

Economics

College of Social Sciences

Department of Economics

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B.A. in Economics

Minor in Economics

Minor in International Political Economy

(Jointly with
Department of Political Science)

Subject Matter Preparation for Single Subject Teaching Credential in Social Science

Economics

Economics is the social science that studies the way in which societies are organized to produce the goods and services that sustain and enhance the life processes of the community. As a fundamental scientific discipline, economics employs systematic analysis in the study of the production and distribution of income within and among nations. Since all social policy issues in modern societies have an economic dimension, the study of economics offers the student an opportunity to investigate the most important and exciting problems of political economy facing the world today.

Such topics as inflation, unemployment, business cycles, international trade and finance, and development have long been within the province of economics. More recently, the economic way of thinking has been extended to other areas. Economic theories have been used to explain crime rates, birth rates, class conflict, pollution, marriage decisions, migration, and many other topics involving human behavior.

Economics majors acquire skills in critical and analytical thinking that contribute to an individual's intellectual independence and self-confidence in the problem-solving processes. In addition, economics majors



confront the necessity of developing a broad view of the options facing humankind in organizing the production and distribution of income. The literature of economics presents widely diverse systems of political economic philosophy. The department offers a well-developed and balanced curriculum.

The program in economics is designed to give the student maximum flexibility. A typical economics major might take courses in intermediate macroeconomic theory and statistics while also learning about global corporations in the third world, or the regional economy, or pursue an independent study project on the foundations of supply-side economics. The economics major is designed to permit the student to pursue a broad liberal arts undergraduate degree, integrating the study of economics with other social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, and business administration.

Center for Economic Research and Education of Central California

The Center for Economic Research and Education of Central California enhances economic development and economic literacy in the San Joaquin Valley by using the expertise of our faculty and the skills of our students. The center sponsors research on regional issues such as unemployment, health care, and pollution. It also provides economic education services such as teacher workshops and curriculum consultation.

Career Opportunities

Graduates of the department pursue a variety of challenging careers in industry, finance, education, government, and international affairs. The economics B.A. is an excellent foundation for graduate study in public administration and business. The undergraduate major in economics has also proved to be an ideal prelaw major. The faculty provides counseling on legal careers to students interested in this career option. A number of distinguished attorneys are graduates of the department.

Careers for professional economists fall into the following patterns:

1. **Business** — roughly one-third of all economists are employed by private firms both large and small, although big corporations, banks, and insurance companies tend to employ larger staffs of economists.
2. **Government** — approximately one out of five professional economists works for a local, state, or federal government agency.
3. **Education** — about 45 percent of all economists are involved in teaching the discipline. There is a reawakening of interest in teaching economics in the secondary and even primary grades as more states are beginning to mandate economics in the curriculum.