



**CENTRAL OREGON**  
community college

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Economics Department  
Central Oregon Community College

Dear Abhay,

Thank you for taking part in Department & Program Review (DPR) this year. The DPR process reveals critical connections that link your strengths, needs, values, priorities, and plans to those of the College. Further, it supports our commitment to innovation through continual improvement. We commend your dedication to empowering our students, engaging our communities, and supporting our values.

## Successes

The Economics program has demonstrated sustained curricular engagement and exceptional student outcomes despite faculty transitions and limited staffing. We would like to commend your involvement at the state level in developing EC 201Z and 202Z through the Common Course Numbering process, which supports students in their transfer goals. Of special note is your pursuit and successful attainment of the sustainability designation for those two courses, alongside the development of EC 230, International Economics, efforts that reflect the program's commitment to keeping curriculum both current and distinctive. Your incorporation of global thinking and focus on ethics are also features that make your program unique.

Your high course success rates, especially for BILAPOC students, speak to your ability to engage students and to make them feel seen and heard. In addition, your effectiveness in enrolling students from throughout our district and beyond through your variety of course modalities is another demonstration of your student-focused approach.

## Challenges

Together we discussed the challenges raised in your DPR report. First, and perhaps the most critical of these challenges is the recruitment of part-time faculty who are qualified within the field of economics and able and willing to follow the program's drive to include of the Global South, non-Western approaches, and sustainability.

On a related note, the program's ability to offer courses at branch campuses is another challenge that will require sustained attention and perhaps continued use of the variety of modalities that Economics has already shown to be able to successfully adopt.

We understand that the challenges of questioning dominant cultural narratives regarding capitalism and the marketplace and combating Western bias in textbooks and other materials are likely to remain perennial.

However, the program's success in its curriculum development and student appreciation of diverse perspectives should be seen as encouraging signs that these efforts not only distinguish the College's Economics program from its peers, but foster student success.

Finally, you have identified gender differences among Economics students to track: the field of economics, itself traditionally a male-dominated field, has been drawing students who major in other male-dominated fields, such as business. Possibly, by continuing to collaborate with other disciplines at the College, the program can find ways to attract more female students and address gender imbalances.

## Goals and needs

The goals and needs expressed by the economics program are modest and well-grounded in practical ways to move forward. Resources needed are found within the college and do not require new funding.

### **Curriculum innovation and alignment: Making sure that the coursework remains relevant to the contemporary global economy and college transfer requirements.**

Curriculum development efforts in this area are already going well, with a focus on incorporating diverse approaches and philosophies, non-Western thinkers, and relevance to the global economy. The global focus brings Central Oregon students a greater scope of application of economics principles and helps prepare them for transfer to university coursework in the field. Please continue to reach out to the Assessment and Curriculum administrator if you need to update any outcomes, course outlines, etc., as you continue to evolve the course.

### **Open Educational Resources (OER) Integration: Continued adoption of OER resources to reduce textbook costs and improve accessibility**

On the affordability front, the program has made admirable strides to keep course materials low or no-cost. In using Open Educational Resources (OER) you have already identified and worked with librarian Kirsten Hostetler to find and adopt OERs. You indicate that the bookstore has been helpful in communicating to students that purchasing physical textbooks is not required though the option is available for those who want it. You don't appear to need additional resources here, but we applaud and encourage your work in this area.

### **Advancing diversity and sustainability goals for the program: Move beyond abstract models to include diverse lived experiences (e.g., replacing traditional examples with those focused on inequality, climate change, and the economic history of marginalized groups).**

Your work in this area has transformed the economics coursework to be more inclusive and potentially more meaningful to a broader set of students. Many will be able to see themselves in the subject matter; others will be introduced to the experiences of other cultures and ways of life that they had never considered. We encourage your continued efforts and collaborations with faculty in other disciplines; this remains an important avenue for advancing students' appreciation of context beyond their own.

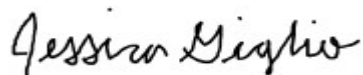
Thank you for your ongoing dedication to student readiness. Together, we can build on our achievements, address the challenges ahead, and meet the evolving needs of our students.

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please reach out. We look forward to working collaboratively to enhance the quality and impact of the Economics program.

Sincerely yours,



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Vice President of Academic Affairs



Jessica Giglio  
Instructional Dean



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