Assessment Plan
Ph.D. in Economics Program
2012

Program Goals
In keeping with Northern Illinois University's mission in the State of Illinois, especially its Northern portion, the mission of the Ph.D. in Economics program is to train analysts who can perform advanced professional evaluations of alternative public or private economic policies within different societal perspectives. Ph.D. graduates will design, implement, and interpret analyses to provide more precise and responsive policy formation for entities in both the private and the public sectors. Some Ph.D.'s will teach and thereby train the next generation of economic analysts.

1. Student Learning Objectives
   a) Graduates will demonstrate sufficient knowledge of economic theory to conduct advanced professional economic analysis.
   b) Graduates will demonstrate sufficient knowledge of econometric techniques to conduct advanced professional empirical analysis.
   c) Graduates will possess sufficient theoretical and econometric skills to conduct independent economic research as professional economists.

2. Methods
   a) After completing advanced theory courses students take candidacy exams in macroeconomic and microeconomic theory. These written exams assess the student's technical competence in theory as well as his or her intuition and ability to apply advanced theory.
   b) After completing field courses Ph.D. students are required to write a Ph.D.'s Research Paper. The treatment of the theoretical model and the sophistication of the econometrics used in these papers are potential measures of our students' mastery of the theory and of empirical techniques. Each Ph.D. Research Paper is examined by a committee of three faculty members. The committee evaluation includes a summary measure (using a holistic scoring method) of the quality of the theoretical and econometric work.
   c) Exit interviews are conducted for students graduating from the Ph.D. program.