

MSU INVESTMENT PROPOSAL FOR INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

PROPOSAL OVERVIEW

Title	Economics Student Retention Investment	Request Date	12/16/2011
Department		Email	
Requestor	Wendy Stock, Ag. Econ & Econ.	Phone	7984

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Core Themes and Objectives (check all that apply)

Educate Students

- Our graduates will have achieved mastery in their major disciplines
- Our graduates will become active citizens and leaders
- Our graduates will have a multicultural and global perspective
- Our graduates will understand the ways that knowledge & art are created and applied in a variety of disciplines
- Our graduates are prepared for careers in their field
- We will provide increased access to our educational programs
- Communities and external stake holders benefit from broadly defined education partnerships with MSU

Create Knowledge and Art

- Students, faculty, and staff will create knowledge and art that is communicated widely

Serve Communities

- We help meet a fundamental need of the citizens of Montana by providing degree programs for our students
- We help meet the educational needs of the citizens of Montana by providing a wide range of educational opportunities to a variety of students
- Our students, faculty, staff, and administrators reach out to engage and serve communities
- Our students, faculty, staff, and administrator reach in to build the university community

Integrate Learning, Discovery, and Engagement

- Each graduate will have had experiences that integrate learning, discovery and engagement
- Outreach activities will educate students and address the needs of the communities we serve
- Students, faculty, and staff will create knowledge and art that addresses societal needs
- MSU is a community that will be characterized by synergy within and across disciplines, roles and functions.

Stewardship

- The public trusts the institution to operate openly and use resources wisely
- The faculty and staff are well-qualified and supported
- MSU will support Native American students, programs, and communities
- MSU will be an inclusive community, supporting and encouraging diversity
- Our publicly provided resources are used efficiently and effectively
- Natural resources are used efficiently and sustainably
- MSU nurtures a culture of resource conservation and ecological literacy among students, faculty and staff
- Our physical infrastructure (e.g., building, equipment, open spaces) will be well-maintained and useful

INSITUTIONAL BENEFIT

Campuses X Bozeman Billings Havre Great Falls FSTS Extension MAES

Cross Depts Please List: Agricultural Economics and Economics

TIMEFRAME

Proposed Dates Start: Fall 2012 End: Never

COST AND REQUIREMENTS

Funding Type	One-Time (\$)	Multi-Year (\$)			Base (\$)	FTE
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3		
Personnel (w/benefits)					\$30,000	
Materials & Supplies						
Travel						
Contracted Services						
Capital						
Other Operations						
TOTAL					\$30,000	

The \$30,000 amount provides funding for 20 \$1500 stipends per year for students to lead sections of ECNS 105 and ECNS 206.

Please comment, if necessary, regarding cost and requirements.

PROPOSAL SCOPE**Describe the Proposal**

ECNS 101 and 202 have both been identified as "barrier" courses at Montana State University (i.e., it has enrollment of over 50 students per section, relatively high rates of student attrition, and relatively high proportions of students earning D or F grades). In an effort to increase student retention in ECNS 101, since fall 2009, an optional one-credit class (ECNS 105) led by top-level economics students (i.e., peer leaders) has been offered to students concurrently enrolled in ECNS 101 at MSU each semester. The ECNS 105 sections are capped at 25 students each and are taught under the leadership of a faculty member in the DAEE. The peer leaders for ECNS 105 enroll in ECNS 305, Peer Leadership in Economics, which teaches leadership as students study and implement effective economics pedagogical techniques, analyze and communicate to others regarding economic problem solving, and conduct research on economics pedagogy. Although the ECNS 105/ECNS 305 structure has been successful, limited resources threaten the program. The faculty member who teaches these classes has been teaching them as an overload to her regular teaching load. In addition, because peer leaders are not paid, attracting an adequate number of highly qualified DAEE students to serve in the peer leadership roles is challenging, and the DAEE is often short of students willing and able to serve that role. In 2011, the DAEE broadened the ECNS 101/ECNS 105 structure to supplement Principles of Macroeconomics (ECNS 202) with ECNS 206 study labs. This proposal seeks funding to pay student leaders of the ECNS 105 and ECNS 206 study labs a \$1500 stipend for their teaching and learning efforts.

PROPOSAL SCOPE**Describe the broader impacts and benefits of this proposal**

Because ECNS 101 and ECNS 202 have very large enrollments (averaging over 1000 students in ECNS 101 and over 650 in ECNS 202 each year), the small ECNS study lab courses provide an important small-class supplement to (primarily) first year students at MSU. In that regard, they are similar to the small-class setting in the US 101 and CLS 101 courses that are touted as important for student retention at MSU.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**Implementation Plan** *(Please describe with timelines)*

The ECNS 105 and ECNS 206 courses are already in place, but are at a crossroads because of lack of funding. Funding would be used beginning Fall 2012 to recruit student leaders for the ECNS 105 and ECNS 206 classes.

Assessment Plan *(Please describe with indicators)*

A rigorous assessment of the impact of the ECNS 105 class has already taken place. As part of the research component of the ECNS 305 course, students examined the impacts of ECNS 105 enrollment on ECNS 101 course grades, course retention, and performance of students in later economics courses. The research indicates that students who voluntarily enrolled in the ECNS 105 recitation class had lower average ACT scores than their ECON 101 peers who did not enroll in the recitation class. After controlling for students' class standing, major, ACT scores, previous economics experience, and other factors, estimates indicate that recitation class students earned higher final grades than their ECON 101 counterparts. In addition, although they were weaker students, those who enrolled in the recitation class were no more likely to drop ECON 101 than their counterparts who did not enroll in the recitation class. Thus, the ECNS 105 class contributes to increased retention and improved learning outcomes in ECNS 101. Although we have not conducted a similar analysis of the impact of ECNS 206, we expect similar impacts from that course.

If assessed objectives are not met in the timeframe outlined, what is the plan to sunset this proposal?

See above.

SIGNATURES

Department Head (please print)	Signature (required)	Date
Wendy Stock	<i>Wendy A. Stock</i> #1 of 3	12/21/2011

Dept Head Priority (please circle one): Very High High Medium Low Very Low

Dean/Director (please print)	Signature (required)	Date
<i>JEFF JACOBSEN</i>	<i>Jim Jordan</i>	12/30/2011

Dean/Director Priority (please circle one): Very High High Medium Low Very Low 2 of 8

Executive/VP (please print)	Signatures (required)	Date

Executive/VP Priority (please circle one): Very High High Medium Low Very Low