

**Academic Department Student Success Plan 2015-2018
Results Update**

Department: Economics

Department Chair: John Conant

Department Freshmen (1st year) Retention Goals:

The small number of new students each year make it impossible to establish a meaningful target. The past 3 years retention has been 75% of 4, 90% of 10 and most recently, 57 % of 7. This 3 year rate of 16 of 21 retained (76%) seems to be in line with university expectations.

Persistence to Completion:

The even smaller numbers here make goals and evaluation even less meaningful. Two of four (50%) members of the 2012 cohort graduated on time and 5/18 (28%) of the 2010-2012 cohort graduated on time. Given the 3 total members of the 2008-2009 cohort, the 6 year graduation rate of 33% is even less meaningful. No “trends” can be established with these small numbers.

Department Plan Elements:

Reducing DWFI rates in 100 & 200 level courses

This goal was largely dependent on the increased utilization of Supplemental Instructors which did not occur due to draconian budget cuts to the program plus the fact that newly mandated syllabus statements about required attendance at SI sessions was not acceptable to many of the faculty teaching these courses and who had utilized SI’s successfully in the past. Other strategies have been more successful. The department has achieved 100% compliance with Blackboard gradebook usage and early graded assignments. We have worked with the University College Dean and advisors about proper placement of first year students into our beginning courses (Econ 100, 200, and 201). This has resulted in a significant reduction in enrollment in Econ 100. The Department has utilized an exit survey of students in its capstone course to determine what parts of the program students are happy and dissatisfied with. We have not been able to generate a list of students who have left the program prior to graduation to determine why they left. As we have begun to reduce seats in Econ 100 (FS SBS elective), we have begun to offer more seats in the Department’s UDIE courses. We have continued to offer meaningful experiential learning opportunities including international and domestic study-travel as well as short term field experiences and taking our students to the Midwest Economic Association meetings in the spring where they can experience the work of academic and non-academic economists as well as interact with economic majors from other institutions in the Midwest. We have not completed a 90 hour audit of advisees to date.