

San Diego State University

Economics Department

Undergraduate Handbook
for Majors and Prospective Majors

2010-2011

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Economics Department
Undergraduate Handbook
2010-2011

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1. Welcome

Welcome to the Department of Economics. Economics analyzes the ways in which individuals and societies decide what to produce, how to produce it, and who gets it. Because it deals with these fundamental issues of our material well-being, it sheds light on the reasons why some individuals and societies are rich while others are poor. This also makes it a powerful tool for analyzing the costs and benefits of decisions, whether they are made by governments, business, or individuals.

A note about economics and business

The fields of Economics and Business Administration clearly are connected: both study similar issues, students in Business majors must take at least a few economics courses and there is a good deal of overlap in the content of many of the courses offered by the Economics department and the Business school. However, they are fundamentally different in that Economics is a social science while Business is an applied science. Business courses are generally about preparing you to run a business, teaching you accounting, finance, marketing, etc. Economics courses emphasize the bigger picture, teaching you to think about how the action of one entity (a firm, government, or individual) may affect other entities.

2. The Majors

The department offers four programs of study: the regular Economics Major, an Emphasis in International Economics, an Emphasis in Pre-Professional Studies and a Specialization in Quantitative Analysis. The difference between an Emphasis and a Specialization is that an Emphasis appears on your diploma but a Specialization does not (your diploma will say 'Economics' but the Specialization will appear on your transcript). All programs of study lead to a Bachelor of Arts degree.

The regular **Economics** major provides a broad exposure to all aspects of the field. This general major provides a well-rounded liberal arts background that is excellent preparation for wide range of career options.

The **Emphasis in International Economics**, as the name suggests, focuses on courses with international content. Choosing this major can signal to future employers that you have a strong interest and solid training in international issues.

The **Emphasis in Pre-Professional Studies** was originally designed for students wishing to go on to law school or administration programs. There is a stronger emphasis on communication and analytic skills and it requires that students take more courses related to regulation and policy institutions.

The **Specialization in Quantitative Analysis** is intended for students with strong math skills. Anyone intending to do graduate work in economics is strongly encouraged to choose this major.

Requirements for each program **for the 2010 catalog** are listed below. Please study these requirements carefully. Note that students in all Economics majors are required to take three core courses: Economics 301 (Collection and Use of Data in Economics); Economics 320 (Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory), and Economics 321 (Intermediate Microeconomic Theory).

Requirements for the Economics major: 27 upper-division units

(All lower-division courses must be passed with a C or better)

- Economics 101 and 102
- Accountancy 201
- Economics 201 OR Statistics 119 OR Statistics 250
- Math 120 OR Math 121 OR Math 150
- IDS 180
- Economics 301 - Collection and Use of Data in Economics
- Economics 320 - Intermediate Macro Theory
- Economics 321 - Intermediate Micro Theory
- TWO International courses, chosen from Economics 330, 360, 365, 463, 464, 489, 561, 565, 592
- FOUR additional upper-division elective courses (any economics course at the 300 level or higher)
- Completion of the THIRD semester of a foreign language [4 years of high school classes or foreign high school graduation/background is equivalent, or can test out]
- Must satisfy graduation writing assessment requirement [must pass a "W" course with C or better, or can test out]
- Completion of an online graduation survey during the student's final semester

Requirements for the Emphasis in International Economics: 33 upper-division units

(All lower-division courses must be passed with a C or better)

- Economics 101 and 102
- Accountancy 201
- Economics 201 OR Statistics 119 OR Statistics 250
- Math 120 OR Math 121 OR Math 150
- IDS 180
- Economics 301 - Collection and Use of Data in Economics
- Economics 320 - Intermediate Macro Theory
- Economics 321 - Intermediate Micro Theory
- FOUR International courses, chosen from Economics 330, 360, 365, 463, 464, 489, 561, 565, 592
- TWO additional upper-division elective courses (any economics course at the 300 level or higher)
- Finance 323 and 329 OR Management 350 and 357 OR Marketing 370 and 376
- Completion of the FOURTH semester of a foreign language
- Must satisfy graduation writing assessment requirement [must pass a "W" course with C or better, or can test out]

- STUDY ABROAD: Completion of 12 units of coursework OR 6 units of the internship course (300 hours) OR 9 units of coursework and 3 units of internship (150 hours), completed in another country
- Completion of an online graduation survey during the student's final semester

Requirements for the Emphasis in Pre-Professional Studies: 30 upper-division units
(All lower-division courses must be passed with a C or better)

- Economics 101 and 102
- Accountancy 201
- Economics 201 OR Statistics 119 OR Statistics 250
- Math 120 OR Math 121 OR Math 150
- IDS 180
- Communication 160
- Economics 301 - Collection and Use of Data in Economics
- Economics 320 - Intermediate Macro Theory
- Economics 321 - Intermediate Micro Theory
- Finance 323
- FOUR Pre-Professional courses, chosen from Economics 311, 338, 349, 380, 382, 401, 406, 422, 441, 449W, 452, 453, 454, 458, 490
- ONE International course, chosen from Economics 330, 360, 365, 463, 464, 489, 561, 565, 592
- ONE additional upper-division elective course (any economics course at the 300 level or higher)
- Must pass the THIRD semester of a foreign language [4 years of high school classes or foreign high school graduation/background is equivalent, can test out]
- Must pass ONE of the following courses with a C or better (will satisfy graduation writing assessment requirement): Econ 449W, English 508W, English 584W, Linguistics 305W, RWS 305W, RWS 500W, RWS 503W, RWS 208W, CCS 396W.
- Completion of an online graduation survey during the student's final semester

Requirements for the Specialization in Quantitative Analysis: 27 upper-division units
(All lower-division courses must be passed with a C or better)

- Economics 101 and 102
- Accountancy 201
- Economics 201 OR Statistics 119 OR Statistics 250
- Math 150
- IDS 180
- Economics 301 - Collection and Use of Data in Economics
- Economics 320 - Intermediate Macro Theory
- Economics 321 - Intermediate Micro Theory
- Economics 441 - Econometrics
- Economics 507 - Mathematical Economics
- TWO additional upper-division elective courses at the 400 or 500 level (any economics course at the 400 level or higher)

- TWO additional upper-division elective courses (any economics course at the 300 level or higher)
- Must pass the THIRD semester of a foreign language [4 years of high school classes or foreign high school graduation/background is equivalent, can test out]
- Must satisfy graduation writing assessment requirement [must pass a "W" course with C or better, or can test out]
- Completion of an online graduation survey during the student's final semester

3. Declaring the major

You are **STRONGLY** encouraged to declare the major as soon as possible. This will help you in planning for a timely graduation and avoid problems that may arise later. However, the Economics department does not currently close any classes to non-majors. That means that you do not need to declare the major before you start taking upper-division classes. **To declare the Economics Pre-major or any of the Economics majors**, submit a request to the Economics Department. Forms are available in the Department office and you must attach a copy of your degree audit to show that you have met all impaction requirements. Requests are reviewed once a week. Once approved, you must pick up the signed Declaration form and deliver it to the Registrar. The Department does not automatically forward forms to the Registrar for you.

Preparation for the major:

All programs of study require lower-division courses in Economics, statistics, calculus, computer skills and accounting. In order to declare the upper-division major, these courses must be completed and you must have a grade of C or better.

The International Economics major carries an additional language requirement. In order to declare the International Economics major, you must have completed the third semester of a foreign language (or the equivalent). To graduate, you must have completed the fourth semester.

The Pre-Professional Studies major has an additional lower-division requirement of Communication 160 (Argumentation), however, this is not an impaction requirement. It must be completed before graduation but you can declare the major without it.

The Quantitative Analysis major specifically requires Math 150. If you have only taken Math 120 or 121, you must also take Math 150 before you can declare this Specialization.

Impaction:

In order to declare the upper-division major, you must meet all the impaction requirements. You can declare the Pre-Major in Economics at any time and you are encouraged to do this as soon as possible because this will lock in your catalog year. That is, if the requirements change before you declare the upper-division major, you can still use the impaction requirements in place for the catalog year when you declared the Pre-Major. *Note to transfer students:* although you may have applied as an economics

major, and have all impaction requirements met when you transfer in, you will come in as a Pre-Major and must specifically declare the upper-division major once you are here.

In addition to the lower-division coursework, students must have a cumulative GPA of 2.4 or higher. Note that this is **higher** than the GPA requirement for graduation (which is 2.0).

4. Planning coursework

It is possible to complete all required coursework and graduate in four years (assuming you enroll full-time) but careful planning is required. You do not need to declare the major before beginning upper-division courses but it is best to declare the major as soon as impaction requirements are met. The upper-division requirements for each program of study are slightly different. Study the requirements carefully. We recommend that you meet with an advisor before, or soon after, beginning upper-division coursework, to plan a schedule that will help you graduate in a timely manner. A Major Academic Plan (MAP) for Economics is also available from the Office of Advising and Evaluations (<http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/advising/>).

All programs require the core classes of Economics 301, 320 and 321. It is highly recommended that you take these courses as early as possible; not only will this be good preparation for your elective courses but if you fail one of the core classes, you will still have time to re-take it and graduate on time.

The regular Economics major requires a total of 27 upper-division units. You are also required to complete 9 units of upper-division General Education courses (Explorations), for a total of 36 units (27 for the major + 9 for GEs = 36) to fulfill all course requirements.¹ However, you need 40 upper-division units to graduate. Thus, you may be able to complete all the required coursework and still need 4 additional units to get up to 40. Those four units can be from any classes you choose. Students often ask if 1-unit upper-division courses are available; the answer is that there are not many. The College of Extended Studies sometimes offers one- or two-unit courses that are considered upper-division (usually an intensive class over a weekend).

Keep in mind that not all electives are offered every semester. Many electives are only offered one semester each year; some may not be offered in a given year at all. Electives are the first casualty as budgets rise and fall, and as instructors come and go. You should never count on a particular class being offered in a particular semester. Similarly, very few electives are offered over the summer and summer schedules are highly uncertain. You should NEVER count on ANY particular class being offered in the summer.

Also note that relatively few classes are offered in the evenings. The department assumes that most of our students are full-time students, or at least that education is our students' first priority. If you must work full-time, you should not expect to finish your degree in four, or even five, years, and you should not expect to find it easy to complete all your

¹ Courses taken for the major cannot be used to satisfy Explorations requirements.

requirements. You may want to consider taking time off to finish your degree, or arranging a flexible schedule so that you can attend classes during the day. Department advisors are happy to discuss your options with you.

Students have a great deal of flexibility to select classes and students often ask what classes they should take. As a general rule, Economics 338, 365, 422, 464, 490 and 592 are all courses that deal more with the tools of macroeconomics and should follow Economics 320. Economics 360, 380, 382, 401, 406, 452, 453, 454, 458, 489 and 561 are all courses in applied microeconomics and should follow Economics 321. Economics 311 and 338 are less technical (not necessarily easier but these classes involve fewer graphs and more reading/writing). For information on specific classes and professors, talk to fellow students or check <http://www.ratemyprofessors.com/>.

5. The Minor

Requirements for the Minor in Economics: 12 upper-division units (18 total)

- Economics 101 AND 102
- Economics 320 OR Economics 321
- THREE upper-division courses, with all three selected from *one* of the following groups:
 - *International Economics:* choose three from Economics 330, 360, 365, 463, 464, 489, 561, 565, 592
 - *Pre-Professional Studies:* choose three from Economics 311, 338, 349, 380, 382, 401, 406, 422, 441, 449W, 452, 453, 454, 458, 490
 - *Quantitative Analysis:* take the following three classes: Economics 301, 441, 507

Courses in the minor cannot also be counted toward your major but they *can* be used to fulfill Explorations General Education requirements.

6. Study Abroad

If you wish to study abroad, your first stop should be the International Student Center (ISC). The counselors there will help you select a program or University abroad and help you with planning a schedule. Once you know where you would like to go, check that University's catalog for courses you might take. Get as much information as possible about courses (you may be able to get course syllabi by emailing instructors or the hosting university). Complete the Academic Approval Form (http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/isc/study_abroad/Academic_Approval.pdf) outlining which courses you may take and their SDSU equivalents, and submit a request for signature to the Economics department. You must attach a copy of your degree audit (showing courses already taken) and course descriptions of the courses you intend to take. It is strongly suggested that you meet with an Economics department advisor to discuss appropriate courses.

Approval of the Form does not guarantee that courses taken abroad will count toward the Economics major, particularly if course information is limited before you go. In order to get credit transferred, you must submit a Request for Adjustment of Academic Requirement (RAAR) when you return. Follow the steps to request transfer credit (discussed in the next section). You must attach a copy of the course syllabus and/or course materials (exams, papers, etc.) to that request.

Students in the International Economics major are *required* to complete 12 units of coursework abroad, or 6 units of Internship (300 hours), or 9 units of coursework and 3 units (150 hours) of Internship. These units do not necessarily have to include courses to fulfill the other requirements of the major. For example, you could go to Spain and take four 3-unit classes covering Spanish Art, History, Literature and Politics, none of which would transfer as Economics courses. This would satisfy the Study Abroad requirement of the International Economics major but you would still need to take all the other required courses. Or you might take 2 classes in Spanish Art, one course in International Economics that corresponds to Economics 360 at SDSU, and work for 150 hours in the Spanish embassy, which would earn you 3 units for Economics 495 (Internship). This would satisfy the Study Abroad requirement of the major as well as take care of 6 units of coursework toward the major (for Economics 360 and 495).

Keep in mind that at least half your units in the major must be taken at SDSU. If you are a regular Economics major, this means that you cannot have more than 13 units counted toward the major transferred from any other institution, including those abroad.

7. Scholarships and Honors

Scholarships:

The Department of Economics administers two scholarship programs specifically for Economics majors. Center for Public Economics (CPE) Scholarships are awarded in the Spring semester and range from \$275 to \$550. To be considered for an award, a student must have completed at least 60 semester units of college work, have a concentration in economics, have an interest in public economics, and submit a completed application

form (including three letters of reference, an essay, and an unofficial SDSU transcript). Application packages are available in the Department of Economics office (NH-305) in late January/early February. If you have any questions, please contact Professor Tia Hilmer at chilmer@mail.sdsu.edu. Economics majors may also apply for a Terhune Scholarship. These scholarships are for students demonstrating potential for success in college in the Economics major. They are renewable yearly for students who meet the scholarship criteria and are making normal progress in the major. Further information about all scholarships is available at the Department of Economics Office.

Distinction in the major:

Upon recommendation of the department, students doing superior work in economics (their major field) may be graduated with distinction. To qualify for Distinction in the Major, a student must have a minimum 3.50 GPA in the major (upper division courses) by the beginning of the fall semester for midyear graduates and by the end of the fall semester for May graduates. Your eligibility for graduation with honors and/or distinction in the major will be computed automatically. However, to be considered in the computation for eligibility for distinction, all removal of incompletes and grade changes must be submitted by the end of the fifth week of your final semester.

Omicron Delta Epsilon – Honor Society:

The objective of this society is to recognize scholastic attainment and honor outstanding achievement in economics. To be eligible for membership, students must have an overall GPA of 3.0 and a 3.0 overall in Economics courses. Students do not have to be Economics majors but must have a genuine interest in the field. Eligibility requires the completion of one semester of full time college work, including a minimum of 12 units of Economics Courses. The faculty adviser is Professor Thitima Puttitanun, Department of Economics, 619-594-3556, tputtita@mail.sdsu.edu.

8. Other issues

- a. *Requesting transfer credit.* If you have taken a course at another University that does not automatically transfer to SDSU as a specific class, you will need to submit a Request for Adjustment to Academic Requirements (RAAR) form. RAAR forms and request slips are available in the economics department office. You must attach a copy of your degree audit and the course syllabus (a simple catalog description is NOT sufficient). Typical wording for such a request is: "Please let Economics 123 at XYZ University substitute for Economics 789 at SDSU." Explanation for the request is simply: "Course content is equivalent." If your request is granted, you must return to the department office to pick up your petition and deliver it to the Central Advising Center (Student Services West 1551) – the department does not forward requests for you.
- b. *Requesting exceptions to policies.* Any request for an exception to any department policy requires a signature from the department chair. Note that exceptions are not made very often and only in extreme circumstances. Requests should be submitted to the department office. These will be evaluated by a committee once a week. If your request is granted, you must return to the

department office to pick up your petition and deliver it to the appropriate university office – the department does not forward requests to any other office for you.

- c. *Internships.* Economics 495 is a three-unit Internship course requiring 150 hours of work. An internship is a professional career experience with specific goals outlined from the beginning. If you already have a part- or full-time job, you may be able to arrange an internship with your current employer but you cannot get internship credit for simply doing your current job. For example, if you work as a salesperson at Banana Republic, you cannot get internship credit for that job. However, you may be able to set up an internship by talking to your supervisor and arranging to work on a specific project for your store or the corporation. For more information, see the Internship coordinator.
- d. *Applying for graduation.* May Commencement ceremonies are for students who graduate in May, August and the previous December (i.e., May 2011, August 2011 and December 2010 grads will all walk in May 2011). The deadline to apply for May or August graduation is usually in early February. The deadline to apply for December graduation is usually in early September. Once you apply, an evaluator from the Office of Advising and Evaluation will check that you have fulfilled all requirements. You cannot register for terms after your graduation date, regardless of whether you actually finish. Thus, if you apply to graduate in May and then don't complete all your requirements by the end of the spring semester, you cannot register for the summer unless you cancel your graduation and re-apply for an August graduation (and pay the fee again). If you have to cancel your graduation, or you simply don't finish, you can still walk in the May ceremony but you will have to re-file your application for whatever term you do finish in (and pay the fee again). We encourage students to meet with a department advisor at least one year before they intend to graduate.
- e. *Grade and GPA rules.* All courses taken to fulfill requirements for the major must be taken for a letter grade. The only exception is that language courses may be taken C/NC to fulfill the language requirement. Lower-division courses needed for impaction must be passed with a grade of C or better. Upper-division courses do not require a specific grade (as long as you pass, which means getting a D-minus or higher) but you must have a 2.0 GPA in the major to graduate. That is, you do not need a C in every class; you need a C *average*. Keep in mind that you must be declared in the major to graduate and the GPA requirement for impaction is 2.4. Since you can begin taking upper-division courses before you declare the major, there *have* been cases where students completed all required coursework and were otherwise ready to graduate but they had never declared the major and their GPA was below 2.4. Even though they had the 2.0 GPA to graduate, they did not have the 2.4 GPA needed to declare the major and they were required to continue taking classes simply to raise their GPA. The department will NOT waive the GPA impaction requirement simply because it is the only thing keeping you from graduating.
- f. *Economics Student Association (ESA) – Economics Club.* The ESA is an organization of students interested in economics. The club meets to network with undergraduate economics students, professors, and those working in economics or

business fields; to gain insight into career opportunities from invited speakers; and to hold social events. If you are interested in joining the club and/or to find out more information, please visit the ESA website, <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=371401307133> , or see Professor Thitima Puttitanun, tputtita@mail.sdsu.edu.

9. After Graduation

Jobs

The Economics Major prepares students for a wide array of careers in business, government, education, law, journalism, non-profits, and elsewhere. Economics majors find employment in financial services, marketing, retail, transportation, management, policy analysis, teaching, and other fields. It also serves as an excellent major for law school or other professional training. Economics majors compete with Business majors for many of the same jobs and any employer that is looking for Business majors will also be interested in Economics majors. Because, as discussed earlier, Business courses are more applied, Business majors may be more likely to ‘hit the ground running’ in entry-level jobs, while Economics majors may need additional training to learn the more hands-on aspects of specific positions. On the other hand, Economics majors have more flexibility in the types of jobs available to them, and employers typically consider Economics to be a more rigorous major.

The best place to start your job search is Career Services, Student Services East Room 1200. They offer career counseling, host career fairs and workshops, maintain thousands of job listings, and schedule on-campus interviews. Do not wait until the end of your senior year to visit them!

Graduate school

An Economics major is excellent preparation for graduate study in business, law, public administration, public policy, education and, of course, economics. Career Services can give you general information about graduate and professional studies. Faculty in the Economics department can advise you about graduate programs in economics.

Graduate study in economics is much more mathematical than your undergraduate coursework at San Diego State. If you are interested in pursuing a graduate degree in economics, it is strongly suggested that you choose the Specialization in Quantitative Economics and take as many math courses as you can.

SDSU offers a Masters program in Economics. For more information on the graduate program, see the Graduate Advisor (Professor Balsdon ebalsdon@mail.sdsu.edu).

Contact Information

Department of Economics
Nasatir 305

Tel: (619) 594-1675

Fax: (619) 594-5062

<http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~econ/>

Office of Advising and Evaluations
Student Services West – Room 1551
Monday-Thursday: 9:00AM-6:00PM

Friday: 9:00AM-4:00PM

Tel: (619) 594-6668

Fax: (619) 594-1553

<http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/advising/>

International Student Center
Study Abroad

Monday-Friday: 8:00 AM-4:30PM

Tel: (619) 594-2475

Fax: (619) 594-16805

<http://www.sa.sdsu.edu/isc/>

Career Services

Student Services East – Room 1200

Monday-Friday: 8:00AM-4:30PM

Tel: (619) 594-6851

Fax: (619) 594-2650

<http://career.sdsu.edu/>

Office of the Registrar

Student Services West – Room 1641

Monday-Thursday: 9:00AM-6:00PM

Friday: 9:00AM-4:00PM

Tel: (619) 594-6871

<http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/registrar/>

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