



1. HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE IN THE PROGRAM?

There are approximately 80 students active in the program in a given year and another 50 to 60 students admitted each fall semester.

2. ARE STUDENTS PRIMARILY PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME, OR A MIX?

Students are mostly part-time, hence, most classes are available during the evening (6:30 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.) or late afternoon (5:00 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.). See the suggested program of study (on the Economics Department website) for the length of time it takes to complete the 31 units as full-time and part-time students.

3. DO YOU THINK THE PROGRAM IS A GOOD STEPPING- STONE INTO GRAD PROGRAMS AT OTHER SCHOOLS, OR IS IT MORE OF AN END IN ITSELF?

We send an average of three graduate students per year to Ph.D. programs at institutions such as George Mason University, U.C. Davis, Irvine and Santa Cruz, Stanford University, Georgia State University, Northwestern, Carlton, NYU-Albany, Washington University, Saint Louis. We are proactive in helping interested students prepare for graduate studies. Since the main emphasis of the program, however, is on applied policy analysis, it is viewed by most of our students as a terminal degree.

4. WHAT DO YOUR GRADUATES GO ON TO DO?

Since most of our graduate students are already employed, the master's degree is regarded as an investment in upward advancement. Students, who have been out of the workforce for a few years, also use the master's degree to reenter or to transition to a new industry. The Department does not have a placement program for students. In industry, students typically work as project managers or in the finance departments. Several of our alumni have become prominent CFOs. In the public sector, students work for the Labor Department or Internal Revenue Service or Federal Reserve Bank. Students also work in local city economic development sectors. Of course, the master's degree will not guarantee placement in any job. The degree, particularly when coupled with a policy study, signals potential employers about your commitment to be in the labor pool and ability to do higher level work.

5. HOW MANY LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION DOES THE DEPARTMENT REQUIRE? (SEE QUESTION #7)

None. We do not accept letters of recommendation.

6. IS THE GRE NEEDED? (SEE QUESTION #7)

The GRE is not needed **IF** your grade point average in the last 60 semester units of coursework is 3.0 or better. The GRE **may be** used if your grade point average in the last 60 units of coursework falls between 2.5 and 2.99. In this case, you have two options. Option 1. Go to a community college and take sufficient additional courses to change the composition of the last 60 units and boost your grade point average. Note: this is only cost effective if you are replacing poorer grades (earned early in your academic career) with the new better grades. Option 2. Take the GRE exam. You will be considered on a space available basis. See question 8 below for more details.

7. WHY DOESN'T THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDER GRE SCORES FOR STUDENTS WITH GPA'S ABOVE 3.0 OR LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION FROM ANY STUDENT?

The University's admission requirements and TOEFL score coupled with prerequisites are sufficient to produce a pool of students that are involved, motivated, and able to complete the Master's program. Additionally these requirements establish an unnecessary hurdle for a group of students that we are trying to cultivate--senior professionals.

8. WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY INTO THE MASTER'S PROGRAM?

Effective Fall 2006 applicants who meet the following requirements will be considered for admission into MA in Economics

- At least a four year B.A. or B.S. degree in any discipline
- A 3.0 minimum GPA in the most recent 60 semester units (or 90 quarter units) of coursework.
- If you **have less** than a 3.0 GPA (GPA between 2.5 - 2.99) in the most recent 60 semester units then you must submit GRE scores of at least 1000 including a minimum of 550 on the verbal, plus 3.0 or higher (scale of 0-6.0) on the Analytical Writing Section of the General Test). Applicants will be considered on a space available basis.

In addition to the same requirements mentioned above, International Applicants must meet the following:

- TOEFL of 575 (paper version) or 240 (computer version)
- OR
- Your primary language of undergraduate instruction was in English

Apply Online: http://www2.sjsu.edu/gradstudies/Prospective/How_To_Apply.html

9. WHAT TYPE OF STUDENTS ARE YOU LOOKING TO ADMIT?

Graduate study is highly, self-directed. Hence, we are looking for students who are self-motivated, resourceful, and accountable. Instructors will inspire and challenge students, but at this level of study, the student is responsible for the development of their human capital.

10. WHERE CAN I GO TO GET ADVISING?

This FAQ and the Economics Department web page are ideal places to start. Remember we are looking for highly motivated, resourceful and accountable students—there are very few advising issues that have not been addressed on this FAQ or on the web.

You will learn more about our program, get recommendations from faculty, and meet your peers at the Graduate Student Orientation held on the first Friday of the week classes begin in the Fall semester. You will have time to attend some courses during that first week of classes, attend the Orientation on the first Friday, and still add or drop courses based on any new information you acquire at the Orientation.

If you still have a particular question that was not addressed on the web pages, or cannot wait until the Orientation then contact the Graduate Advisor (see Faculty list).

11. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE MA IN ECONOMICS AND THE MA IN APPLIED ECONOMICS?

There is not a lot of difference at this time. All courses emphasize applied economics but the MA in applied economics makes sure that your elective courses focus on subjects that are generally regarded as highly applied in nature. Some students tell us that their companies look more favorably on the applied title.

12. I AM AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT WITH A THREE-YEAR BACHELORS DEGREE AND ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATES OF TRAINING, WILL I BE ACCEPTED INTO THE PROGRAM?

The University and the Department of Economics strictly enforce a four-year bachelors degree requirement. Graduate Studies and Research reviews all transcripts and materials in a complete and professional manner to see if the work is “equivalent” to a four-year bachelors degree. The determination of Graduate Studies and Research is final and is honored by the Department of Economics.

13. CAN I FIND OUT BEFORE I APPLY, IF MY THREE-YEAR BACHELORS DEGREE AND SUPPLEMENTARY ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING ARE “EQUIVALENT” TO A FOUR-YEAR DEGREE?

Regrettably, the answer is no. You will need to formally apply and send original copies of all materials to Graduate Studies and Research. Each application requires and receives individualized consideration.

14. MY THREE-YEAR BACHELORS DEGREE AND SUPPLEMENTARY CERTIFICATE TRAINING WAS ACCEPTED BY A DIFFERENT GRADUATE PROGRAM ON CAMPUS, BUT NOW I WANT TO SWITCH TO ECONOMICS. CAN I CHANGE MAJORS?

Your application for a change of majors (there is a form for this) will be processed according to the requirements and standards applied to any new admission to the economics program. You will have to meet Economics Department requirements including those that apply to a four-year bachelors degree.

15. I AM AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AND DUE TO CHANGES IN MY VISA STATUS I NEED TO KNOW QUICKLY, WHETHER OR NOT I WAS ACCEPTED, HOW CAN I GET A FAST RESPONSE?

You can't. Telephone calls, email messages, or other contact will not push the application process faster. It is your responsibility to anticipate visa requirements and file for the graduate program as soon as the application period is open (see Graduate Studies and Research website for dates). If you encountered unforeseeable circumstances that delayed your application it is STILL your responsibility to make travel and visa related arrangements. We cannot and will not expedite your application.

Application processing is generally delayed when students fail to get a release from a current OPT program or when they fail to submit all the necessary original documents. Review the International Students website for more information.

16. CAN I TRANSFER CREDITS FROM ANOTHER PROGRAM THAT I STARTED?

Yes, with advisor approval, we accept up to 2 classes (6 semester units) from other programs. Review the catalog for complete details and restrictions but in general, other programs includes:

- (a) Classes taken as an Open University student at SJSU
- (b) Graduate classes at another university if you were a graduate student
- (c) Classes taken in the senior year at SJSU

17. CAN I APPLY EVEN IF I DO NOT HAVE A BACKGROUND IN ECONOMICS?

Yes. The Department has had excellent experience with students from a variety of backgrounds, from engineering to art history. You will have to take several prerequisites. These are determined on an individual basis depending on your transcript. The Full-Set of prerequisites includes the following (each course must receive a B or better):

- A. Principles of Micro and Macroeconomics (these can be taken at a community college)

- B. Intermediate Micro, Econ 101 and Macroeconomics, Econ 102 (these must be taken at a university)
- C. Basic Statistics (this can be taken at a community college)
- D. An upper division economics elective such as Economic History of the U.S., Topics in Asian Economies, Economic Development, Topics in Latin American Economies, Government and Regulation, or other.
- E. Basic Calculus such as Math 71 (this can be taken at a community college)

Although the prerequisite course units cannot be counted toward the MA degree you must still maintain a minimum 3.0 average in all courses attempted.

You must complete Econ 101 and Math 71 before taking the following graduate courses: Econ 104 and Econ 201.

We highly recommend that you complete Econ 104 before Econ 201.

You must complete Econ 102 before taking the following graduate courses: Econ 202 or Econ 235.

If you have had introductory economics several years ago, it would be advisable for you to refresh your economics at the principles level, either through self-study or by taking a course. This is not a requirement but is left to the student's discretion. Principles of Microeconomics (Econ 1B) and Macroeconomics (Econ 1A) are available at SJSU or at a community college during the summer and interim sessions.

If you have had statistics or calculus several years ago, it is strongly advised that you refresh these concepts either through self-study or by taking a course at a community college.

18. CAN I TAKE MY PREREQUISITES AT SJSU?

Yes. You must take the Intermediate courses (upper division—100 level) at a University. A conditional admission allows you to complete the prerequisites while simultaneously taking 3 courses that count towards your MA. You must finish your prerequisites before taking more than 3 courses that you want to use towards your MA.

19. HOW MATH INTENSIVE IS YOUR PROGRAM?

Our program uses calculus in the graduate micro theory course (Econ 201), in the math for economics course (Econ 104), and uses statistics in the econometrics course (Econ 103 or 203). While we use math, the emphasis of the program is on applied policy analysis. If you are particularly weak in math, you should take or review calculus (such as Math 71: Calculus for Business and Aviation).

20. DOES YOUR PROGRAM PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO GRADUATE STUDENTS?

Few graduate programs across the country provide assistantships at the master's level. Faculty at SJSU are actively involved in research and some have small pools of funds for research fellowships (\$500 to \$1000 per year). At this time we have no other forms of financial assistance.

21. DO YOU SUPPORT INTERNSHIPS?

Graduate students can take Econ 285 Applied Economics Internship. Students have used this course to secure internships at such as public policy research institutes and at companies as Cisco, Applied Materials, PG&E and several banks in the area. More information about internships can be found at the [Internship link](#).

22. WHAT ASPECT OF THE PROGRAM ARE YOU MOST PROUD OF?

Although most students have full-time employment, they are able to form close, effective study groups. In part, this is due to the necessity of managing time. In part, it is due to excitement about economic concepts. This excitement is generated by a superb and accessible faculty, by student participation in summer seminars across the United States, and by student participation in our Barstool meetings. For example, one group of students formed a Saturday reading group. The group was an eclectic mix of senior professionals, undergraduates, and graduates. Students from this group have gone on to doctoral programs and to co-author published papers with faculty. Another group of alumni recently got together for their own 5 year Barstool reunion. I am most proud of a program where busy working professionals are re-energized by a shared commitment to learning economics in a convivial environment. In short, our students get jazzed about economics.