

Doctoral Program in Economics Learning Goals, Rutgers University

Adopted February 2008

(Revised November 2011, November 2017)

The Doctoral Program in Economics trains students for careers as economists and econometricians in academia, government, financial and consulting firms, and other policy and research institutions. The program aims for students to:

1. Acquire advanced knowledge in core subjects of microeconomics, macroeconomics, and econometrics.

Assessment of student achievement of goal:

- Grades in core macroeconomic, microeconomic and econometric graduate courses
- Qualifying examinations assessing depth and breadth of knowledge in core theory fields

Role of the program in helping students to achieve goal:

- Provide comprehensive course work in core fields at the outset of graduate studies
- Support for success in the first year of the program, including a math review before term and teaching assistants for core courses

2. Acquire specialized knowledge in at least two areas of economics.

Fields of specialization may include: applied econometrics, financial econometrics, health economics, labor economics, microeconomic theory, macroeconomic theory, and public economics.

Assessment of student achievement of goal:

- Grades in courses selected from at least two chosen fields of specialization or specialized field exam
- Assessment of command of the literature in second-year research papers

Role of the program in helping students to achieve goal:

- Offer courses each semester across a range of fields
- Advise students as they select courses
- Provide flexible options for students with interdisciplinary interests and interests in courses elsewhere at Rutgers and at other universities
- Offer a variety of research workshops with presentations by visitors, faculty and graduate students

3. Develop skills to conduct original research in economics.

Assessment of graduate student achievement of goal:

- Completion of an original research paper (second year paper)
- Assessment of dissertation proposal

Role of the program in helping students to achieve goal:

- Focus on review and critique of cutting-edge literature in graduate courses
- Require a course in applied econometrics for macroeconomics or microeconomics
- Encourage student participation in department research workshops
- Sponsor student-run reading groups, including lunches
- Provide detailed feedback on original second year research paper, including “referee reports” written by two faculty members other than the student’s advisor

4. Develop and undertake an original research program.

Assessment of graduate student achievement of goal:

- Assessment of Ph.D. dissertation:
 - Public defense of dissertation
 - Review of dissertation by committee of graduate faculty members and a committee member from outside of the economics graduate program
- Achievement of students in having research selected for conference presentations and peer-reviewed publications
- Placement of students in academic and research positions

Role of the graduate program in helping students achieve goal:

- Assure ongoing engagement with dissertation committee and other faculty members
- Provide opportunities to present research and receive feedback, including in departmental workshops and student-run workshops
- Provide logistical and financial support for acquiring datasets and related materials, when needed for empirical research
- Maintain merit-based funding through the research phase of the dissertation
- Fund travel to professional conferences in the US and abroad for research presentations

5. Enhance professional skills such as writing, presenting, teaching, and interviewing.

Assessment of graduate student achievement of goal:

- Teaching effectiveness of graduate student instructors
- Achievement in various stages of job market, including final job placement
- Success in receiving university-wide and external support
- Surveys of graduating students and alumni

Role of the program in helping students achieve goal:

- Provide faculty oversight and mentoring of teaching assistants and students teaching core undergraduate courses
- Encourage enrollment in university-wide teaching, writing, and English classes
- Provide professional development programs
- Prepare students for the job market with mentoring and practice interviews
- Support student travel to conferences and participation in professional societies