Learning Goals:  
A Statement of Principles

As part of its periodic review and assessment of the undergraduate curriculum in economics, the Department of Economics at Rutgers University in New Brunswick has reaffirmed our learning goals for students who complete the major. These goals represent the consensus of the faculty in regard to the concepts a student should grasp and the skills a student should acquire in the course of completing the major. Moreover, these goals motivate the choices faculty make about the structure of the curriculum and the requirements for our majors. Specific learning goals guide faculty and instructors in preparing course material and teaching classes. In deciding what material to cover and how to cover it, all instructors should consider how the components of the course contribute to the ability of our students to meet the learning goals.

Completion of an economics major at a research university provides students with exposure to the latest developments in the discipline. While providing students with the skills and abilities to be informed citizens who are competent to engage in meaningful consideration and debate of significant public policy issues, the economics program at a research university should also offer students substantial access to faculty and resources and an opportunity to become familiar with the latest developments in the discipline.

Current Requirements

To complete the major in economics, all students must complete, with a grade of C or better, introduction to microeconomics, introduction to macroeconomics, intermediate macroeconomics and intermediate microeconomics. Students must also complete one semester of statistics and one semester of calculus with a C or better in both classes. Students are also required to pass a course in econometrics. In addition, students must complete 7 electives in economics. At least four of these electives must be ‘higher level,’ which means they have at least one of the intermediate courses as well as econometrics as prerequisites. Only one D in the electives (or in econometrics) can count toward the major and students need a 2.0 overall GPA in economics to complete the major.
Learning Goals for Economics Majors

1. Economic Literacy - Students who complete the major in economics should understand and be able to articulate, both orally and in writing, the core economic principles, concepts and theories that form the foundation for modern economic analysis and economic research.

2. Economic Numeracy - Students who complete the economics major should be familiar with the tools, techniques and methods of empirical economics. They should be able to analyze data using computer applications and should be familiar with regression methods and other statistical techniques. They should be able to read and assess general interest articles on economic topics. In addition, they should be able to understand and evaluate key findings in published economic research from a wide range of sources including academic economists, public policy ‘think tanks,’ and government agencies.

3. Economic Citizenship - Upon completion of the major students should be able to apply their understanding of core concepts and quantitative tools to analyze and research real world problems and evaluate alternative economic policy proposals on microeconomic and macroeconomic issues.

4. Economic Scholarship – Qualified majors should have an opportunity through such avenues as advanced coursework, faculty interactions, national and local competitions and honors courses and programs to utilize up-to-date methodological tools and become fully engaged in economic research and issues on the frontiers of economics.