

New Academic Program: B.A./B.S. in Economics (OSU-Cascades)

Program Proposed Start Date

Fall 2022

Program Description

Staff propose to offer the B.A./B.S. degree in Economics at the OSU-Cascades campus in a collaboration between OSU-Cascades and the Economics program in the School of Public Policy (SPP) within the College of Liberal Arts at the OSU-Corvallis campus. Economics is a popular major at the OSU-Corvallis campus with over 250 enrolled students. It is anticipated that the B.A./B.S. program in Economics at OSU-Cascades will also be popular as it provides a marketable degree that is otherwise unavailable in a face-to-face modality to students in a central and growing region of the state.

The Economics undergraduate degree has options in general economics, managerial economics, law, economics and policy, and mathematical economics. The B.A./B.S. degree in Economics prepares students for careers in various public sector roles, financial analysis, investment analysis, graduate studies, and a variety of other paths. Graduates are trained in economic theory and applications, and they are able to test hypotheses, make forecasts, and interpret estimates. Businesses are seeking employees who can think critically, communicate clearly in written and oral form, solve problems, and who are comfortable with quantitative analysis. The Economics degree will address these needs in Central Oregon. It will also provide outstanding preparation for graduate studies in many fields as students develop the analytical skills highly coveted by many academic disciplines.

Program Context

This proposal is a collaboration between OSU-Cascades and the Economics program in SPP within the College of Liberal Arts. The academic home for the program is in SPP, and program coordination will occur in Corvallis under the direction of Dr. Todd Pugatch, Associate Professor, and Dr. Catherine Bolzendahl, Director of SPP. The administration of the program in Bend will be overseen by OSU-Cascade's Dean of Academic Affairs and an OSU-Cascades program coordinator (TBD). There are adequate resources to support the program in Bends in terms of facilities, faculty, student support services, and library holdings (available through the Corvallis campus).

The program will not differ from that delivered at the Corvallis campus. The curriculum, catalog description, and degree learning outcomes and assessment plan (including direct measures of student learning) will be aligned across campuses. All courses needed to complete the major will be offered face-to-face in Bend. Students will have access to any additional Economics courses in the designator through OSU's Ecampus.

Students in this major are a part of OSU-Cascades, where student services exist for academic advising, financial aid, course registration, textbook purchases, a career development center, veterans' support services, experiential learning access, tutoring and student support services,

disability services, and mental health counseling. Where appropriate, students at OSU-Cascades also have access to online services, such as the Writing Center and technology support services, provided on the Corvallis campus.

Program Purpose/Relationship to University Mission/Strategic Plan

The B.A./B.S. in Economics at OSU-Cascades directly addresses OSU's Strategic Plan 4.0 to provide access to rich educational opportunities for students. First year students who attend public universities typically do so within 50 miles of their homes as these students are most often place-bound and seek higher education closer to their current residence and employment.¹

Need for the Program

All public institutions in Oregon with a comprehensive liberal arts program offer an undergraduate degree in Economics: University of Oregon, Eastern Oregon University, Southern Oregon University, Western Oregon University, and Portland State University. The synergy created by the Economics degree programs in the state of Oregon will provide accessible educational opportunities for all regions of the state. The Economics programs at these institutions are complementary as regional schools as well as state institutions contribute to the health of their regional economies and communities.

Program Financials

The estimate of enrollment was completed using data from trends in completions from Hanover Research. The estimate of the first five years of enrollment was also based on historical growth trends for new programs at OSU-Cascades.

All instructors in the program in Bend will have their credentials vetted by faculty in SPP in Corvallis. For FY2023 (the first year of the program, or zero year), we will hire a part-time instructor to teach three courses in the major and act as the initial program coordinator. Instructors at OSU-Cascades hold a minimum of a master's degree in their field (PhD preferred) and provide evidence of teaching experience and success. The new program coordinator will work with the Corvallis campus on assessment plans, the recruitment of students, and the coordination with advising staff. During FY2023, we will conduct a search for a full-time 9-month Instructor who will take on the role as the OSU-Cascades program coordinator, teach 5-6 courses in the program, and assist the Dean of Academic Affairs and the program coordinator in Corvallis to roll out additional courses and select/hire additional part-time faculty.

Advisors at OSU-Cascades are assigned at the ratio of 1 FTE per 275 student headcount. At program maturity, we anticipate that 0.5 FTE of advising staff will be assigned to the Political Science and Economics programs. No other support staff will be needed.

The budget is summarized in the table below.

¹ Hillman, Nicholas, and Taylor Weichman. "Education Deserts: The Continued Significance of 'Place' in the Twenty-First Century." *Community*, American Council on Education and the Center for Policy Research and Strategy, 25 May 2017, community-wealth.org/content/education-deserts-continued-significance-place-twenty-first-century.

	Academic Year 2022-23	Academic Year 2023-24	Academic Year 2024-25	Academic Year 2025-26
COSTS				
Personnel				
Faculty (T/TT & fixed term) & Staff	\$18,441	\$62,759	\$78,776	\$80,568
OPE	\$4,320	\$34,202	\$39,381	\$41,204
Personnel Subtotal	\$22,761	\$96,960	\$118,156	\$121,772
Other Resources				
Library printed/electronic	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Services & Supplies: office supplies, postage, professional development, student workers, student transportation to coast	\$100	\$6,123	\$4,255	\$4,338
Other Resources Subtotal	\$100	\$6,123	\$4,225	\$4,338
TOTAL COSTS	\$22,861	\$103,083	\$122,411	\$126,109
INCOME/SUPPORT				
Tuition & Degree Conferrals*	\$77,970	\$123,673	\$173,306	\$222,998
MSI Support	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL INCOME/SUPPORT	\$77,970	\$123,673	\$173,306	\$222,998

*In its initial year (AY 2022-23) and thereafter, projected tuition and degree conferrals will generate revenue sufficient to fully cover projected program costs.

RECOMMENDATION

All appropriate university committees and the OSU Faculty Senate have positively reviewed the proposed program. The Provost recommends that the Academic Strategies Committee approve the establishment of a B.A./B.S. in Economics at OSU-Cascades, effective fall 2022, pending support of the Statewide Provosts Council and the approval of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission.