



2011-2012 Assessment Plan Report

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT REPORT AY 2011-2012

Report Date: September 27, 2012

School/College: Arts and Sciences

Department/Program: Masters Program in International and Development Economics

Person completing the Report: Prof. Bruce Wydick

1. **Overview Statement:** Briefly summarize the assessment activities that were undertaken this academic year, indicating:

a. Which program learning outcomes were assessed this year?

Primary Program Goal: To train masters students as empirical economic researchers so that they are capable of carrying out fieldwork, econometric analyses of policies and programs related to international and development economics, and displaying these competencies in high-quality research papers and oral presentations.

a. Students will be able to define an economics research question appropriate to a topic of interest.

b. Students will be able to review and synthesize the existing theoretical and empirical literature in a given field of research.

c. Students will be able to design appropriate field research strategies for collecting primary data on a topic related to international and development economics.

d. Students will acquire the econometric skills required to rigorously analyze a broad range of types of data, be able to run appropriate econometric tests, and diagnose statistical problems in estimation.

e. Students will be able to tie statistical methods to microeconomic and macroeconomic theory and the literature in international and development economics, interpret econometric results, and discern the conditions under which estimations are able to yield causal relationships.

f. Students will be able to infer implications and policy conclusions from their research for other international economists, policy makers, and development practitioners.



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g. Students will be able to communicate at an excellent level, both in writing and verbally, recognizing that good economic research involves not only effective technical skills but effective means of listening and responding to criticism and communicating results.

b. *Who in your department/program was involved in the assessment of the above learning outcomes?*

Bruce Wydick, Elizabeth Katz, Alessandra Cassar, Sunny Wong, Yaniv Stopnitsky, Suparna Chakraborty, Jesse Anttila-Hughes, Michael Jonas, Jacques Artus.

2. Please Answers the Following Questions for Each of the Student Outcomes Assessed:

a. What did you do?

- Students took 12 classes (36) units in microeconomic theory, macroeconomic theory, international economics, development economics, research methods, and three semesters of econometrics to create both the foundation and build the applied tools for students to become proficient in economic research.
- Students met a series of deadlines related to completion of their theses beginning at the beginning of their second semester through their third semester, and culminating with the oral defense of their research paper.
- Faculty utilized a scoring rubric to assess the quality of the students' oral presentations of their Masters Projects in the Spring of 2012. Each of the program sub-goals comprises a component of how the students were evaluated in these defenses. Please see attached.

b. What did the faculty in the department or program learn?

- Students fared extremely well based on our assessment rubric. Our standards were quite high, but the students impressed us with the depth of their analysis and the technical tools used on their research papers. Several of the papers are expected to be published in top academic journals, co-authored with faculty.
- We did find that the students could use a little bit more breadth in their grasp of econometrics (although their depth was quite good in the techniques that they used themselves for their own projects). Students could use a little more training in mathematical statistics to help them understand the



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algorithms behind some of the estimation techniques employed.

- Our feeling was confirmed that it is best when students work in research teams in the field, but with each student writing his or her own thesis. The strongest research teams had students with the strongest research papers.
- We would like to develop our macroeconomic research capability to a greater extent so that it is able to keep up with our strength in the micro area.

c. What will be done differently as a result of what was learned?

- The four faculty who teach the econometrics classes met to develop a more seamless three-course sequence in econometrics that will help bolster students' understanding of mathematical statistics, improve the depth of their understanding about techniques such as instrumental variables, maximum likelihood, and non-parametric estimation.
- We hired three new faculty for this year, two development economists and one international economist. We expect that the new faculty will be instrumental in helping us to achieve program goals.

3. Attach a copy of the components of the department/program assessment plan that have been modified since its initial submission:

- a. Program Mission
- b. Program Learning Goals
- c. Program Learning Outcomes
- d. Program Learning Rubrics aligned with outcomes
- e. Curriculum map that shows the courses that pertain to the outcome

University of San Francisco
Masters Program in International and Development Economics

Assessment Rubric for Masters Project Oral Defense

Student Name: _____

Faculty Advisor: _____

Evaluation Criteria: Did this student's Masters Project defense:	Poor/Unacceptable	Fair/Acceptable	Good	Excellent
1) State clearly the purposes, research question(s), and hypotheses appropriate to the topic and area of study?				
2) Show appropriate preparation and knowledge through the review of literature?				
3) Clearly and thoroughly explain the data collection methodology utilized, and present descriptive statistics in a useful way?				

Evaluation Criteria, cont.	Poor/Unacceptable	Fair/Acceptable	Good	Excellent
4) Explain, use and competently implement econometric methods appropriate to the area of study and to the purpose and question(s)?				
5) Illustrate appropriate means for evaluating and interpreting the results?				
6) Discuss and arrive at appropriate and logical conclusions from the results?				
7) Demonstrate fluent verbal communication?				
8) Respond well to questions?				
9) Have a clearly understandable and visually useful PowerPoint presentation?				

Recommendation:

PASS PASS SUBJECT TO REVISIONS

PASS WITH HONORS

FAIL

Assessment submitted by (faculty name): _____

IDEC 2012 Oral Defenses*

Evaluation Criteria: Did this student's Masters Project defese:	Poor/Unacceptable	Fair/Acceptable	Good	Excellent	% Excellent
1) State clearly the purposes, research question(s), and hypotheses appropriate to the topic and area of study?	1	4	41	66	59%
2) Show appropriate preparation and knowledge through the review of literature?		4	47	55	52%
3) Clearly and thoroughly explain the data collection methodolgy utilized, and present descriptive statistics in a useful way?		12	50	51	45%
4) Explain, use, and competently implement econometric methods appropriate to the area of study and to the purpose and question(s)?		7	46	58	52%
5) Illustrate appropriate means for evaluating and interpreting the results?	1	4	51	51	48%
6) Discuss and arrive at appropriate and logical conclusions from the results?		13	41	51	49%
7) Demonstrate fluent verbal communication?		6	42	62	56%
8) Respond well to questions?	4	7	42	52	50%
9) Have a clearly understandable and visually useful powerpoint presentation?		3	41	64	59%

*Number in matrix represents one evaluation of one attending faculty per student.

IDEC 2011 Oral Defenses

Evaluation Criteria: Did this student's Masters Project defese:	Poor/Unacceptable	Fair/Acceptable	Good	Excellent	% Excellent
1) State clearly the purposes, research question(s), and hypotheses appropriate to the topic and area of study?	0	1	16	42	71%
2) Show appropriate preparation and knowledge through the review of literature?	0	2	23	34	58%
3) Clearly and thoroughly explain the data collection methodolgy utilized, and present descriptive statistics in a useful way?	0	6	26	27	46%
4) Explain, use, and competently implement econometric methods appropriate to the area of study and to the purpose and question(s)?	0	6	21	32	54%
5) Illustrate appropriate means for evaluating and interpreting the results?	0	8	19	32	54%
6) Discuss and arrive at appropriate and logical conclusions from the results?	0	8	19	31	53%
7) Demonstrate fluent verbal communication?	0	2	18	38	66%
8) Respond well to questions?	1	9	20	26	46%
9) Have a clearly understandable and visually useful powerpoint presentation?	0	0	24	35	59%

IDEC 2010 Oral Defenses

Evaluation Criteria: Did this student's Masters Project defese:	Poor/Unacceptable	Fair/Acceptable	Good	Excellent	% Excellent
1) State clearly the purposes, research question(s), and hypotheses appropriate to the topic and area of study?		4	8	15	56%
2) Show appropriate preparation and knowledge through the review of literature?		1	9	17	63%
3) Clearly and thoroughly explain the data collection methodolgy utilized, and present descriptive statistics in a useful way?		7	6	14	52%
4) Explain, use, and competently implement econometric methods appropriate to the area of study and to the purpose and question(s)?		1	10	16	59%
5) Illustrate appropriate means for evaluating and interpreting the results?		3	8	15	58%
6) Discuss and arrive at appropriate and logical conclusions from the results?	1	1	10	15	56%
7) Demonstrate fluent verbal communication?	2	2	5	17	65%
8) Respond well to questions?		3	10	14	52%
9) Have a clearly understandable and visually useful powerpoint presentation?		3	10	14	52%