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The Office for Academic Advising Support
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Major: Economics, BSB

An Economics major hones your analytical and critical thinking skills, emphasizing data-driven decision-making and strategic problem-solving, while training you to anticipate and adapt to shifting market and policy landscapes.

What skills do students develop in this program?

Economics students develop a versatile set of skills that can be applied to a variety of careers, including:

- Analytical Reasoning and Critical Thinking: Learning to dissect complex economic issues, interpret data, and draw evidence-based conclusions.
- Quantitative and Data Analysis Skills: Applying mathematical and statistical methods to forecast trends, evaluate policies, and solve real-world problems.
- Problem-Solving: Constructing and testing models to address a range of questions, from everyday decisions to global challenges.
- Communication and Collaboration: Presenting research and working with others to build consensus, making these skills vital for professional environments.
- Adaptability and Strategic Thinking: Translating economic principles into practice and adjusting strategies as markets, policies, and technologies evolve.

What kind of student is a good fit for Economics?

A student who thrives in the economics major is often: 1) Curious and Analytical: They enjoy probing deeper into how and why things happen, using data and logical reasoning to solve puzzles in business, policy, and finance. 2) Comfortable with Numbers: While not all economists are "math wizards," having a willingness to engage with quantitative methods and interpret data is essential. 3) Problem-Solving Oriented: They find satisfaction in diagnosing challenges, crafting solutions, and iterating on models or strategies. 4) Interested in Big-Picture Questions: Whether it's social issues, public policy, or international trade, these students seek to understand the broader forces shaping economies and societies. 5) Adaptable and Open-Minded: Economics is an evolving field, so a readiness to explore new technologies, datasets, and perspectives helps students stay at the cutting edge.

Are there any popular classes in the program that you would suggest or recommended classes for a student who is just starting to explore the major?

- ECO 105: Principles of Microeconomics: Provides a fundamental understanding of how individuals and firms make decisions about resource allocation, laying the groundwork for advanced topics.
- ECO 106: Principles of Macroeconomics: Introduces the big-picture concepts of economics, focusing on national income, inflation, unemployment, and government policy.
- ECO 304: Introductory Econometrics: Teaches essential tools for analyzing data, interpreting results, and applying quantitative methods to economic questions.

What are examples of internships and/or research opportunities that students in this major are currently working on or have access to as majors in this program?

Students have the opportunity to participate in an array of internships, including those associated with traditional criminal justice agencies (e.g., police, prosecutors, defense, probation, corrections), those that provide support services or prevention to justice-involved persons (e.g., victim advocates, youth advocates, reentry programs, legal advocacy), and those in aligned fields of public health, social work, forensic psychology, legal studies (in addition to criminal legal work).

Students can participate in a wide variety of research options, including research-related internships, faculty-led research projects, and student-directed research projects. Students can also participate in the Inside Out program, which offers students the opportunity to take criminology courses alongside individuals residing in a correctional facility. The Criminology program also hosts a chapter of the Alpha Phi Sigma National Criminal Justice Honor Society. Student members of the honor society engage in multiple activities throughout the year, including attending national conferences and networking events.

What are students doing after graduation?

Undergraduate economics students have the opportunity to explore a wide range of research topics in their electives often applying economic theories to real-world issues. This would include labor economics, where students can analyze wage disparities and employment trends; environmental economics, focusing on regulations and externalities; behavioral economics, which examines how psychological factors influence decisions; international trade, exploring trade policies and globalization effects; and industrial organization, investigating market structures and competition. Other popular topics include monetary and fiscal policy, income inequality, sports economics, and health economics, each providing insights into economic decision-making at individual, firm, and national levels. Students then have the opportunity to present these findings at an annual student conference.

Undergraduate economics students gain practical experience through internships, applying their analytical and quantitative skills in real-world settings. Many work in finance, consulting, and data analytics, some recent examples include: Berkely Research Group, Coherent Economics, Accenture, and Compass Lexicon. Others explore roles in government agencies, nonprofits, and think tanks, contributing to public policy and economic development projects like the World Bank, Congressional Research Service, and Federal Reserve Bank. Tech firms and startups also seek economics students for business strategy, pricing analysis, and consumer behavior research, e.g. United Airlines, Circle-K, and others.

Other interesting facts about the Economics major?

Because of the general purpose nature of skills acquired, economics graduates pursue a wide range of career paths, including roles in finance (banking, investment analysis), consulting (management or economic consulting), government and public policy (working with agencies or think tanks), data analytics (helping businesses or organizations interpret and act on data), and academia (through graduate study in economics, law, or business). Many also find opportunities in corporate strategy, nonprofit advocacy, or entrepreneurship, leveraging their analytical and problem-solving skills to inform strategic decisions and drive innovation.