

Program: Economics

Division: BSSL

Writer(s): Gina Webster

SLO/SAO Point-Person: Gina Webster

Email your completed form to Karin Spirn and your dean by November 3.

Helpful Links:

- ★ [Tools for Writers](#) - with contacts and info for help with specific sections.
- ★ [Program Review Glossary](#) - defines key terms you can review when writing.
- ★ [Discipline Data Packets](#) – institutional research about disciplines and student services
- ★ [Course Success Rates Dashboard](#) – allows you to research your program’s success rates

Detailed information and instructions appear at the end of this form. For help, please contact Karin Spirn at kspirn@laspositascollege.edu.

1. Please describe your program's most important **achievements** in year 24-25.

- The Economics program continues to actively contribute to the College's strategic priority of “Excellence and Equity in Student Success and Completion” through the following key initiatives:
 - ✓ Curriculum design focused on inclusivity and relevance: The program ensures that its curriculum is rigorous while being inclusive and relevant to a diverse student population. This includes incorporating real-world issues - such as income inequality, and racial disparities in labor markets - into coursework to reflect students lived experiences and encourage deeper engagement. For example, our Principles of Microeconomics course includes case studies on wage gaps across gender and race.
 - ✓ Equity-focused pedagogical practices: The Economics faculty implement (to the best to their abilities) teaching strategies that support historically underrepresented students. For example, classroom participation is structured to ensure all voices are heard, using small group assignments and discussions.
 - ✓ Proactive academic support and early intervention: The program identifies students who may be struggling early in the semester and connects them with tutoring, office hours, or supplemental instruction. For example, students who underperform on the first exam are invited to targeted review sessions.
 - ✓ Career connection: The program integrates career development into the curriculum. For example, the use of professional publications - such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ “Occupational Handbook” - exposes students to various career opportunities in Economics, Business, and other related fields.

Program Review Update 2025

- The Economics program successfully hired a new part-time faculty member as part of its strategic plan to enhance instructional quality and promote student success. For the past several years, the program has aimed to bring on a high-quality adjunct instructor with expertise in economics - someone capable of delivering rigorous, up-to-date, and engaging instruction. We are pleased to welcome this new faculty member, who brings strong academic experience and a passion for teaching.

2. Please describe your most important **challenges** in year 24-25.

- The Economics program continues to face a challenge related to the academic preparedness of incoming students. Many students enter the program lacking foundational skills in mathematics and English, which are essential for understanding core economic concepts and engaging with college-level coursework. This gap makes it difficult for faculty to effectively teach economics content while simultaneously having to provide informal tutoring in basic math and language skills.
- Another ongoing challenge the Economics program faces is the lack of resources to support the growing demand for its Honors projects. Over the past few terms, the number of Honors contracts has increased significantly, reflecting strong student interest and engagement. However, the Program currently lacks the support necessary to effectively accommodate and sustain this growth.
- Also, despite the recent addition of a new part-time faculty member, the program continues to require an expansion of its part-time faculty pool. Current course demands, enrollment trends, and the need for specialized expertise exceed the capacity of the existing instructional staff.

3. What SLO(s) or SAO(s) if any did your program assess or discuss since your last program review? Please describe any findings and planned actions.

- Since the last program review, the Economics program temporarily paused SLO assessments in eLumen due to the College's transition to CurrIQunet META. As a result, no SLO data was recorded during this period. The program plans to resume assessments in Fall 2025, following the completion of the transition. Moving forward, SLO assessments will continue as scheduled according to the established three-year assessment plan.

4. What are your upcoming plans? Please note any ways that these support student achievement and equity.

- The Economics program plans to continue advancing excellence - "the quality of being outstanding in all that we do."
- The program's faculty have decided to phase out HyFlex courses beginning in Spring 2026 and return to the traditional in-person format used before the pandemic. While HyFlex served an important purpose during a transitional period, our experience shows it is not pedagogically effective for our program in the long term.

Although HyFlex offered great flexibility - combining in-person, online synchronous (via Zoom), and online asynchronous options - the drawbacks have outweighed the benefits. Program data show that

Program Review Update 2025

HyFlex students consistently underperform compared to those in single-modality courses, with withdrawal rates among asynchronous participants being particularly high.

From a teaching standpoint, HyFlex is also highly demanding. Delivering instruction simultaneously to three different audiences requires extensive preparation and feels much like teaching three separate courses. However, despite this increased workload, student outcomes have been disappointing, yielding a low rate of return.

Finally, HyFlex tends to undermine classroom engagement. Attendance across modalities is low, and it's not uncommon to have only one student in person and a few on Zoom, making meaningful discussions and group work difficult.

CTE REPORT (CTE DISCIPLINES ONLY)

1. Does this program continue to meet a labor market demand?

- Yes or No:
- Explanation/evidence:

2. Are there similar programs in the area? If yes, list the programs and their institutions.

- Yes or No:
- Explanation/evidence:

3. Has the program demonstrated effectiveness as measured by the employment and completion success of its students? Provide employment and completion success based on Perkins Core Indicator Report.

- Yes or No:
- Explanation/evidence:

4. Does the program provide opportunities for review and comments by local private industries? Attach most recent Advisory Committee meeting minutes.

- Yes or No:
- Explanation/evidence:

Detailed Instructions and Information

Instructions:

1. Please answer each question with enough detail to present your information, but it doesn't have to be long.
2. If the requested information does not apply to your program, write "Not Applicable."
3. Optional/suggested: Communicate with your dean while completing this document.
4. Send an electronic copy of this completed form to Program Review chair Karin Spirn and your Dean by November 3.
5. Even if you don't have much to report, we want to hear from you, so your voice is part of the college planning process.

Audience: Deans, Vice Presidents of Student Services and Academic Services, All Planning and Allocation Committees. This document will be available to the public.

Uses: This Program Review will inform the audience about your program. It is also used in creating division summaries, determining college planning priorities, and determining the allocation of resources. The final use is to document the fulfillment of accreditation requirements.

Please note: Program Review is NOT a vehicle for making requests. All requests should be made through appropriate processes (e.g., Instructional Equipment Request Process) or directed to your dean or supervisor.

Time Frame: This Program Review should reflect your program status during the 24-25 academic year. It should describe plans starting now and continuing through 2025-26. It is okay to include information outside of these time windows as needed.

Program Review Process: Comprehensive Program Reviews will be completed every three years, in alignment with the SLO/SAO cycle. On the other years, programs will complete an update.

SLO/SAO Process: SLOs and SAOs should be assessed according to a three-year plan, with comprehensive reporting on the third year. For more information, contact SLO chair John Rosen: jrosen@laspositascollege.edu

Equity is a guiding principle. Here is the LPC definition:

Las Positas College will achieve equity by changing the impacts of structural racism, ableism, homophobia, and systematic poverty on student success and access to higher education, achieved through continuous evaluation and improvement of all services. We believe in a high-quality education focused on learning and an inclusive, culturally relevant environment that meets the diverse needs of all our students.

LPC Equity Definition: Equity is parity in student educational outcomes. It places student success and belonging for students of color and disproportionately impacted students at the center of focus.