



# AY1213 Economics courses—international undergraduates’ academic achievement



<b>Name of Assessment Project:</b>	AY1213 Economics courses—international undergraduates’ academic achievement
<b>Name(s) of Person(s) Responsible for Assessment Project:</b>	SEVIS and Analytical Studies Coordinator (Barry Fass-Holmes)
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<b>Providing Department:</b>	International Center
<b>Other Units/Departments Involved in Assessment Project:</b>	
<b>Program, Service, or Event Related to Assessment Project:</b>	This project is related to Economic Department faculty and staff members’ concern that international undergraduates struggle in that department’s courses.
<b>Assessment Project Description:</b>	This project’s primary goal is to determine the extent to which international undergraduates (i.e., ones who are in F-1 or J-1 I-94 status; <a href="http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/all-visa-categories.html">http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/all-visa-categories.html</a> ) struggle in Economics Department courses. “Struggle” is defined as earning an academic mark less than C in any Economics course. The results of this project will be used to publicize international students’ academic success, and to advocate for those who struggle, as part of campus efforts to promote retention, engagement, and satisfaction.
<b>Unit/Program Specific Goals and Learning Outcomes:</b>	International undergraduates will earn C or better in Economics Department classes.
<b>Relationship to Student Affairs Learning Outcomes:</b>	Communicate Effectively
<b>Assessment Project Start:</b>	7/1/2013
<b>Assessment Project End:</b>	6/30/2014
<b>Population/Sample:</b>	Eleven hundred and fifty-four international undergraduates attended at least one Economics Department course during AY1213. Of these 1,154, 1,044 were in F-1 status and 100 in J-1; 571 were from China, 207 South Korea; 203 were junior transfer students; and 108 (~10%) were disqualified, subject to disqualification, or on probation.
<b>Type of Assessment:</b>	Student learning outcomes and/or behavioral outcomes
<b>Other Assessment Type(s):</b>	
<b>Assessment Methods:</b>	Other: Please indicate below
<b>Other Assessment Method(s):</b>	Descriptive statistical analyses

**Data Collection Tools:** Data were extracted from Data Warehouse (SQL Executor; <https://act.ucsd.edu/cgi-bin/datalink.pl/1/>).

**Data Analysis Methods:** Counts and percentages were computed and descriptive statistical analyses were performed in spreadsheet software.

**Presentation of Findings:** This project's findings have been presented to the Economics Department's Director of Student Affairs, Vice-Chair for Undergraduate Education, and undergraduate advisors.

**Progress:** 100%

**Link Assessment Project in Campus Labs Baseline :**

Name	Source
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**Summary of Findings:** International undergraduates who enrolled in Economics classes in AY1213, in general, succeeded in those classes—their average academic mark was B, the majority earned C or better (the frequency distribution of academic marks was skewed to the right), and 82.4% of the marks (3,561 of 4,323) were C or better (this is a considerably higher percentage than would be expected if academic marks were distributed normally [bell curve]).

**Impact of Assessment:** This project's findings were contrary to Economics staff members' expectations based upon their observations of and interactions with international undergraduates enrolled in the Department's courses; the expectation was that these students, in general, were struggling (earning below C) due to English weaknesses (especially writing). These findings could have important implications for decision-making about programs and services for international undergraduates; their affiliation with the Economics Department; retention, engagement, and satisfaction.

**Lessons Learned:** A likely explanation for the above expectation is that UC San Diego's increased number of international undergraduates has led to a proportional increase in the number of ones struggling academically rather than that academic struggles are a general characteristic of these undergraduates (<http://jistudents.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/5-are-international-students.pdf>). Policies and programs intended to support these undergraduates therefore would be most cost effective if they targeted the specific students with demonstrable academic struggles rather than all undergraduates who are not native English speakers.

**Supplemental Information:** Our analytical studies on UC San Diego international undergraduates' academic achievement consistently have shown that, in general, these students are succeeding academically except in the Basic Writing Program's classes ([http://icenter.ucsd.edu/\\_files/ispo/COPE\\_presentation\\_5\\_3\\_13](http://icenter.ucsd.edu/_files/ispo/COPE_presentation_5_3_13)).

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