

## **University of Rochester, Department of Economics, Doctoral Degree Program Assessment Plan**

**A. Program title:** Economics

**B. Program degree:** PhD

**C. Program objectives:**

### **Core knowledge:**

The objective of the first year is that students master the central subjects: mathematical methods, two-course sequences in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and statistics/econometrics are the foundations for anyone doing research at the Ph.D level.

### **Research skills in specialized areas:**

The primary goal of the second year is to develop critical skills in approaching research in specialized areas. Students are trained to conceptualize, model, and treat problems at the boundary of the literature.

### **Creative synthesis:**

Students should develop a broader perspective for their specialized areas than represented by the individual courses. The Department provides students exposure beyond courses, such as time to prepare for qualifying exams that extend beyond coursework and opportunities/requirements to attend regular research seminars by faculty, often external, and fellow students.

### **Development of research agenda/scholarship:**

The primary objective of the third year and beyond is to develop a research agenda and produce scholarly contributions. The research program is valued for its originality and importance for the frontier of the researcher's field.

### **Oral communication:**

Ability to communicate is a critical component of training as an economist. Presentation at conferences, departmental seminars, and elsewhere is important for communicating one's research. Good communication skills are also critical for job placement, teaching performance, and performance in non-academic positions.

**Written communication:**

The results of economics research are disseminated through working papers, journal publications, and sometimes books. An important goal of the program is to teach students to present their contributions clearly in their writing.

**Teaching skills:**

Most of our graduate will take jobs as assistant professors in a university. Thus, one of the goals of the program is that students be able to effectively prepare and delivery classroom presentations.

**Professional Ethics:**

Accuracy, proper claims and attribution, and transparency are critical in research, teaching, and all professional work in economics. Contributing professionally, e.g., advising, reviewing, and contributing to the public good of one's institution are all highly valued.

**D. Program assessment direct methods**

The following methods will be implemented annually and for each doctoral degree candidate. Test results and faculty review forms for each method will be gathered in student file:

1. First year course tests, written form, grades reviewed annually by Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) for proficiency in areas of micro, macro, and econometrics.
2. Core exam after first year, written form, by area for students who do not show clear proficiency in any one of first-year course areas of micro, macro, or econometrics. Tests written and student responses reviewed by faculty teaching that core area. Scores on exams will be reviewed each year by DGS.
3. Qualifying exams on specialized fields, after second year, written form. Tests written and student responses evaluated by faculty in the relevant field. Scores on qualifying exams will be reviewed each year by DGS.
4. Third-year original research paper, written form, evaluated by advising faculty, evaluations reviewed each year by DGS

5. Doctoral dissertation proposal, written form, will be reviewed by faculty advisor using the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Review Form. Data from forms will be presented to DGS each year.
6. Teaching assistance evaluations. Department gathers student evaluations of graduate teaching assistants as well as evaluation by faculty teaching the course. Evaluations are reviewed by Director of Undergraduate Studies each semester.
7. Job-market seminar presentation to faculty and students, typically in the fifth year. Evaluated by faculty in the field, gathered by department's administrator for graduate program and presented each year to DGS for review.
8. Doctoral dissertation, written form, will be reviewed by faculty committee using the Doctoral Dissertation Defense Review Form. Data from forms will be reviewed by DGS each year.
9. Doctoral dissertation, oral defense, will be reviewed by faculty using the Doctoral Dissertation Defense Review Form. Data from forms will be reviewed by DGS each year.

#### **E. Program assessment indirect methods**

The following indirect methods will be implemented as noted:

1. Graduating Student Survey will be a web based survey distributed by the UR College Director of Assessment. The survey will ask students to assess how well they believe they achieved program objectives, and allow for suggestions for program methods to better support those objectives. (2012,2013, every other year after that)

## F. Program assessment data review

1. Data gathered in Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Review Forms and Doctoral Dissertation Defense Forms will be tabulated by program staff on an annual basis, reviewed by the DGS, and presented each year to the economics faculty.
2. Data gathered in Graduating Student Survey will be reported annually to the DGS by the College Director of Assessment, and presented to the economics faculty and to the Dean of the Graduate School.

## G. Alignment of program learning outcomes and program assessment methods

Program objective		Assessment method
<b>Core knowledge</b>	Mastery of the central subjects of micro, macro, and econometrics	<b>DIRECT METHODS</b> <b>First-year course exams--written</b> Students expected to receive at least an average B grade in each of three major areas  <b>Core exam after first year--written</b> Students must show work consistent with B or better in any area required
<b>Research skills in specialized areas</b>	Develop critical skills in approaching research in specialized areas	<b>DIRECT METHODS</b> <b>Qualifying exams on specialized fields, after second year--written</b> Students must pass exams at Ph.D. level
<b>Creative synthesis</b>	Students develop a broad perspective on their specialized areas.	<b>DIRECT METHODS</b> <b>Qualifying exams on specialized fields, after second year--written</b> Students must pass exams at Ph.D. level

	<p><b>Third-year original research paper—written</b> Paper must be judged acceptable by advisor</p> <p><b>Doctoral dissertation proposal-- written</b> Proposal must be judged acceptable</p>
<p>Development of research agenda /scholarship</p> <p>Develop a research agenda and produce scholarly contributions</p>	<p><b>DIRECT METHODS</b></p> <p><b>Third-year original research paper—written</b> Paper must be judged acceptable by advisor</p> <p><b>Doctoral dissertation proposal--written</b> Proposal must be judged acceptable by faculty in the area</p> <p><b>Doctoral dissertation--written</b> Advising faculty committee must judge as acceptable</p> <p><b>Doctoral dissertation--oral defense</b> Advising faculty committee and external committee members must judge as acceptable</p> <p><b>INDIRECT METHODS</b></p> <p><b>Graduating student survey</b></p>
<p><b>Oral communication</b></p> <p>Students will be able to deliver effective presentations</p>	<p><b>DIRECT METHODS</b></p> <p><b>Teaching observation by faculty and student evaluation</b> Student teaching will meet faculty expectations.</p> <p><b>Job-market seminar presentation</b> Faculty in student’s area of specialty must judge as acceptable</p> <p><b>Doctoral dissertation--oral defense</b> Advising faculty committee and external committee members must judge as acceptable</p>

		<p><b>INDIRECT METHODS</b>  <b>Graduating student survey</b></p>
<p><b>Written communication</b></p>	<p>Students will present their contributions clearly in their writing.</p>	<p><b>DIRECT METHODS</b>  <b>Doctoral dissertation proposal- written</b>          Proposal must be judged acceptable by faculty in the area</p> <p><b>Doctoral dissertation--written</b>          Advising faculty committee must judge as acceptable</p> <p><b>INDIRECT METHODS</b>  <b>Graduating student survey</b></p>
<p><b>Teaching</b></p>	<p>Students will present well organized lectures and other assignments that support student learning</p>	<p><b>DIRECT METHODS</b>  <b>Teaching observation by faculty and student evaluation</b>          Student teaching will meet faculty expectations.</p> <p><b>INDIRECT METHODS</b>  <b>Graduating student survey</b></p>
<p><b>Professional ethics</b></p>	<p>Students gain appreciation of importance of responsible conduct in all facets of their work</p>	<p><b>INDIRECT METHODS</b>  <b>Graduating student survey</b></p>