2026-27 Comprehensive Program Review

Program: ECONOMICS

Division: BSSL

Writers: Gina Webster

SLO/SAO Point-Person: Gina Webster

Email your completed form to Karin Spirn and your dean by November 2, 2026.

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.

Section 1: Program Reflection and Planning

These questions appear on all Program Reviews including comprehensive and updates.

1. Please describe your program's most important **achievements** in year 25-26.

The most significant achievements of the Economics Program during the 2025–2026 academic year included advancing student access and equity; enhancing the Program's inclusive curriculum and students' academic and career-ready skills; and expanding the existing part-time faculty pool to increase instructional capacity.

- **Supporting Access, Equity, and Student Success:** During the 2025–2026 academic year, the Economics Program continued to provide high-quality, transferable courses to students throughout the Tri-Valley community and beyond while supporting the College's commitment to improving access and equity. The Program continued to identify and address barriers that could affect students' ability to access and successfully complete courses and reviewed student outcome data to identify disparities and opportunities for improvement. To better accommodate students with varying educational, employment, family, and scheduling needs, the Program offered courses in multiple modalities, including online asynchronous, online synchronous, hybrid, and in-person formats. Faculty also continued to identify affordable course materials and other resources whenever possible to reduce financial barriers. Together, these efforts supported the Program's ongoing work to expand access, reduce achievement gaps, and improve student success.

- **Strengthening Inclusive Curriculum and Student Skill Development:** During the 2025–2026 academic year, the Economics Program expanded the integration of equity-related topics throughout its curriculum and placed greater emphasis on developing skills that prepare students for transfer and future careers. Courses addressed topics such as income and wealth inequality, gender wage gaps, racial and socioeconomic disparities, discrimination, and the effects of public policies on economic opportunities and outcomes. The Program also strengthened its emphasis on analytical reasoning, quantitative literacy, and critical thinking to enhance students' ability to interpret economic information and evaluate economic policies. These efforts increased the relevance and inclusiveness of the Economics curriculum while equipping students with knowledge and transferable skills that support continued academic study, successful transfer to four-year institutions, and future employment.

- **Expanding the Existing Part-Time Faculty Pool:** During the 2025–2026 academic year, the Program expanded its pool of part-time faculty by hiring three new adjunct faculty members. This expansion strengthened the Program's instructional capacity and provided additional flexibility in meeting scheduling and student needs. The new adjunct faculty received mentoring and support as they became familiar with the Program, its courses, and College practices and expectations. They are also being evaluated in accordance with established College procedures. These efforts supported faculty development, instructional quality, and consistency across Economics course offerings.

2. Please describe your most important **challenges** in year 25-26

Despite its successes in 2025–2026, the Economics Program faced growing challenges related to widening differences in student academic preparation and learning needs, increasingly complex student support requirements, and the expanding use of artificial intelligence (AI) in coursework. These developments placed additional demands on faculty time and instructional resources while creating challenges in maintaining academic rigor and fostering independent learning and critical thinking. In particular:

- **Widening Differences in Student Preparation and Academic Goals:** During the 2025–2026 academic year, the Economics Program experienced an increasingly wide range of student preparation, skills, and academic goals. A growing number of students entered Economics courses with gaps in foundational mathematics, reading, and writing skills, as well as difficulties with organization, time management, and independent learning. At the same time, the Program saw growing interest from highly motivated and academically prepared students seeking more challenging opportunities, including Honors-level Economics coursework. This widening range created significant instructional challenges for faculty, who needed to provide additional support to students struggling with foundational skills while maintaining academic rigor and offering sufficient depth and challenge for advanced students.

- **Increasing Complexity of Student Mental Health and Learning Support Needs:** Faculty also encountered a growing number of students whose mental health concerns, learning disabilities, or other individual circumstances affected attendance, engagement, assignment completion, and academic progress. While faculty remained committed to providing an inclusive and supportive learning environment and implementing approved accommodations, they do not always have the specialized

training needed to respond effectively to increasingly complex student situations. This presents challenges in determining how best to support students while maintaining appropriate faculty roles and academic expectations.

- **Increasing Student Reliance on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools:** During the 2025–2026 academic year, the Economics Program faced growing challenges associated with students' increasing reliance on AI-powered tools to complete assignments and other coursework. While these technologies can provide valuable learning support, their use sometimes raises concerns about academic integrity, the authenticity of student work, and the development of independent analytical reasoning, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Faculty faced increasing difficulties in determining whether submitted work reflected students' own understanding of economic concepts and their ability to apply economic reasoning. These developments created additional challenges in designing meaningful assessments, maintaining academic standards, and encouraging students to use AI responsibly as a learning resource rather than a substitute for independent intellectual effort.

- **Growing Demands on Faculty Time and Instructional Capacity:** The increasing diversity of students' academic preparation, learning needs, and educational goals placed additional demands on faculty time and instructional capacity. Faculty were expected to maintain consistent academic standards while providing more individualized assistance, adapting instructional approaches, addressing accommodation needs, referring students to appropriate support services, and creating advanced learning opportunities for highly prepared students. Balancing these responsibilities while maintaining high-quality instruction became increasingly challenging and underscored the importance of adequate institutional resources, faculty development, and effective collaboration between instructional programs and student support services.

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

Building on its progress in 2025–2026, the Economics Program will focus on improving instructional accessibility, strengthening academic integrity, expanding advanced learning opportunities, and exploring new curriculum that supports diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and belonging. These priorities aim to address evolving student needs while fostering a more inclusive, rigorous, and supportive learning environment. The Program plans to:

- **Review and Revise Content Accessibility:** The Economics Program will review and revise its online instructional content to ensure that course materials are accessible to students with disabilities and align with Las Positas College's accessibility guidelines. This work will include improving document formats, alternative text, captions, heading structures, links, color contrast, and compatibility with assistive technologies. By identifying and removing accessibility barriers, the Program aims to provide more equitable access to course materials and activities and create a more inclusive learning environment in which all students have meaningful opportunities to participate and succeed.

- **Explore In-Person Testing Options for Online Courses:** The Economics Program will explore the feasibility of incorporating in-person, supervised assessments into all online Economics courses to strengthen academic integrity and ensure that students demonstrate the knowledge and skills outlined in course learning outcomes. This review will consider logistical challenges, student accessibility, scheduling flexibility, and the availability of appropriate testing facilities and support services. By exploring alternative assessment methods, the Program aims to reduce overreliance on AI-powered tools, promote independent learning and critical thinking, and ensure that students successfully completing online Economics courses have acquired the expected knowledge and competencies.

- **Explore Separate Honors Sections:** In response to growing student interest in more challenging academic opportunities, the Program will explore the feasibility of offering separate Honors sections of Economics courses. The review will consider student demand, enrollment, scheduling, faculty availability, as well as opportunities for more advanced analysis, research, and quantitative work.

- **Explore a New Economics Course Supporting DEIAB:** The Program will explore the feasibility of developing and offering a new Economics course focused on contemporary social and economic issues in support of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Access, and Belonging (DEIAB) initiative. Faculty will consider potential course content, student interest, transferability, curriculum requirements, and how the course could complement existing Economics offerings while expanding opportunities for students to examine economic disparities and their broader social impacts.

Section 2: SLOs/SAOs

This section is completed every three years as part of the Comprehensive Program Review, with brief annual check-ins on the Program Review Updates. The following resources will be useful when completing this section:

- Three-Year Assessment Template
- Aggregated and Disaggregated Data from the following sources:
  - ELumen (if saved--no longer available online)
  - CurrlQunet
  - Student Success Dashboard

1. During the 2023-2026 three-year assessment cycle that just concluded, what did your program set out to learn through your PSLO/CSLO/SAO assessments?

The Economics Program focused on two of its most prominent and foundational PSLOs. The goal was to determine how effectively students are developing the economic reasoning and quantitative skills needed to analyze individual markets and the broader economy.

- **The first outcome, PSLO 1**, which states: *"Upon completion of the AA-T in Economics, students are able to explain how market forces of supply and demand lead to efficient allocation of goods, services and factors of production,"* was assessed in ECON 1 and ECON 10 sections. The assessment sought to

determine whether students could move beyond simply defining supply and demand concepts and use the model to explain how changes in market conditions affect equilibrium price and quantity and the allocation of scarce resources.

PSLO 1 is particularly important because the supply and demand model is one of the fundamental analytical frameworks in economics. It provides the foundation for understanding consumer and producer behavior, market efficiency, elasticity, taxation, price controls, international trade, and other forms of government intervention. Assessing this outcome therefore provides important information about students' ability to apply economic reasoning to both theoretical and real-world market situations.

- **The second outcome, PSLO 2**, which states: *"Upon completion of the AA-T in Economics, students are able to define key economic indicators, including GDP, CPI, and unemployment rate, and use these quantitative measures to analyze the economy,"* is being assessed during Fall 2026 in ECON 2 sections. This assessment focuses on whether students can accurately interpret major macroeconomic indicators and use quantitative information to evaluate economic conditions.

  PSLO 2 is as important as PSLO 1 because understanding key economic indicators, such as GDP, CPI, and the unemployment rate, is essential for analyzing economic conditions and evaluating economic performance. These indicators provide the quantitative foundation for assessing economic growth, inflation, and labor market conditions, identifying economic trends, and understanding the effects of economic policies. Students must be able not only to define these measures but also to interpret economic data, recognize their limitations, and apply them to real-world economic issues to make informed, evidence-based conclusions.

Together, these two PSLOs represent complementary dimensions of the discipline. PSLO 1 emphasizes microeconomic reasoning and the functioning of markets, while PSLO 2 emphasizes macroeconomic analysis and quantitative literacy. By assessing both outcomes, the Program sought to determine whether students are developing the foundational skills expected of Economics and Business AA-T candidates.

2. Based on your analysis of your PSLO/CSLO/SAO assessment data, what conclusions did you draw about student outcomes and equity in your program?

The available assessment data from the 2023–2026 cycle demonstrate consistently high levels of student performance. Results indicate that most students successfully achieved the assessed PSLOs, reflecting strong attainment of core economic knowledge.

- **For PSLO 1**, assessment results indicate an overall high level of student achievement, with most students meeting the expected learning outcome across assessed sections. Attainment rates ranged from 91% to 98% in most sections, while the remaining sections reported lower rates, ranging from 64% to 86%. Overall, online sections tended to demonstrate higher attainment rates than in-person sections. However, these differences should be interpreted cautiously, particularly given the limited number of in-person sections offered during the 2023–2026 assessment cycle. Differences in assessment conditions may also have contributed to the observed variation. In-person assessments were administered in

supervised, proctored settings, whereas online assessments relied on remote proctoring tools such as *Respondus*, which may be less effective than in-person supervision in ensuring the integrity of student work.

PSLO 1 assessment results also reveal one particularly notable equity consideration. Differences in achievement by gender were inconsistent across sections, with female students outperforming male students in some sections and male students outperforming female students in others. Similarly, younger students generally demonstrated higher attainment rates than older students, although the opposite was observed in some sections. The most consistent pattern across both online and in-person sections was a notable achievement gap for Hispanic students, who demonstrated lower PSLO 1 attainment rates compared with other racial and ethnic groups. This pattern warrants further examination to better understand potential contributing factors and identify strategies to support more equitable student outcomes.

- **For PSLO 2**, assessment data are not yet available at the time of this report. PSLO 2 is currently being assessed in ECON 2 sections during Fall 2026, and the results will be recorded and evaluated at the conclusion of the semester.

3. Explain potential plans to improve student outcomes and close equity gaps.

Based on the assessment results, faculty will consider the following strategies to improve student performance, increase engagement, and address equity gaps:

- **Strengthen student engagement and performance in in-person sections:** Faculty will explore strategies to encourage more regular attendance, active participation, and consistent engagement with course material. These may include incorporating a greater number of graded in-class assignments, quizzes, group discussions, and collaborative problem-solving activities.

- **Address equity gaps and improve outcomes among Hispanic students:** Faculty will further examine CSLO assessment results and student achievement patterns to better understand differences in performance and identify potential barriers to success. Based on these findings, faculty will consider implementing additional instructional support, such as providing more structured study guide, and encouraging greater use of tutoring services and office hours. Faculty will also explore incorporating more diverse and culturally relevant examples into course discussions and assignments to make economic concepts more relatable to students from different ethnic backgrounds.

4. Describe any obstacles that you encountered in your assessment process and any supports that would be helpful.

A primary challenge encountered during the assessment process has been the transition from *eLumen* to *currIQūnet META*, including occasional technical difficulties with system access and login procedures. Some faculty, particularly part-time instructors, may benefit from additional guidance and hands-on experience with

the new platform, especially in entering and submitting assessment data. Offering more training opportunities during College Days and Professional Development Days, including individualized assistance when needed, could help faculty become more comfortable with the system and promote greater consistency, efficiency, and timely participation in the assessment process.

Section 3: Data Discussion

This section is completed every three years as part of the Comprehensive Program Review. Workshops and office hours will be offered in Fall 2026 to support Program Review writers.

1. RPIE Data Review: Discuss any significant trends in the data provided by the Office of Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness (or any other data you use for decision-making and planning).

*(**Note**: Not all Programs have RPIE data available; if your program does not have a data packet or dashboard data, you may note that in the response box and reach out to the RPIE team.)*

Data may come from:

- RPIE Data Packets
- Transfer data
- Succes Rates Dashboard (scroll down on page)
- Requested data from the Office of Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness (RPIE)
- SLO/SAO data
- Data from program-created surveys or investigations
- Any other relevant source of quantitative or qualitative data

From Fall 2021 through Spring 2026, the Economics Program experienced substantial growth in enrollment, improved productivity and fill rates, and generally strong student outcomes. Although enrollment declined in 2022, the subsequent four years show sustained recovery and expansion, with several measures reaching their highest levels in 2025–2026.

- **Enrollment and Program Growth:** Student headcount and course enrollments increased considerably over the review period. Fall headcount declined from 371 in Fall 2021 to 308 in Fall 2022, but then increased each year, reaching 539 in Fall 2025; 45% above Fall 2021 and 75% above Fall 2022. Total course enrollments followed a similar pattern, rising from 396 in Fall 2021 to 567 in Fall 2025, an increase of 43%. Spring enrollment showed equally strong growth: headcount increased from 302 in Spring 2022 to 499 in Spring 2026 (65%), while total course enrollments rose from 329 to 517 (57%). These trends indicate that the Program has not only recovered from the enrollment decline observed early in the period but has expanded substantially beyond its Fall 2021 levels.

- **FTES, Productivity, and Fill Rates:** Enrollment growth was accompanied by substantial increases in FTES and instructional productivity. Fall FTES increased from 39.0 in Fall 2021 to 58.1 in Fall 2025, while spring FTES rose from 32.2 in Spring 2022 to 50.4 in Spring 2026. Productivity (WSCH/FTEF)

increased from 539.1 to 685.0 across the fall terms and from 493.5 to 649.2 across the spring terms. Particularly notable is the recovery from the lower productivity levels of Fall 2022 (531.7) and Spring 2023 (458.2). Fill rates demonstrate a similar pattern of improvement. Fall fill rates increased from 90% in Fall 2021 and 81% in Fall 2022 to 97% in Fall 2023, 100% in Fall 2024, and 99% in Fall 2025. Spring fill rates rose from 75% in Spring 2022 to 85% in Spring 2023, 94% in Spring 2024, 102% in Spring 2025, and 98% in Spring 2026. Together, these measures indicate strong demand for Economics courses and increasingly efficient use of available instructional capacity.

- **Student Success and Withdrawals:** Overall course success also improved over the five-year period. Fall success rates increased from 71% in Fall 2021 to 75% in Fall 2022, 81% in Fall 2023, 80% in Fall 2024, and 85% in Fall 2025. Spring success rates remained comparatively high, ranging from 79% to 87%, with an 85% success rate in Spring 2026. At the same time, withdrawals generally declined. Fall withdrawals decreased from 19% in Fall 2021 to 6% in Fall 2025, while spring withdrawals declined from 8% in Spring 2022 to 6% in Spring 2026, despite increasing temporarily to 11% in Spring 2024. The combination of higher success and lower withdrawal rates is particularly significant given the substantial increase in enrollment during the same period.

- **Student Demographics and Gender Distribution:** The demographic composition of the Program remained relatively stable in some areas while changing in others. Students under age 25 consistently represented majority of Economics students; between 88% and 90% in fall terms and between 86% and 91% in spring terms. However, the proportion of students age 19 or younger increased notably, from 49% in Fall 2021 to 63% in Fall 2025 and from 46% in Spring 2022 to 58% in Spring 2026. Gender distribution remained relatively consistent, with male students comprising the majority throughout the period. Female representation ranged from 34% to 42%, while male representation ranged from 58% to 66%. The racial and ethnic composition remained diverse. Latine students consistently represented approximately one-quarter of students (24%–27%), while Asian representation increased from 20% in Fall 2021 to 29% in Fall 2025 and was 28% in Spring 2026. White representation declined from 32% in Fall 2021 to 26% in Fall 2025 and was 27% in Spring 2026. African American students represented between 2% and 4% of the student population across the period.

- **Student Academic Profile and Educational Goals:** Transfer remained overwhelmingly the primary educational objective of Economics students throughout the review period. Between 84% and 88% of students identified transfer, with or without an associate degree, as their educational goal. In Fall 2025, 84% identified transfer as their goal, compared with 85% in Spring 2026. The data also indicate that an increasing share of Economics students are relatively early in their college careers. Students classified as freshmen represented 47% of the Program in Fall 2021, increasing to 54% in Fall 2025; in spring terms, the proportion increased from 38% in Spring 2022 to 55% in Spring 2026. This trend, combined with the growth in students age 19 or younger, suggests that the Program is serving a growing population of students at earlier stages of their college education.

Overall, the Fall 2021–Spring 2026 data demonstrate substantial growth and generally strong performance across the Economics Program. Enrollment, FTES, productivity, and fill rates increased considerably, while student success rates improved and withdrawals generally declined. The Program continues to serve a diverse, predominantly traditional-college-age and transfer-oriented student population, with DE courses accounting for the majority of enrollments.

2. Equity: Did your data reveal any patterns of inequity? If so, please explain those patterns and any actions that should be taken at the program or college level.

The data revealed differences in students' academic preparation that may contribute to inequities in their ability to meet the quantitative, analytical, and writing demands of Economics courses. In Fall 2025, 50% of Economics students had previously completed transfer-level English and 43% had completed transfer-level mathematics. By Spring 2026, these rates increased to 65% and 53%, respectively. Although these rates exceeded College-wide averages, a substantial proportion of Economics students had not yet successfully completed transfer-level English or mathematics, potentially placing them at a disadvantage in courses requiring strong quantitative reasoning and analytical skills.

- **Actions to Support Equity:** To address these potential inequities, the College could expand tutoring in mathematics, writing, and quantitative reasoning; strengthen early alert and academic intervention systems; increase access to academic coaching; and improve coordination among faculty, counseling, and student support services. These efforts would help students with varying levels of academic preparation develop the skills needed to succeed in Economics and other transfer-level courses, promoting more equitable learning opportunities and outcomes.

3. Course Modality (Instructional Programs Only): In reviewing your program's data packet and Succes Rates Dashboard, are there differences in success rates by modality (i.e. face-to-face, asynchronous, synchronous, hybrid, or hyflex)? If so, reflect on what might account for differences and any actions that should be taken. (Non-instructional programs may also choose to reflect on online vs. in-person services if applicable).

The data indicate that Distance Education (DE) remained the primary instructional modality for Economics courses, with generally strong student outcomes, while face-to-face (F2F) results were more variable.

- **Distance Education:** DE accounted for the majority of enrollments throughout the period, including all 567 enrollments in Fall 2025 and 473 of 517 in Spring 2026. Success rates remained strong, reaching 85% in Fall 2025 and 86% in Spring 2026, while withdrawal rates declined to 6% in both terms.

- **Face-to-Face:** F2F success rates varied considerably, from 40% in Fall 2023 to 96% in Fall 2024 and 70% in Spring 2026. However, because the Program offered very few F2F sections (and no F2F sections in some semesters) the available data is insufficient for a meaningful comparison of student outcomes between F2F and DE courses.

These results suggest that modality-specific outcomes should continue to be monitored, particularly as the Program adjusts its mix of course formats.

4. Program-Set Standard (Instructional Programs Only): The program-set standard is a baseline that alerts programs if their student success rates have dipped suddenly below 95% of the rolling 5-year average. There is no punishment for not meeting the standard, and many valid reasons this may occur. When a program does not meet this standard, they are asked to examine possible reasons and note any actions that should be taken, if appropriate. | Program-set standard data can be found on this page

5a. Did your program meet its program-set standard for successful course completion in AY25-26?

Yes__X__ No____

5b. If your program did not meet your program-set standard, discuss possible reasons and how this may affect program planning or resource requests. Success rates for individual courses can be found on the Success Rates Dashboard.

N/A

Section 4: Special Topics

These questions have been chosen for this year's Comprehensive Program Review to meet reporting mandates (for accreditation, Ed. Code, or other sources).

1. Mission: Describe 1-3 examples of how your program's work has aligned with the college's mission, vision, values, and/or educational master plan over the past three years. (Possibilities might include new initiatives, resource allocation/use, program improvements, or other activities). • Mission, Vision, and Values • Educational Master Plan

Over the past three years, the Economics Program has supported Las Positas College's Mission, Vision, and Values and advanced the goals of the Educational Master Plan through curriculum and instructional practices that emphasize educational excellence, equity, student success, and preparation for transfer and career opportunities. In particular, the Program's work aligns with the College's commitment to providing an inclusive, learning-centered, and equity-focused educational environment and responding to the needs of an evolving workplace and society.

- **Inclusive, relevant, and equity-focused curriculum:** The Economics Program maintains a rigorous curriculum while incorporating contemporary economic and social issues relevant to a diverse student population. Students apply economic concepts to real-world issues, strengthening their critical-thinking

and analytical skills. For example, Principles of Microeconomics examines wage disparities across demographic groups and differences in labor-market outcomes, while Principles of Macroeconomics explores income inequality, unemployment, inflation, and how fiscal and monetary policies may affect different groups and communities. By connecting economic theory to current issues, the program supports the College's commitment to Educational Excellence, Equity, and Anti-Racism and helps students understand how economic policies and outcomes affect diverse populations.

- **Equitable instructional practices and proactive academic support:** Economics faculty use a variety of instructional strategies to increase student engagement and promote academic success. Small-group activities, collaborative problem-solving, and structured class discussions provide students with multiple ways to participate and apply economic concepts. For example, students work in groups to analyze the effects of a minimum wage increase, evaluate fiscal and monetary policy responses to a recession, or interpret current economic data on inflation and unemployment. Faculty also identify students who are struggling early in the semester and encourage them to use office hours and additional tutoring services. Students who perform poorly on an early exam, for example, receive additional guidance and opportunities to review challenging concepts. These practices support the College's commitment to an inclusive, learning-centered environment while advancing the EMP goals of Educational Excellence and Equity.

- **Career awareness and connection between education and the workplace:** The Program integrates career exploration into Economics courses by connecting economic concepts and skills to educational and employment pathways. Students are introduced to professional resources, including the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, to explore careers in economics, business, finance, public policy, and related fields. These activities help students recognize the practical value of economic analysis and better understand the relationship between their coursework, transfer goals, and future careers. This work supports the College's Vision of empowering students with the knowledge, skills, values, and abilities needed to participate in their communities and its commitment to responding to the needs of an ever-changing workplace and society.

2. Regular Substantive Interaction (Instructional Programs Only)

To meet our college, ACCJC, state, and federal standards, **all online instructors** must demonstrate "**regular and substantive interaction**" (RSI) with students. That is, we must be clearly providing instruction and interacting with our online students, just like we would in an on-campus class. The following reflection questions allow us to capture how RSI is occurring in our classes.

The following documents explain requirements and best practices for RSI:

- ACCJC Quality Continuum Rubric for Distance Education
- Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) requirements

2a. If your program offers DE courses, how are Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) requirements met in your area? Examples appear on the DE addendums of your Course Outlines of Record. Place an X next to each method used in your courses.

x	Course materials make clear to students how often and when the instructor will interact with students (e.g. syllabus/home page lists email/office hours/other ways to communicate and typical response times)
x	Provides direct instruction over Zoom (e.g. regularly scheduled live online class sessions in synchronous/hybrid/hyflex courses)
	Provides direct instruction through instructor-created videos (e.g. lecture videos created using Studio in asynchronous courses)
x	Provides additional information from various sources/mediums to engage students with course content (e.g. instructor-curated content in Canvas pages that help deepen students understanding of course content)
x	Facilitates discussions (e.g. through Canvas discussion boards, Pronto, Studio, or Hypothesis)
x	Provides feedback on students' coursework (e.g. through detailed rubrics and/or assignment comments in Speedgrader; note: a grade alone does not quality as RSI, nor does auto-graded feedback students may get through completing publisher content)
x	Responds to students' questions (e.g. through timely responses to student messages in Canvas Inbox, discussion boards, social annotation assignments)
x	Facilitates student success through ongoing outreach (e.g. posts announcements; uses "Message Students Who" to encourage struggling students to attend office hours or access free tutoring)
	Other [explain]:

2b. What challenges if any have you faced in implementing RSI? What additional training or resources might instructors in your program need to increase the quality of RSI in online courses?

Economics faculty recognize that Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) is essential to effective online instruction and student success. However, maintaining high-quality RSI has become increasingly challenging as more students enter online Economics courses without the academic, technological, and time-management skills needed for college-level online learning. As a result, faculty often spend substantial time providing individualized support for basic skills and online-learning readiness, reducing the time available for substantive interaction focused on Economics course content.

- **Gaps in foundational academic skills:** Economics courses require students to interpret graphs and data, perform calculations, read college-level material, and communicate economic reasoning in writing. Faculty increasingly encounter students who need additional assistance with foundational English and mathematics skills. This directly affects RSI because faculty must devote significant time to individualized explanations and feedback on prerequisite skills rather than substantive instruction and feedback on economic topics.

- **Time-management and online participation challenges:** Some students enrolled in online courses demonstrate varying levels of preparedness for independent learning, time management, and effective use of Canvas. Many require additional guidance in meeting deadlines, maintaining consistent participation, navigating course materials, and submitting assignments. Consequently, faculty devote considerable time to sending reminders, conducting individualized outreach, and assisting students with course procedures and expectations. Although these activities are essential for promoting student engagement, retention, and academic success, they also place additional demands on faculty time. Balancing these responsibilities with the expectations of RSI can be challenging, as the time devoted to administrative and procedural support limits opportunities for more substantive academic engagement.

Faculty may benefit from hands-on training sessions offered during College Days or Professional Development Days, providing opportunities for one-on-one collaboration with online instructional technology support staff on developing instructional videos and other engaging course materials for asynchronous classes. However, an even more valuable institutional initiative would be to strengthen the assessment of students' readiness for online learning prior to enrollment. Ensuring that students possess the necessary technological, time-management, and independent learning skills, or providing appropriate preparation before they begin online coursework, would allow faculty to devote more time to substantive academic interaction and meaningful engagement with course content.

Section 5: Program Review Feedback

What questions or suggestions do you have about this year's Program Review forms or process?

N/A

Detailed Instructions

Instructions

1. Send an electronic copy of this form to Program Review chair, Karin Spirn, and your Dean by Monday, November 2.
2. Please respond to questions with enough detail to present your information; it doesn't have to be long.
3. If the requested information does not apply to your program, write "Not Applicable."
4. 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.
5. Optional/suggested: Communicate with your dean while completing this document.

Sections: There are five sections to the document:

1. Program Reflection and Planning
2. SLO/SAO Review
3. Data analysis
4. Special topics
5. Feedback on the PR template and process

Time Frame: This Program Review should reflect your program status during the 25-26 academic year. It should describe plans starting now and continuing through 2026-27. It is fine to discuss topics beyond these time frames, but please specify the time frame in your responses.

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.

Equity: Here is the LPC definition of equity, which is a guiding principle in reviewing programs: "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."

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.

Helpful Links:

- ★ Tools for Writers - with contacts for help with specific sections.
- ★ Program Review Glossary - defines key terms you can review when writing.
- ★ Fall 2023 Program Reviews
- ★ Program Review FAQs

For help with your program review, please contact Karin Spirn at kspirn@laspositascollege.edu