

BENCHMARKS FOR THE SCHOOL OF ECONOMIC SCIENCES

Revised, October 30, 2006

School Vision Statement

Washington State University's School of Economic Sciences (SES) provides an outstanding academic environment dedicated to:

- offering the best undergraduate economics experience possible at a research institution.
- world-class graduate education, research, and scholarship, and
- creating effective links between economics education, economics research, and outreach to the state and nation,

within an environment of trust, respect and dedication to teamwork, in support of Washington State University's four core strategic goals.

The Strategic Plan adopted by the School of Economic Sciences in December, 2004 offers a pathway to achieving this vision. The proposed benchmarks measure our progress towards the vision. Each benchmark notes the Goal, and if relevant, strategy and tactic from the School of Economic Sciences's Strategic Plan.

Goal 1: The best undergraduate economics experience at a research institution

The School of Economic Sciences, with its breadth of faculty interests, selected areas of depth, and commitment to undergraduate education has the opportunity to offer one of the best undergraduate experiences possible for studying economics, consistent with the university commitment to a World Class Face-to Face student experience. Among the special characteristics of the programs we can offer is exceptional attention by the faculty to teaching and mentoring students, and where appropriate, incorporating aspects of faculty research into the undergraduate experience, giving students the skills necessary for applying appropriate theories and methodologies to solve all types of economics problems.

Benchmarks: Percent of students in introductory economic principles courses achieving learning goals for core principles topics.

Percent of graduating majors achieving degree program learning goals.

Target: Annual improvement in percentages, with 100% of graduating majors achieving degree program learning goals, and 90% of students in introductory economic principles courses achieving learning goals for core principles topics, both achieved within 5 years.

Strategic Plan: Goal 1, strategy 1, tactic 3.

- Impact:** Better prepared students for programs that depend on introductory economics courses as prerequisites. Better prepared majors for career objectives, job placements, and/or graduate study. Increased visibility of the quality of the programs offered by the School, and enhancing the School's reputation.
- Tools:** Develop a core set of topics and desired learning outcomes for introductory economics principles courses and learning goals for all degree programs, as well as assessment tools for learning outcomes. Institute grading standards tied to achieving learning goals in introductory economics principles classes, so that a "C" or better requires a demonstrable understanding of core economic topics and an "A" indicates mastery of all learning goals relating to economics principles. Target curriculum development in principles and majors courses towards encompassing learning outcomes, and design assignments in majors classes, especially the major capstone classes, to assess whether the learning objectives have been met. Institute grading standards in majors and capstone classes that are tied directly to achievement of learning objectives. Incorporate broad faculty participation for evaluating capstone assignments.

Benchmarks: Percent of SES majors courses requiring student research projects.

Percent of SES faculty members with undergraduate SES majors participating in research projects.

- Target:** 100% of SES majors-designated courses (i.e., courses carrying an "MJ" designation) requiring research projects, within 3 years.
- 25% of SES faculty having undergraduate majors provide some assistance in their research within 5 years.

Strategic Plan: Goal 1, strategy 3.

- Impact:** Greater use of research to enhance the undergraduate experience in the School, as well as an increased opportunity to recruit undergraduates into graduate programs. By interacting with a faculty member directly, students will achieve an increased awareness of the value of faculty research to their education.
- Tools:** Assignments in upper division and capstone Economics classes requiring student interaction with SES faculty on faculty research. Budget time-slip funding of undergraduates in grant proposals. Work closely with Honors College to identify promising students to engage in the research process. Formalize research project expectations in upper-division courses for majors. Encourage the use of undergraduates as research assistants in faculty projects as 499 (independent study) credits in undergraduate degree programs.

Benchmark: Number of students enrolled in SES undergraduate majors and minors

Target: 20% increase in both majors and minors in 5 years.

Strategic Plan: Goal 1.

Impact: Increases the visibility of the School of Economic Sciences within Washington State University, and contributes to the strategic goals of the College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Resource Sciences.

Tools: Increased recruitment activities, including participation in Summer Alive and other university-wide events for recruitment, correspondence and visits with community colleges, and solicitations sent to high-performing students in EconS 101, Fundamentals of Microeconomics, EconS 102, Fundamentals of Macroeconomics, and EconS 198, Honors Economics. Increase scholarship offers to majors. Devote one School scholarship specifically for majors in their first semester in SES. Seek additional instructional FTEs to support courses for SES majors.

Goal 2: World class graduate education, research and scholarship

One goal of the School is to become a world leader in graduate education, research, and scholarship in selected applied economics and policy-oriented areas, with added emphasis in four identified Areas of Excellence:

1. *Environmental and Resource Economics*
2. *International Trade, Markets, and Development*
3. *Transportation Policy*
4. *Economics of Agribusiness Systems and Biotechnology*

The School will be known for its timely and, rigorous applied economic analysis relating to real-world issues of societal relevance, especially within the Areas of Excellence.

Benchmark: Number of students in SES PhD degree programs

Target: Increase to 75 in 5 years.

Strategic Plan: Goal 2.

Impact: Increases the visibility of the School of Economic Sciences within Washington State University and most importantly within the Economics and Agricultural Economics disciplines, and contributes to the strategic goals of the College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Resource Sciences.

Tools: Increase the visibility of SES and its faculty at major conferences, most importantly at the annual ASSA meetings, and also at the annual AAEA meetings, by expecting and rewarding faculty and graduate student research presentations at organized sessions. Increase the financial support offered potential graduate

students by increasing the number of grants and the levels of stipends. Offer supplemental stipends (utilizing, for example, the Nelson money) to high-performing incoming students. Increase recruitment of PhD students through faculty visits to other universities. Advertise SES expertise in selected excellence areas.

Benchmarks: Level of extramural funding procured by SES faculty

Level of extramural funding procured by SES faculty from high-visibility, high reputation sources.

Targets: 25% increase in total external funding in 5 years.

At least 2 NRI awards in each 5 year period and two additional awards from high-visibility, high reputation sources like the NSF, NIH, Ford Foundation and MacArthur Foundation within 5 years.

Strategic Plan: Goal 2.

Impact: Increases the visibility of the School of Economic Sciences within Washington State University and most importantly within the Economics and Agricultural Economics disciplines, and contributes to the strategic goals of the College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Resource Sciences. Increases the funding available to support research, as well as to support graduate students, faculty development, and SES operations

Tools: Support faculty, especially junior faculty, in training programs related to the procurement of extramural funding. Reward grant-writing efforts in annual review; and reward grant-getting even more. Provide additional credit in annual review for grants procured from high reputation sources. Encourage faculty participation in the “Mission to DC”.

Benchmarks: Percent of faculty with an accepted peer reviewed publication co-authored with a graduate student.

Percent of PhD students having a scholarly work accepted for publication prior to receiving their degree.

Target: Annual improvement in percentages, with a five-year target of 50% of faculty on average having a peer reviewed article coauthored with a graduate student accepted for publication.

Annual improvement in percentages, with a five-year target of 50% of PhD students having at least one peer-reviewed scholarly work accepted for publication prior to receiving their degree.

Strategic Plan: Goal 2, strategies 2 and 3.

Impact: Greater visibility of graduate programs within the Economics disciplines and other disciplines using economic research. Improved placement of graduates. Greater overall research output from the School. Contributes to students' training in the professional dissemination of research results.

Tools: Require more research papers in field courses in the graduate curriculum to promote research productivity early in the graduate program. Promote additional collaboration between faculty and graduate students in research and in publishing papers. Provide more mentoring for graduate students regarding the framing, writing, and submission of research papers to appropriate publication outlets. Provide more opportunities for students on teaching assistantships to rotate into research assistantships. Selectively support graduate student travel to major professional meetings.

Benchmarks: Peer reviewed publications.

Peer reviewed publications in high reputation journals.

Peer reviewed publications within the Areas of Excellence.

Targets: 100% of faculty having an average of at least one peer reviewed publication accepted each year, achieved within 3 years.
50% of faculty having at least one peer reviewed publication accepted in a high reputation (top field or general economics journal) publication every 3 years, achieved within 4 years.
50% of faculty having at least one peer reviewed publication accepted in a topic area encompassed by the SES Areas of Excellence each year, achieved within 5 years.

Strategic Plan: Goal 2, strategies 1 and 5.

Impact: Improve the research and scholarship reputation of the School of Economic Sciences within economics disciplines. Strengthen the Areas of Excellence as areas of emphasis within the research and scholarship activities of the School of Economic Sciences. Accelerate the impact of the Areas of Excellence on the reputation of the School of Economic Sciences in the economics disciplines.

Goal 3: Create and promote effective links between economics education, economics research, and outreach to the state and nation

SES outreach and Extension activities will be designed to ensure that the implications of research discoveries are clearly communicated to constituent groups who would benefit from those discoveries. In addition, SES outreach activities will offer formal and informal educational opportunities to enhance economic literacy in the state, and will expand beyond traditional agriculturally based extension activities.

Benchmark: Percent of SES faculty without formal Extension appointments having documented outreach activity each year, including, but not limited to, presentations to trade, government or other non-academic clientele interest groups, or scholarly work in an applied economic policy or problem solving area relevant to such groups.

Target: An annual average of 50% of non-Extension faculty with documented outreach activity within 3 years, and 75% within 5 years.

Strategic Plan: Goal 3, strategy 2, tactic 1 and strategy 1, tactic 1.

Impact: Extends the benefits of SES research, scholarship and expertise to society beyond purely academic venues. Enhances economic literacy. Expands clientele contacts, and increases the external and non-academic visibility of the SES beyond what can be achieved by Extension faculty. Fosters external clientele support for the School.

Tools: Advertise the SES Speakers Bureau. Increase the value of outreach activities in annual review. Provide support for outreach activities.

Benchmarks: Number of documentable and effective Extension outreach and engagement activities accomplished.

Number of documentable and effective Extension outreach and engagement activities accomplished within the Areas of Excellence.

Target: Annual improvement in percentages, with a 5-year target of a 25% increase in the total number of documentable and effective Extension activities provided by faculty with Extension appointments.

75% of faculty with Extension appointments will have a significant portion (75%) of their Extension activities within the Areas of Excellence within 3 years.

Strategic Plan: Goal 3, strategy 3, tactic 4.

Impact: Recognizes and substantiates the importance of formal Extension activities to the role of SES within the state and within WSU, and promotes the achievement of SES goals regarding outreach. Promotes additional engagement with clientele on

real-world economic issues facing citizens and industries in Washington State. Fosters the reputation of SES for providing relevant economic intelligence, especially in the Areas of Excellence.

Tools: Provide support and incentives for developing new and innovative formal Extension activities, especially within the Areas of Excellence. Prioritize the use of Extension resources so that planned activities address important economic issues facing citizens and industries that can also be accomplished efficiently as well as effectively, extending the scope of problems that can be addressed by Extension faculty.

Benchmark: DDP courses offered with faculty instructors

Target: Fundamentals of Microeconomics and Fundamentals of Macroeconomics offered through DDP every Fall and Spring semester by SES faculty. At least one of the courses offered during the Summer. Accomplished and maintained after 2 years.

Impact: Maintains and expands the formal teaching component of SES outreach activities to the state and nation, expanding high-quality educational opportunities to place-bound students.

Tools: Work with DDP advisors to ensure sufficient enrollment and funding base to support staffing of classes with faculty instructors.

Goal 4: Build an environment of trust, respect and dedication to teamwork.

As a new unit the School of Economic Sciences brings together a diverse group of individuals coming out of departments with overlapping but different histories and cultures. Thus it is incumbent upon the SES to develop a set of common values and experiences. Much of that comes from building an environment that respects and celebrates the contributions of its members, and provides the resources needed for people to excel at the work and receive support and compensation that recognizes their contributions to the organizational success.

Benchmark: Faculty salaries.

Target: Increase the average SES faculty salary, by rank, to at least the average level offered by peer institutions, as documented by Institutional Research.

Strategic Plan: Goal 4, strategy 3.

Impact: Improve incentives for SES faculty to achieve SES goals. Promote retention of high quality faculty. Provides a tangible measure of respect for the professional accomplishments of SES faculty.

Tools: Maintain current documentation, with appropriate updates provided to the WSU administration, regarding SES salaries relative to other programs at WSU and at peer institutions. Excel at teaching and research, and generate improvements in the quality, reach, and reputation of SES programs to earn an increased emphasis by university administration on economics as an important discipline at WSU worthy of additional investment. Seek external funding for salary enhancement.

Benchmark: Development

Target: Increase annual giving to scholarship and undesignated funds by 5 percent per year in each of the next 5 years.

Strategic Plan: Goal 4, strategy 2, tactic 4.

Impact: Increases the ability of the School to fund faculty research and development, new initiatives, and to support undergraduate and graduate education. Integrating the entire SES faculty into development efforts will promote a sense of teamwork in support of the SES, and in support of fellow faculty members.

Tools: Develop marketing plans for additional development activities, and reward faculty involvement and success in fund raising.

Benchmark: Diversity

Target: Improve gender balance of faculty and ethnic diversity of faculty, staff and students, over the next five years.

Strategic Plan: Goal 4.

Impact: Provide a more diverse and representative environment. Increases the comfort and appeal, and widens the perspective of SES programs to a larger, more diverse population.

Tools: More active recruitment and mentoring of women and minority faculty.