

**UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**Fiscal Year 2009 (July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009)**

**DEPARTMENT OF Economics**  
*Name of Department Chair* David Boldt  
*Name of Person Completing Report* David Boldt

<b>1*</b>	<b>Departmental Mission/Vision Statement</b> ( <i>url only, required</i> )	<a href="http://www.westga.edu/~econ/mission.html">http://www.westga.edu/~econ/mission.html</a>
<b>2*</b>	<b>Departmental Statement of Goals, Process to Assess These Goals, and Assessment Results</b> ( <i>url only, required</i> )	<a href="http://www.westga.edu/~econ/goals0809.html">http://www.westga.edu/~econ/goals0809.html</a>
<b>3*</b>	<b>Departmental Statement of Curriculum Learning Outcomes, Process to Assess These Outcomes, and Assessment Results for each Degree Program</b> ( <i>url only, required</i> )	<a href="http://www.westga.edu/~econ/lg_assessments.htm">http://www.westga.edu/~econ/lg_assessments.htm</a>
<b>4*</b>	<b>Statement of Departmental Condition - please indicate the specific strengths and weaknesses of your department.</b>	
	<b>STRENGTHS:</b>	
	<u>Certain strengths remain:</u>	
	<p>Evidence of Excellence in Teaching---Economics faculty achieved extraordinary success in teaching as measured by student evaluations, faculty development activities, teaching awards and pedagogical research. Five of the twelve full time faculty had 90% or more of students agree/strongly agree on excellence in teaching factors (median of all evaluations). Adrian Austin was selected and received a grant to attend a NSF funded teaching innovations workshop during June 2009. The department offered three completely online courses for the first time in 2008-09, ECON 2105, 3402 and 4410. Four faculty in the department (Boldt, Kassis, Lopez and Patron) have had peer-reviewed "economics pedagogy" articles published since 2008. In addition, another faculty member in the department (Smith) has a couple of economics education articles under review. Hilde Patron had an article published in Winter 2008 in the top journal in economic education (Journal of Economic Education). In the exit surveys gathered at the end of the spring semester, the most frequently mentioned strength of the Economics Department by students was the high quality of instruction.</p> <p>Regional Economic Activities--- The department has presented economic forecast breakfasts each fall since 1997. Almost 400 individuals attended the 2008 Forecast Breakfast (supported by 12 sponsors or co-sponsors.) William Smith presented the local economic forecast while Kenneth Heaghney, the State Fiscal Economist, discussed the state and the national economy. The West Georgia Regional Outlook, co-authored by Smith, Boldt, and Kassis, was published in October 2008. Department faculty made presentations to local organizations such as Coweta County Leadership, Haralson County Leadership, Douglas County Chamber of Commerce, Great Decisions Group in Carrollton, and the Carrollton Golden K. Department faculty contributed to both newspaper articles and to radio news shows during 2008-09. William J. Smith was awarded a "RCOB Excellence in Service Award" in recognition of his extensive regional economic activities.</p> <p>International Economics Activities---The department continues to support the International Economic Affairs major. The department offers ECON 4450 (International Trade) twice a year since this course is now one of the options in the "international select" business core requirement. The "Global Food Crisis" was a focus of the senior seminar in economics (ECON 4484) during Spring 2009. William Schaniel, William Smith and Hilde Patron all participated in the RCOB Economics and Finance Program in NY/ London during Summer 2008. William Schaniel continues to serve as Director of International Programs at UWG.</p> <p>Research and Professional Activities--- Economics faculty were credited with 15 peer reviewed publications in 2008-09. In that period, eight of the full time faculty (or two-thirds) had publications in peer-reviewed journals. Two faculty members in the department, Adrian Austin and Hilde Patron, received RCOB "Excellence in Research" awards in 2008. One faculty member, Hilde Patron, had a particularly good year in 2008 having six peer-reviewed articles appear in print. Another outstanding publisher in the department, Swarna Dutt, was awarded the "RCOB Research Scholar's Award" for 2008-09. William J. Smith had an article published in the Journal of Urban Economics, the top economics journal in the field of urban/regional economics. In addition, economics faculty were also active as paper presenters at academic conferences, grant recipients, discussants, book/article reviewers, and in submitting manuscripts to academic journals.</p> <p>Economic Education Activities--- As evidenced by the many activities of the Center for Economic Education, department faculty provided considerable services to K-12 social studies teachers in the region. Leland Gustafson coordinates the Center's efforts. Activities of the center are funded by grants from the Georgia Council on Economic Education (GCEE) and by a one-course release provided to the Director of Center. This past year, approximately \$5,100 of support was provided by the GCEE for the UWG Center for Economic Education. Activities of the center director include conducting workshops, distributing economic education</p>	

materials, service on the Georgia Professional Standards Commission for high school economics, meeting with West Georgia school district curriculum directors, and attending the Georgia Council on Economic Education and the National Council on Economic Education annual meetings.

Economics Graduates and Majors--- The number of graduates with economics degrees has increased sharply in recent years. In the three year period (2001-2003), the department averaged about 12 graduates per year. During 2008-09, 20 students graduated with a degree in economics. In addition, the number of economics majors has risen in recent years. Currently, as of the end of the Spring 2009 semester, there are 126 active economics majors. As recently as 2003, there were only 76 economics majors.

Undergraduate Research---Two undergraduate economics students were involved in significant research this past year: Asad Malik (RCOB Big Night) and Tania Celis (RCOB Big Night). In addition, William J. Smith served as faculty advisor to German Vargas (Finance/Management major), the winner of the RCOB Big Night Competition. William J. Smith was awarded a "RCOB Faculty Sponsored Student Research Award" for his work with undergraduates on research. David Boldt chaired the undergraduate paper sessions at the Academy of Economics and Finance meeting held in February 2009.

Additional strengths:

The economics honor society (Omicron Delta Epsilon) remained active this past year. Two meetings were held during 2008-09. A total of 10 students were inducted into ODE. Professor James Murphy continues to serve as ODE Faculty Advisor.

The Department of Economics organized a "seminar series" for the 2009 Spring Semester. Seven guest speakers participated as part of this series.

New Faculty Hire: Robbie Collins joined the economics faculty as a temporary full-time instructor beginning August 2008. His addition has allowed the department to offer BUSA 1900 (Core B2) sections and additional sections of ECON 2106 (a Core E and a Business Core Area F course).

The exit surveys completed by economics majors (Spring 2009) indicated a strong satisfaction with the economics program at UWG. Twenty-two students in the Economics Senior Seminar class participated in the survey. The most common strengths listed by students were the quality of the economics teachers, the close contact between faculty and students, and the overall quality of the curriculum.

**WEAKNESSES:**

Some of the weaknesses remain:

Failure to attract enough students to participate in a study abroad program during Summer 2009.

Not all faculty are currently "academically qualified" according to RCOB standards.

In the exit interviews of graduating seniors conducted during Spring 2009, students noted four areas in particular in which they would like to see improvement: the need for more internship opportunities, the need for more economics elective courses, the need for more internationally-oriented classes, and the need for additional quantitative economics courses.

The enrollment in the B.S. Economics with Secondary Education Certification degree program remains low (total of 4 majors as of Spring 2009). Only one student graduated with this degree in 2008-09.

Only three economics students participated in Internships for academic credit during 2008-09.

Others have been identified:

**OPPORTUNITIES:**

Certain opportunities remain:

Expand the number of internships available to economics majors.

Review and update (if needed) the economics curriculum.

Increase the number of economics majors participating in research.

Develop a viable study abroad program to replace the International Economics and Finance Program.

Other opportunities have been identified:

**THREATS:**

Certain threats remain:

Class size increases resulting from enrollment increases. Average class sizes for introductory classes remain too large. For example, in Fall 2008, ECON 2105 sections averaged 62 students while ECON 2106 sections averaged 51 students. In addition, junior level core courses such as ECON 3402 and ECON 3406 remain too large for the effective incorporation of Excel-based assignments.

The department faces a serious salary compression problem. New assistant professors are being brought in at a nine-month salary only slightly below the salary earned at the associate professor level. Some salary compression dollars were allocated to the Economics Department during 2005-06. These dollars temporarily eliminated the salary "inversion" problem but did little to reduce the problem of salary compression. The weak condition of state budget suggests that there is little prospect of the situation improving in the near term.

Other threats have been identified:

**DEPARTMENTAL ACHIEVEMENTS**

Place NA if not applicable or 0 if zero for the year.

5	Percent of Students passing licensing, certification, or other accreditation examinations related to their chosen field	NA
6	Proportion of graduating students going on to graduate or professional schools	Based on a sample of 22 soon to be graduating economics majors, about 13.5% plan on attending graduate school soon after graduation. Another 73% indicated that they will be attending graduate school in the near future while only 13.5% indicated "no plans" for attending graduate school.
7	Number of Nationally recognized programs.	BBA Economics Degree program is accredited by AACSB. The BS Economics with Secondary Certification degree program is accredited by NCATE.
8	Number of Endowed chairs and professorships	None
9	Types of Licensure (please list) NA	
10	How does the department prepare students for Licensure? NA	
11	Other notable achievements See Section 4 (under Strengths)	

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

Place NA if not applicable or 0 if zero for the year.

12	<b>Total Published Research Papers</b>	None
13	<b>Total Presentations</b>	3
14	<b>Total Internships</b>	3
15	<b>Total Co-ops</b>	0
16	<b>Total Scholarships</b>	Four students received Economics Department scholarships. Economics students were awarded other scholarships during 2008-09 including Hope, the Scott Taylor Memorial, and the Chi Phi Educational Trust.
17	<b>Total Fellowships</b>	NA
18	<b>Total Students engaged in Funded Research</b>	0
19	<b>Total Students receiving National Awards and/or National Recognition</b>	NA
20	<b>Total Students inducted into Academic Honor Societies</b>	Ten economics students were inducted into the Economics Honor Society during 2008-09. Four economics majors were Ingram Scholars (above 3.75 GPA) during 2008-09 (D. Beaver, J. Couch, D. Marron and B. Pease). At least one economics major was inducted into Phi Kappa Phi also.
21	<b>Total Student Programs (debate, cheerleaders, athletic teams) receiving National Recognition</b>	NA
22	<b>Other notable achievements by Students</b>	
	Three economics majors (N. Ball, O. Ladipo-Ajayi, and J. Lovell) graduated with Honors College distinction during 2008-09. Four students graduated with cum laude recognition during 2008-09. Also, two undergraduate economics students were involved in significant research this past year: Asad Malik (RCOB Big Night) and Tania Celis (RCOB Big Night). In addition, Joey Smith served as faculty advisor to German Vargas (Finance/Management major), the winner of the RCOB Big Night Competition. Ronlee James served as the International Club President during 2008-09. Recent economic graduates have been accepted into a number of graduate programs including the Ph.D economics programs at Georgia, George Mason, and Georgia State University, the M.S. economics program at Auburn University, international studies programs at the University of San Francisco and the University of Bristol, and the MBA program at the University of West Georgia.	

## FACULTY/STAFF PRODUCTIVITY

Place NA if not applicable or 0 if zero for the year.

### TEACHING

23	<b>Total New Course Developments</b>	4 (three online courses: 2105, 3402 and 4410 and ECON 4485 Econ Dev. )
24	<b>Total Faculty Teaching Honors Courses</b>	2 (Kassis, Murphy)
25	<b>Total Faculty traveling Abroad for Teaching Purposes</b>	2 (Patron, Smith)
26	<b>Percent of Faculty involved in Academic Advisement</b>	100 (formal and informal)

RESEARCH/PRODUCTIVITY		
27	Total Books and Monographs	0
28	Total Book Chapters	1
29	Total Peer Review Articles	14 (7 faculty)
30	Total Other Shorter Works	0
31	Total Paper Presentations	11
32	Total Other Presentation	10
33	Total In-House Publications	3 (2008 WG Outlook, three authors)
34	Total Juried Exhibits/Performances	0
35	Total Other Exhibits/Performances	0
36	Total Positions Held in Journal Editing/Review	12
37	Total Faculty involved in Notable Continuing Education Efforts	11
38	Total Faculty traveling Abroad for Research Purposes	0
<b>PUBLIC SERVICE</b>		
39	Total Participants in Honors Organizations	10 (all full time faculty)
40	Total Offices held in Professional Organizations	8 Boldt (2), Gustafson (2), Kassis (1), Schaniel (2), Smith (1)
41	Total Advisors of Student Organizations	4 (Austin, Murphy, Schaniel, Smith)
42	Total Participants in Cooperative Consulting Efforts	3 (Kassis, Smith, Schaniel)
43	Total System-wide/UWG Committee Activities	70
44	Total Participants in Public Service Activities	7 faculty
45	Other notable achievements by Faculty	
	Included in item 4 above under "Strengths."	
<b>GRANTS/AWARDS</b>		
46	Total Proposals Submitted	10 (GCEE, RCOB Awards)
47	Total Proposals Funded	10
48	Total Amount Awarded	\$13,635
49	Total Grants Generated by Department	\$11,935 (2008 Forecast Breakfast)
50	Total Faculty receiving Grants	5 (Austin, Dutt, Gustafson, Patron, Smith)
51	Total Fellowships Awarded	Included above in item 48
<b>IMPORTANT: Please do not abbreviate. Please spell out all organization/program names.</b>		
52	New Degree Programs or Deletions <i>(name of program and semester added/deleted)</i>	
	None	
53	New Departments or Other New Units; Also any Restructuring of These	
	None	
54	Accreditation or Similar Distinction or Renewal <i>(name of accrediting body and date department/program received accreditation)</i>	
	The BBA Economics Degree program is accredited by the AACSB. The BS Economics with Secondary Ed. Certification degree is NCATE accredited. The Center for Economic Education was granted a five year "affiliation renewal" from the National Council on Economic Education in September 2004	

55	<p><b>Additional Comments Concerning Your Department</b></p> <p>Included in item 4 above</p>
56*	<p><b>Give an example of how your department used the assessment of goals and outcomes to change/improve a process. (Required)</b></p> <p>In past assessments, students have indicated that a strong positive of the Economics Department is the high quality of the faculty. Students have made a number of positive comments about the teaching quality of the faculty and the willingness of the faculty to work individually with students. The department's newest tenure track faculty member began her position at UWG in August 2007. As an indication of the success of the department's search for excellent teachers, this new faculty member proceeded to achieve the highest summary student evaluation of teaching score of any economics faculty member during the 2007-08.</p> <p>During 2005-06, no economics students participated in "Big Night" or other research presentation forums. Beginning Fall 2006, the department began offering a research methods class (ECON 3460, Forecasting) on a consistent basis. The offering of this course (as well as other factors) have contributed to an expanded interest in undergraduate research. In 2008-09, three undergraduate RCOB students participated in research projects with economics faculty.</p> <p>The department reviews the exit evaluations of graduating seniors. Two of the greatest weaknesses of the department (based on the Spring 2009 survey) are the lack of internship opportunities for students and the lack of variety of upper division elective offerings. The chair of the economics department has been "making the case" with the Dean for college support to help expand the number of internship opportunities for RCOB students. The department was able to offer an additional international elective course in Spring 2009 (Economic Development) and will be offering Environmental and Resource Economics in Fall 2009.</p> <p>The goal of the department and the RCOB has been to begin offering more online courses. This past year, the department made enormous strides in achieving that goal. Hilde Patron taught ECON 4410 (Money and Banking) online during Summer 2008. In addition, ECON 2105 and ECON 3402 were offered completely online for the first time in Spring 2009. Plans are in the works to offer two additional courses (ECON 2106 and ECON 3406) online during 2009-10.</p>

**UPON COMPLETION**

Please email completed report to:

Institutional Research and Planning

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