ECONOMICS

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507-786-3149
economics@stolaf.edu
wp.stolaf.edu/economics

The Department of Economics seeks to create a teaching and learning community that provides students with varied opportunities for acquiring the necessary knowledge, analytical skills, and judgment to prepare them for personal and professional growth and for confident and responsible leadership in a rapidly changing world.

The department encourages students:

1. To learn about the economic, commercial, and governmental institutions that serve the American and international communities.
2. To be competent in economic and statistical analysis.
3. To be cognizant of historical, global, and moral perspectives on economic and business issues.

Overview of the Economics Major

Economics is the study of how people and organizations make decisions, how they interact with each other, and how institutions and policies can be designed to improve people's lives. The ambition of those who study economics is to understand the world around them both as it is and as it ought to be. The basic principles of economics are applied to a wide range of social and political challenges that confront us today. These include international trade, environmental protection, health care, international development, domestic taxes, Federal Reserve policies, labor outsourcing, and the regulation of business.

The economics curriculum at St. Olaf includes theory, applications, institutional studies, and quantitative analysis. Where appropriate, economics courses also pursue historical and ethical concerns.

The department offers areas of emphasis for its majors who desire more focused study in finance, international economics, management, and public policy. The department also supports several programs available to students regardless of major: an interdisciplinary concentration in management studies, international and off-campus courses, and internship opportunities.

The economics major serves as excellent preparation for careers in a wide variety of fields, including economic analysis, banking, accounting, consulting, health administration, finance, business management, teaching, and international affairs. The major also provides a solid foundation for students wishing to pursue graduate studies in economics, business, public policy, and law.

Intended Learning Outcomes for the Major

See Academic Honors.

Distinction

See Academic Honors.

The criteria and guidelines for Distinction in Economics can be found through the Economics Department web page.

Special Programs

Areas of Emphasis

Areas of emphasis provide the opportunity for economics majors to pursue a more extensive and focused program of study beyond the normal major requirements. Please see Requirements (p. 1) for more information.

Concentrations and Interdepartmental Programs

The Economics Department participates in international studies programs and encourages its majors to take advantage of study in other countries. The department also participates in several interdisciplinary majors and concentrations, including Asian studies, management studies, Latin American studies, statistics, environmental studies, women's and gender studies, and the social studies education major.

Recommendation for Graduate Study

Students considering graduate work in economics (either Ph.D. or M.A.) are advised to take additional courses in economic analysis, mathematics, and statistics beyond those required for the economics major, and to pursue a significant research experience in economics. Within the major, we recommend that students take additional level III economic analysis courses, one of which should be Econometrics (ECON 385). The following courses in mathematics, listed in order of importance, are recommended: Multivariable Calculus (MATH 226), Elementary Linear Algebra (MATH 220), Real Analysis I (MATH 244) and Differential Equations I (MATH 230). A concentration in Statistics is helpful, but the most useful statistics courses for graduate study are Statistical Modeling (STAT 272) and Advanced Statistical Modeling (STAT 316). A significant research experience gained through participation in a Directed Undergraduate Research (ECON 396), the Center for Interdisciplinary Research (CIR) (http://wp.stolaf.edu/cir), or a statistically related CURI (http://wp.stolaf.edu/curi) project is also recommended. Finally, the American Economic Association provides additional information for undergraduate students interested in graduate work in economics here.

Requirements

Requirements for the Economics Major

 Majors in economics must meet the following minimum requirements:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECON 261</td>
<td>Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory</td>
<td>3.00-4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 262</td>
<td>Intermediate Microeconomic Theory</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statistics for Economics</td>
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Select one of the following:

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECON 263</td>
<td>Statistics for Economics</td>
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At least four economic analysis courses: at least one at level II and at least two at level III.  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STAT 272 &amp; ECON 385</td>
<td>Statistical Modeling and Econometrics</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 120</td>
<td>Calculus I (or equivalent or higher credit)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>or MATH 119</td>
<td>Calculus I with Review</td>
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**Total Credits:** 8-9

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1. Core courses -- ECON 261 and ECON 262, and ECON 263, or STAT 272 plus ECON 385 -- all require an introductory course and calculus (usually ECON 121 and MATH 120). Core courses cannot be taken S/U.

2. ECON 385 may count as a level III economic analysis course when taken to fulfill the core course requirement.

**Management Emphasis**

The purpose of the management emphasis is to provide a structured program of study beyond the economics major to better prepare students for immediate careers in the private and public sectors of our economy.

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MGMT 225</td>
<td>Principles of Accounting</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGMT 237</td>
<td>Managerial Accounting</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGMT 251</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGMT 383</td>
<td>Management Policy and Strategy</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGMT 250</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGMT 252</td>
<td>Legal Aspects of Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>MGMT 256</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MGMT 281</td>
<td>Corporate Finance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MGMT 256</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
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**Total Credits:** 5

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**Finance Emphasis**

The purpose of the finance area of emphasis is to provide a structured program of study beyond the economics major to better prepare students for immediate careers in the private and public sectors of our economy.

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<td>MGMT 237</td>
<td>Managerial Accounting</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGMT 281</td>
<td>Corporate Finance</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGMT 380</td>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MGMT 250</td>
<td>Marketing &amp; Management</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>MGMT 252</td>
<td>Legal Aspects of Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>MGMT 256</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECON 374</td>
<td>Money and Banking</td>
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<td>ECON 382</td>
<td>International Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECON 385</td>
<td>Econometrics</td>
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**Total Credits:** 5

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**Areas of Emphasis**

The Economics Department offers three optional Areas of Emphasis that students may complete in addition to a major in economics. There is one economics area: international economic analysis and policy and, and two management areas: (2) management and (3) finance. Students may be certified in no more than one economics and one management studies area of emphasis. Grades of C or better must be earned in all courses counted toward an area of emphasis.

Contracts for each area of emphasis must be negotiated individually with the assigned area director before the end of the student’s junior year. Copies of contracts can be found on the Economics Department web page (http://wp.stolaf.edu/economics/forms/department-forms). Please contact the Economics Department for names of the current area directors.

Courses counted toward an area of emphasis may not also be counted toward any requirements for the economics major.

**International Economic Analysis and Policy Emphasis**

The purpose of the International Economic Analysis and Policy emphasis is to provide a structured program of study beyond the major, so that students will expand their understanding of the international economy, and be better prepared for careers in the private and public sectors.

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECON 382</td>
<td>International Economics</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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Choose two of the following: 2.00

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**ECON 210**  Argentina and World Agricultural Trade

**ECON 218**  Economic Progress in China (abroad)

**ECON 243**  Economic Development

An off-campus economic analysis course approved by the emphasis director

Elective course outside of Economics Department that relates to international topics 1.00

**Total Credits:** 4
Courses

Introductory Courses

ECON 110-ECON 120 Gateways to Economics

These courses introduce students to principles of economics through special topics. Each course emphasizes the application of economic concepts to topics of general interest, capitalizing on the special interests and expertise of the faculty. Courses numbered 110-120 all present a common core of economic principles, and, therefore, credit will be given for only one of these courses. Courses numbered 110-120 cannot be taken after taking ECON 121. Students may only take one course from among 110-120; none of these courses may be repeated. Students considering a major in economics are encouraged to take Principles of Economics (ECON 121), below.

ECON 113: Gateways to Economics: Capitalism

This course uses major schools of economic thought and major economic writers from the past 600 years to introduce principles of economics. Readings include the architects of capitalism (Adam Smith, David Ricardo, etc.), the critics (Karl Marx, Thorstein Veblen, etc.), and the reformers (J.M. Keynes, Joseph Schumpeter, J.K. Galbraith, etc.). Offered periodically during Interim.

Principles of Economics

Students considering a major in economics are encouraged to complete Principles of Economics (ECON 121) prior to taking any economics courses at level II or above.

ECON 121: Principles of Economics

This course takes an analytical approach to economic reasoning and contemporary issues. The course introduces microeconomic and macroeconomic theories with applications to relevant topics, such as employment, growth, environmental protection, affirmative action, exchange rate fluctuations, taxes, and welfare reform. Students explore economics as an intelligent approach to understanding our daily lives as citizens, workers, managers and consumers. Offered each semester. This course does NOT count toward the economics major, but is the prerequisite for all higher-level economics courses. Also counts toward environmental studies major (social science emphasis) and management studies concentration.

Core Courses

ECON 261: Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory

This course addresses the economic institutions and forces that determine levels of income, output, employment, and prices in our society. Questions related to employment prospects and standard of living provide an important focus. Classical and Keynesian perspectives are employed in attempting to understand these matters, the macroeconomic problems in market economies and the policies that economists prescribe as remedies for these problems. Offered each semester.

Prerequisites: MATH 119 or MATH 120, and one of ECON 110-121 or permission of instructor.

ECON 262: Intermediate Microeconomic Theory

Microeconomics is the study of the resource allocation decisions by households, producers, and government and the resource allocation process in various types of market structures. Students are trained in the use of economic models and optimizing techniques to address a variety of real-world problems, including case studies from business and public policy. Offered each semester.

Prerequisites: MATH 119 or MATH 120, and one of ECON 110-121 or permission of instructor.

ECON 263: Statistics for Economics

This course emphasizes skills necessary to understand and analyze economic data. Topics include descriptive statistics, probability and random variables, sampling theory, estimation and hypothesis testing, and practical and theoretical understanding of simple and multiple regression analysis. Applications to economic and business problems use real data, realistic applications, and econometric/statistical software. Offered each semester. ECON 263 is required for economics majors who do not take both STAT 272 and ECON 385. Credit towards the economics major will not be given for ECON 263 following completion of STAT 272. Also counts toward environmental studies major (social science emphasis).

Prerequisite: MATH 119 or MATH 120 and one of ECON 110-121, or permission of the instructor.

Economic Analysis Courses, Level II

ECON 200: Topics in Economic Analysis

In this course students apply the models, insights, and analytical techniques of economics to a specific topic or economic problem. Topics vary from year to year. May be repeated if topic is different. Offered periodically.

Prerequisites: one of ECON 110-121 or permission of instructor.

ECON 210: Argentina and World Agricultural Trade (abroad)

Argentina is a global leader in production and exports of several major agricultural products: corn, soy, beef, and wine. Students explore the economic and political factors that affect these goods’ internal markets and how domestic production responds to these factors and world market conditions. Students gain an understanding of international commodity trade, futures markets, and the economics of agricultural production through readings, discussions, and meetings with experts in Argentine agriculture. Apply through International and Off-Campus Studies.

Prerequisite: one of ECON 110-121 or permission of instructor.

ECON 218: Economic Progress in China (abroad)

This course tracks economic development in China with emphasis on Shanghai. The course examines the emergence and evolution of markets in rural, urban, commercial, and financial centers and how the changes affect culture, attitudes, customs, and life of the people. Shanghai will be compared with other Chinese cities, including Nanjing, Suzhou, Hangzhou and Hong Kong. The role of Hong Kong in China’s reform and its integration since 1997 is also discussed. Offered alternate years during Interims. Also counts toward Asian studies major and concentration. Apply through International and Off-Campus Studies.

Prerequisites: one of ECON 110-121 or permission of instructor.
ECON 220: Economic Justice
This course examines Christian ethics along with major frameworks in philosophical ethics (Utilitarianism, Liberalism, and Marxism) in addressing economic issues. Offered periodically.
Prerequisites: one of ECON 110-121 and completion of BTS-T or permission of instructor.

ECON 222: Game Theory in Economics
Game theory is the formal study of the strategic interactions between individuals and between groups of individuals. Game theory has become a widely adopted tool of analysis in economics, business, law, politics, anthropology, sociology, and international relations. This course introduces students to the theoretical constructs of game theory and focuses on economic applications in the fields of labor economics, international trade, environmental economics, macroeconomics, and industrial organization. Offered annually.
Prerequisite: one of ECON 110-121 or permission of instructor.

ECON 240: Introduction to Law and Economics
This course applies standard microeconomic theory and concepts to understand the law and the legal system. There are two primary approaches to “Law and Economics.” The first uses economics to understand how changes in legal rules affect human behavior. The second uses economics to explain the structure and variation of the legal rules themselves. This is an introductory course to the economics of law aimed at introducing students to both approaches. Offered annually.
Prerequisite: one of ECON 110-121 or permission of the instructor.

ECON 242: Environmental Economics
The powerful insights of microeconomic analysis inform this consideration of environmental policy and regulation. Coursework emphasizes issues germane to setting and attaining specific environmental objectives - how much pollution to allow, how much to encourage preservation, how much cutting to permit. By considering whether and how to assign monetary values to goods like species diversity and climactic stability, students gain practical experience applying benefit-cost analysis to environmental decisions. Offered annually. Also counts toward environmental studies major (all emphases) and concentration.
Prerequisite: one of ECON 110-121 or permission of instructor.

ECON 243: Economic Development
Students in this course learn and apply economic analysis, tempered by an appreciation for the political and institutional contexts of the less developed countries, to gain an understanding of these countries’ economies. Using cases involving both written and oral analysis, students explore topics such as economic growth in Brazil, trade strategies in Singapore, poverty and income distribution in Taiwan, or macroeconomic performance in Mexico. Offered annually. Also counts toward environmental studies (social science emphasis) and Latin American studies majors and Latin American studies concentration.
Prerequisite: one of ECON 110-121 or permission of instructor.

ECON 245: Economics of Health Care
The health care sector in the U.S. is undergoing rapid change that affects patients, providers and payers. Managed care and managed competition are restructuring the delivery of health care services and reducing costs, while frustrating physicians and patients. The course examines the economic factors leading to the changes, current issues and controversies, and federal health policies. Students interested in nursing, medicine, and the sciences are encouraged to enroll. Offered annually.
Prerequisites: one of ECON 110-121 or permission of instructor.

ECON 247: History of Economic Thought
Many aspects of our lives and our society are influenced by the ideas (or the theories) of economists. This course explores where economic ideas have come from, how they have changed over time and the extent to which they are compelling. While the ideas of many important figures are covered, economists such as Smith, Ricardo, Marx, Marshall, and Keynes receive particular attention. Offered annually.
Prerequisite: one of ECON 110-121 or permission of instructor.

ECON 249: Urban Economics
This class applies economic principles to issues of urban development. Topics include urban economic history, location analysis, policy analysis (especially concerning poverty, housing, transportation and education), land use controls, and macroeconomic forecasting. Offered annually.
Prerequisites: one of ECON 110-121 or permission of instructor.

Economic Analysis Courses, Level III

ECON 372: Behavioral Economics
Classic economics assumes that people make decisions rationally. Behavioral economics weakens that assumption, incorporating the findings of psychology into economic models. Students learn to apply behavioral economics theories to improve their understanding of business, marketing, public policy, and other domains of economics. Students utilize skills they have learned from microeconomic theory and statistics orally and in writing. Offered annually.
Prerequisites: ECON 262 and either ECON 263 or STAT 272, or permission of instructor.

ECON 373: Health Care, Behavioral Economics, and Technology
In this course, students explore the technological and social forces that cause change in the health-care sector over time. Topics include health incentives, diffusion of technology, big data, uncertainty in health care decision-making, expertise and the health care workforce, and the personalization of medicine. A semester-long research project trains students in empirical research and effective academic writing. Offered periodically.
Prerequisites: ECON 262 and either ECON 263 or STAT 272, or permission of instructor.

ECON 374: Money and Banking
This course addresses the institutions that comprise modern monetary systems and the influence that these systems have on levels of income, output, employment, and prices in market economies. Monetary theory and monetary policy, including both the nature of our central bank and the role that it plays in our monetary system, are also addressed in some detail. Offered annually.
Prerequisite: ECON 261 and either ECON 263 or STAT 272, or permission of instructor.

ECON 376: Labor Economics and Employment Relations
What do workers want from work? What do employers want from workers? Pressing policy issues exist for workers competing in the global economy. Unions, unemployment insurance, welfare and the minimum wage enhance the prospects of many, while leaving others even worse off. This course utilizes microeconomic theory, statistics and institutional analysis to understand labor markets. Offered annually.
Prerequisites: ECON 262 and either ECON 263 or STAT 272, completion of BTS-T, or permission of instructor.
ECON 380: American Economic History
This course focuses on the development of the U.S. economy since colonial times and the contributions and limitations of economic analysis and quantitative methods in understanding the economy’s evolution. The course explores how economic analysis illuminates past trends and events, and how the historical record can further our understanding of economic principles, theory, and current economic problems. Course topics include colonialism, slavery, industrialization, the economic effects of wars, and the Great Depression.
Prerequisites: ECON 261 and/or ECON 262 (at the discretion of the instructor) and either ECON 263 or STAT 272, or permission of the instructor.

ECON 382: International Economics
This course offers students an integrated approach of theory, policy, and enterprise to understand international trade and investment. The course focuses on the costs and benefits of global economic interdependence for students who plan to enter an international business career or to work for government and international organizations in activities affected by international economic relations. Offered annually.
Prerequisites: ECON 261 and ECON 262, and either ECON 263 or STAT 272, or permission of instructor.

ECON 385: Econometrics
Ideal for students interested in applying statistical models to economic problems, this course emphasizes theoretical foundations, mathematical structure and applications of major econometric techniques, including ordinary least squares, generalized least squares, dummy variables, non-linear transformations, instrumental variables, simultaneous equation modeling, and time series models. Students in the class complete a sophisticated economic research project of their choice. Offered annually.
Prerequisites: ECON 261 and either ECON 263 or STAT 272 or permission of instructor.

ECON 399: Seminar in Economics
Selected topics to be announced. May be repeated if topics are different.
Prerequisites: ECON 261 and/or ECON 262 (at the discretion of the instructor) and either ECON 263 or STAT 272, or permission of instructor.

Other Courses
ECON 294: Academic Internship
ECON 298: Independent Study
ECON 394: Academic Internship
ECON 396: Directed Undergraduate Research
This course provides a comprehensive research opportunity, including an introduction to relevant background material, technical instruction, identification of a meaningful project, and data collection. The topic is determined by the faculty member in charge of the course and may relate to his/her research interests. Offered based on department decision. May be offered as a 1.00 credit course or .50 credit course.
Prerequisite: determined by individual instructor.

ECON 398: Independent Research

Related Courses
For courses in accounting and management, see the Management Studies (http://catalog.stolaf.edu/academic-programs-management-studies) section of this catalog.