstrates that these percentages are generally in line with previous years.
  + There have been two significant changes in Economics Program enrollments over the past 5 years.
    - The overall percentage of students who identify as Hispanic has *increased* about 6%.
    - The overall percentage of students who identify as White has *decreased* by about 6%.
  + The ethnic representation in 2015‐16 of these two groups is actually only 4% [Hispanic/Latino/a] and 1% [White] lower than the collegewide average. [College‐wide averages were not provided for previous years]
* A second change is that the percentage of students enrolled in the Economics Program Aged 19 and younger has remained consistently about 7% [or higher] above the college average for the same age group.
  + However, when compared to the last year without a prerequisite[2014-2014], the population of 19 and younger students in 2015‐16 decreased by 6% and the percentage aged 20‐29 increased by 4%.
    - The department is confident that the main reason for this disparity in enrollments is not the prerequisites, but the reality that math is a core skill needed for success, and it must be said that our numbers in the key 19-younger group are now back to what they were in 2011-2012.
* One common belief of the origins of this disparity is the idea of the prevailing gender‐typing about Math skills in K‐12, where female students are not encouraged to pursue math‐laden careers at the same rate that male students are.
  + That may be true of interest, but it doesn’t relate to skills, as the recent CAASPP scores indicate.
  + Kern County had a 23% achievement of meets or succeeds in the Math core skills in the most recent test results of 11th grade students.
    - This is 7% lower than the state average for success.
      * This means 77% of students do not meet this skill.
    - However, 24% of the females tested in 11th grade met or exceeded this standard, with males earning 23% or lower.
      * Thus, female 11th grade students have a slightly higher demonstrated level of skill in these math standards than male students.
    - In addition, if the information is further disaggregated, the 3 core areas of learning [high school SLO’s?], demonstrate this female parity or superiority as well.
      * Of the three areas, female 11th graders scored at least 49% near/at/or above standards but no greater than 66%.
      * Of the three areas, male 11th graders scored at least 44% near/at/or above standards, but no greater than 62%.
        + In no one area of the three did female students perform worse than the male students measured.
* A common problem for both genders related to lack of appropriate math skills seems to exist [at least 77% of both genders did not meet or exceed the skill level], but there doesn’t appear to be a gender disparity in the skills themselves, but rather in social *encouragement* to pursue math or business.

1. Changes in enrollment (headcount, sections, course enrollment and productivity).

* Total unduplicated headcount enrollment in our Economic courses rose by 12% from the previous year.
  + - The total number of student served in 2015-2016 was 1317, or 144 more than 2014-2015.
    - However, it was still 139 students fewer than our peak 3 years ago.
  + This occurred while offering 3 more sections than last year, which gave us the same total of sections [35] offered as our peak 2 years ago.
    - One of the reasons for the decline in real number of students while offering the same number of sections is that is that our course enrollments have steadily declined from a peak of 61 per section 5 years ago to the current 44 per section.
* Over the last 5-year period, we also added a second full time professor [a replacement position that was vacant for a couple of years], and our productivity has decreased from 25.4 in 2011‐12 [before the new full time professor joined us] to 19.8 in 2014‐15.
  + - This is still a 2.4% higher productivity number than the college‐wide average, with success and retention rates scoring 4% higher for the Economics Program than the college-wide average as well.
  + There are a few factors that are believed to be related to these changes.
    - Over the past two and a half years the Priority Room registration/assignment has been implemented, with specific rooms set aside for each department, which then sets rooms aside for specific programs.
      * As a result of that, the rooms Economics has been scheduled in moved from all over the campus to a single room for all ‘single load’ classes, and a second room for the double‐sized classes.
        + This resulted in a room size maximum of 40 for the majority of courses offered, due to room size limitations.

In previous years our courses were assigned to rooms that frequently had a capacity of over 50, or we scheduled more double-sized courses.

This accounts for the decrease in student enrollments per course, as there isn’t the physical room to place them in the existing room.

* + - * As this change occurred, another one began: Student Education Plans.
    - As a result of Student Education Plans, students are now steered through a 2-year sequence of courses, which results in fewer students enrolling in a course for personal interest, and fewer potential years spent to get an A.A.
      * It also may result in lower enrollment numbers due to less latitude to ‘experiment’ with course offerings.
    - A third potential cause of these changes in the final 2 years is the implementation of the prerequisites for the program, which act as a limitation‐ allowing students with a higher demonstrated likelihood of success to take the class and filtering out students who have a lower probability of success.
    - The last possible change for this is the fact that our online course offerings have declined from 5 courses [2010-2011] to 2, and now back up to 4 in the past 6 years.
      * Looking at a three-year window shows an increase of 2 online courses.
        + It is interesting to note that in 2010‐11 we offered 30 traditional courses and 5 distance ed courses.
        + In 2015-2016 we offered 31 traditional courses and 4 distance ed courses.

What we cannot explain is how we have over 139 fewer students with the same number of sections available.

1. Success and retention for face-to-face, as well as online/distance courses.

* There have been significant changes in the retention and success rates for our program.
  + Our Retention and Success rates are 11 and 17% higher, respectively, when comparing our 2011-12 to 2015-2016 academic years, with every year witnessing an improvement in both categories.
  + Futhermore, it should be noted that the modality of instruction that led to the largest improvement in both categories was online instruction.
    - In online instruction, our Retention rates went from a 3-year average [2011-2014] of 63% to 91% in the most recent year.
    - In online instruction, our Success rates went from a 3-year average [2011-2014] of approximately 40.7% to 69% in the most recent year.
      * By comparison, the most recent college-wide numbers for distance learning/online instruction was a Retention of 80% and a Success of 55% [Compared to Economics numbers of 91% and 69% in online learning].
    - Obviously, the Economics Department is doing achieving success in both the face to face and online/distance environments.
* This seems to correspond to when the current online instructor began to utilize the Aplia software program to assist students with online instruction [as well as face‐to‐face homework].
  + Online/distance education is difficult to administer, and frequently more difficulty to use to learn.
  + Having a prerequisite for specific levels of math skills seems to have translated into higher success rates in the first year applied.
* Conclusion: a better education is being earned by fewer students than when we had 139 more enrolled.
  + Interestingly enough, our retention improvements mean that only 25 fewer students are being retained in Economics, despite having 139 fewer enrolled.
  + In addition, despite having 139 fewer students than our peak, we had such an improvement in our success rate that we had a net increase of 7 successful students compared to 2013-2014.
    - 2013-2014 = 1456 x .56 = 815.6 successful students.
    - 2015-2016 = 1317 x .73 = 961.4 successful students.
      * Difference of 145.8 more students succeeded, despite starting with 139 fewer students in the second sample group.
        + Of course, if we had the same enrollment as 3 years ago, we would have 100 MORE students who succeeded last year, with those numbers.
* Secondary conclusion, the success rates would indicate that we are at a ‘sweet spot’ and should not be looking to increase productivity per faculty member.
  + Instead, we should be looking to expand offerings *when* enrollments allow for it.
  + We should be investigating how to replicate the online successes, as we add more online professors to the department.

1. Other program-specific data that reflects significant changes *(please specify or attach).* All Student Affairs and Administrative Services should respond.

**IV. Program Assessment (focus on most recent year):**

Use attached **Assessment Report Form AU Tab**

1. Describe *any significant changes* in your program’s strengths since last year.

* Diversity of pedagogy, continual mutual respect for the professionalism of our colleagues, concern with both academic excellence in our understanding of the material and in developing student academic excellence, combined with concern with a more holistic approach to helping students succeed are all hallmarks of our programs’ strengths.
* Providing high levels of intellectual stimulation and education are continuing strengths of this program.
* All full time members of our program are constantly assessing diverse approaches to enhancing student achievement, in each semester, and implementing the same.
  + Many professors are engaged in professional and student development activities designed to enhance student learning.
  + This is continually modifying the program’s approach to fostering success.
  + This is a strength we had last year, this year and in the foreseeable future.
* We do this because the 1317 students we served last year [unduplicated head count], while being under 5% of the student population, deserve the respect of the best possible education and preparation we can provide for them.
* We do this because we recognize the importance of constantly enhancing our strengths to continue to meet the needs of all students enrolled in our courses: be they transfer or major.
* We play to our strengths to facilitate student degree attainment and transfer status.

1. Describe *any significant changes* in your program’s weaknesses since last year.

* As a direct and conscious result of our deliberate decision to implement prerequisites for our program, the Economics program at Bakersfield College in 2015-2016 lost 8% of the students we had in the 2013‐2014 academic year.
  + This is a comparison to a year that was already 1% lower than the previous year, but marks a 12% increase over 2014-2015.
  + Thus, we have gone from serving 1456 students [2012‐13] to serving 1317 students [2015‐16], with our percentage of the overall student population declining as well. This is a weakness, yet is was expected. The ‘silver lining’ is that our new cohorts [and multiple measures] are beginning to bring enrollment number back up to close to 2013-2014 levels.
* We believed that the ultimate impact of this requirement will be higher success rates, which will facilitate higher transfer rates and higher degree attainment rates.
* A look at our 2015‐16 success rates validates this belief, as it demonstrates higher retention rates than ever [91%] and higher success rates than ever [73%], both of which are 2% points higher than the rate measured in the previous academic year.
  + Thus, the largest weakness [our lower share of students served] appears to be linked to our increase in success rates, and it begs the question as to whether a prerequisite really IS a weakness after all?

1. If applicable, describe any unplanned events that affected your program.

* There were no unplanned events that had a significant enough impact upon our program to merit discussion.
* We did lose a section of courses from a full-time professor, who was elected grievance officer of the faculty union.
  + That loss was offset by the gain of an adjunct who was available for morning classes.

**V. Assess Your Program’s Resource Needs:** To request resources (staff, faculty, technology, equipment, budget, and facilities), please fill out the appropriate form. <https://committees.kccd.edu/bc/committee/programreview>

1. Human Resources and Professional Development:
2. If you are requesting any additional positions, explain briefly how the additional positions will contribute to increased student success. Include upcoming retirements or open positions that need to be filled.

* No positions requested at present.

1. Professional Development:
2. Describe briefly the effectiveness of the professional development your program has been engaged in (either providing or attending) during the last year, focusing on how it contributed to student success.

* Our program has also engaged in specific professional development opportunities to improve student performance.
* These steps include increased participation in programs designed to enhance student success: Habits of the Mind, Early Alert, ACDV workshops, and other extra‐curricular opportunities to enhance student success, as provided by the BC Professional Development program.
* In addition, department members have actively engaged in conferences to enhance their knowledge about subject matter, as well as pedagogical techniques and how to be a more effective member of the academic community, through committee participation.

1. What professional development opportunities and contributions can your program make to the college in the future?

* Student success is paramount to our department. As such, there are two main areas of departmental activity that would best augment said student success that fit within the definition of Professional Development.
  + The first is participation in subject/field appropriate conferences to enhance knowledge of either new developments in subject matter or of pedagogical techniques to utilize in the classroom. This leads to higher morale as well, which translates to more engaged professionals.
  + The second area of activity is continual [or expanding] participation in campus initiatives to increase student success, such as the Habits of the Mind program or Mentor‐ship programs that assist traditionally marginalized groups.

1. Facilities:
2. How have facilities’ maintenance, repair or updating affected your program in the past year as it relates to student success?

* There has been no significant maintenance, repair or updating of the facilities in H-11, the primary classroom for our program, or, to the best of our knowledge, at the outlying classrooms on [and off] campus.
* As such, there has been no measureable affect on the program.

1. How will your Facilities Request for next year contribute to student success?

* The main facilities request we have submitted will result in increased ability of the students to see the board and any data presentations in the classroom.
* This will result in higher levels of comprehension among the students, which should result in higher levels of student success.

C. Technology and Equipment:

1. Understanding that some programs teach in multiple classrooms, how has new, repurposed or existing technology or equipment affected your program in the past year as it relates to student success?

* Other than off‐campus, our Priority Room Scheduling process has resulted in all Econ classes taught M‐F on the Panorama Campus being
* offered in the same room, thus this question is only relevant as it applies to H‐11.
* The existing technology has two flaws in this room.
  + The first is that the images from the computer are too small for those in the rear of the room to see clearly.
  + The second is that the WiFi signal in the room is so weak that students cannot follow the days presentation while using their computer to use the online notes component provided.
* As such, the technology is limiting student access to all the tools/information that the instructors are attempting to make available for student success.

1. How will your new or repurposed classroom, office technology and/or equipment request contribute to student success?

* If we are successful in having our requests granted, we will be able to improve the quality of education in multiple ways.
* We will be able to have them take effective notes, as they would all have desks.
* Those who have special needs would have appropriate desks in the room for their success.
* With expanded Wifi, the students will be able to use their portable devices to interact in new technologies for the classroom, whereas now they are limited by weak signals or choked bandwidth.
* When using technology to teach, the images will be clearer and the students will still be able to see well enough to take notes due to the new projectors.
* These requests will create a more positive learning environment for the students, which enables them to focus on the task at hand‐ education, instead of discomfort or overcoming difficulties in seeing what they are doing.

1. Discuss the effectiveness of technology used in your area to meet college strategic goals.

* Our area is operating at a deficit in modern educational technology, which hinders the college’s goal of enhancing student educational opportunities [Strategic Direction #1, paraphrased].
* Initiative #2 under Strategic Direction #3 [Facilities] is to “Enhance campus WIFI coverage and capacity”, which is what we are asking for.
  + The current levels of support for WiFi isn’t effectively meeting our educational needs, our students’ needs, and falls short of the college’s strategic goal.
* In addition, we have previously requested projectors be installed in each classroom, as the TVs being used for monitors are too small of a screen
* for students in the rear corner to be able to gain the most from the presentation, and those in the rear of the room can’t use the subtitles for anyone who has auditory language skill issues [disproportionally affected students and ADA compliance issues also].
  + We have not been able to achieve this.
  + Until we do, there really is no point in requesting the smart boards, tablet rentals, and software licenses that will allow our program to meet or exceed the college’s strategic goals.

D. Budget: Explain how your budget justifications will contribute to increased student success for your program.

* The only budget requests being made on the budget form are for the entire department‐ not just the program.
* The requests are based on providing the necessary classroom/office supplies for a professor to be able to do their job.
* The second request was for funds to be shared by the department so that members could use it to offset some of the expenses of attending conferences.
  + The ideas brought back from attending said conferences, combined with the sense of professional pride exhibited by colleagues who feel that their knowledge and understanding is valued by the college, translates into more effective leadership on campus and more effective teaching in the classroom.
  + Both of these are strong reasons to support travel funds for our department.

**VI. Conclusions and Findings:**

Present any conclusions and findings about the program. This is an opportunity to provide a brief abstract/synopsis of your program’s current circumstances and needs.

The evidence demonstrates that the Economics Program at Bakersfield College is working diligently to meet the continually demonstrated needs of our

students. We have implemented prerequisites that are designed to enhance the prospects of student success, as they should now be able to keep up

with the math. This change has occurred at the same time that our retention and success rates eclipsed the college average. We have maintained a stable number of Economics Majors, and last year had 5 more than the 5 year average, showing the increased relevance our program has for our students. Fall of 2016 saw us increase the number of students enrolled in Economics classes by 1 full class, with 65 more students in the census enrollment, and we still had to turn away around 30 from our waitlists due to not enough sections. Our changes to require prerequisites is not having a negative impact on our enrollments.

Last years’ number of registered Economics Majors demonstrates a consistency in the past 4 years in having almost twice as many majors as in 2011- further demonstrating the contributions to the college from our program. We have increased the academic rigor of our department, while striving to meet ever changing student needs. As a transfer‐preparation institution, the Economics Program demonstrates its’ continual vitality and worth to Bakersfield College.

We not only provide transfer G.E. course preparation and facilitate degree attainment: we do so while endeavoring to enhance the students’ abilities in

the areas of critical thinking, evaluation methods, effective written communications, utilization of theories accurately, and other academic skills.

The findings indicate our program has made significant headway in improving student success, while addressing the retention issue. And all of this was

done with a minimal amount of fuss, leading to above‐average workplace productivity. The evidence of our improvements demonstrate the success of

the program in working with students to make the learning process more useful to the students.

We will be continuing those things which worked well, while evaluating the potential for other reforms and programs that may assist students to grow.

We understand there are some situations that are beyond our control, as they are up to student actions. However, we further understand that we do

have wide latitude on what to do within our classroom to improve this performance. Student performance is not something that can be guaranteed, but

the Economics Program will be working harder to find ways to constantly change the numbers in these categories.

There is much to be said that is good about the program, but there are still tasks to accomplish to make the education we provide a stronger one, and

this semester we are endeavoring to do so. The faculty members continue to assist students in their educational successes inside and outside the

classroom, serving as mentors, advisors and supporters of student’s extracurricular activities. The Economics faculty makes a strong attempt to stay

current in their fields, stay active within our communities and support the college’s shared governance through their participation on committees/councils.

The faculty’s dedication allows the Economics Program and Bakersfield College to continue its longstanding reputation of excellence. We are now working to see more of a translation of said excellence into higher success among our students.

**VII. Forms Checklist (place a checkmark beside the forms listed below that are submitted as part of the Annual Update):**

[Best Practices Form](http://committees.kccd.edu/bc/committee/programreview) **(Required)**

Curricular Review Form **(Instructional Programs Required)**

[Certificate Form](http://committees.kccd.edu/bc/committee/programreview) **(CTE Programs** **Required)**

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[Faculty Request Form](http://committees.kccd.edu/bc/committee/programreview)  [Classified Request Form](http://committees.kccd.edu/bc/committee/programreview)  [Budget Form](http://committees.kccd.edu/bc/committee/programreview)

Professional Development Form  [ISIT Form](http://committees.kccd.edu/bc/committee/programreview)  [Facilities Form](http://committees.kccd.edu/bc/committee/programreview) (Includes Equipment)

Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_