Sophomore Planning in Economics: A Five-Point Summary

What would you like to understand and improve?
- jobs
- health
- wealth
- finance
- fairness
- inflation
- education
- environment
- gentrification
- globalization
- new technologies
- structural change
- government policies
- the distribution of opportunity
- and more!

ECONOMICS
Do you like asking questions?
Do you like solving problems?

February 7, 2023
Professor Amanda Bayer
Economics Department Chair
1. Consult the department website early and often

https://www.swarthmore.edu/economics

for important information on:
Academic Program
Courses
Faculty & Staff
Visible Hands in Economics
Student Research
Jobs and opportunities
Student Activities
Lectures
Transferring Credits
2. Know the value of studying Economics

• Studying economics is a doorway to lots of destinations and careers

• Economics provides a set of tools for understanding, predicting, and evaluating individual choices and collective resource allocation. It can help you
  – make better decisions with the resources you control
  – analyze policy issues
  – prepare for further study in economics
  – explore fascinating ideas and complicated realities

• You can help change the field and the world
3. Know your options in Economics

- The department offers a course major, an honors major, and an honors minor
- We do not offer a course minor

**Requirements in brief**

Check the department website and course catalog for important details. Information in the catalog supersedes the summary here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE MAJOR</th>
<th>HONORS MAJOR</th>
<th>HONORS MINOR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>≥ 8 ECON credits</td>
<td>≥ 8 ECON credits (effectively ≥ 10 credits)</td>
<td>≥ 4 ECON credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON 001, 011, 021, &amp; 031, + MATH 015*</td>
<td>ECON 001, 011, 021, &amp; 031, + MATH 015*</td>
<td>ECON 001, 011, 021, &amp;/or 031, + MATH 015 if prerequisite for the honors preparation</td>
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<tr>
<td>A comprehensive exam in senior spring</td>
<td>3 2-credit honors preparations in ECON, with external exams in senior spring</td>
<td>1 2-credit honors preparation in ECON, with external exam in senior spring</td>
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* Check the catalog for info on waivers and equivalents.
3.a. The course major

A typical timeline for the course major:

*(Don’t worry if your path doesn’t match this. I didn’t take Intro until my sophomore spring.)*

First year: ECON 001 + ECON elective

Sophomore: ECON 011 + ECON 031 + ECON 021 *(Complete these courses before your senior spring!)*

Junior: 2 ECON electives *(Can include honors seminars - try at least one!)*

Senior: 2 ECON electives + “the Comps” (3-hour exam) in January or February

To be admitted as a course major:

- at least 2 credits in ECON at Swarthmore, with a B or better in at least one *(Shadow grades count)*
- an overall grade average of C or better
- no D’s or NC’s in economics courses *(You’ll have to re-take those to be admitted)*
3.b. The honors major

A typical timeline for the honors major:

First year: ECON 001 + ECON elective
Sophomore: ECON 011 + ECON 031 + ECON 021
Junior & Senior: 3 ECON 2-credit seminars* + external exams (written and oral) in May of senior year

To be admitted as an honors major:

- the same requirements as for the course major, plus a B or better average in all economics courses including shadow grades
- must be paired with an honors minor in another discipline

* Some preparations combine a course and a 1-credit seminar (e.g., ECON 035+135).
3.c. The honors minor

A typical timeline for the honors minor:

First year: ECON 001 + ECON elective
Sophomore: ECON 011 &/or ECON 031 &/or ECON 021 (Check prerequisites for your desired seminar)
Junior & Senior: 1 ECON 2-credit seminar* + external exams (written and oral) in May of senior year

To be admitted as an honors minor:

• the same requirements as for the course major, plus a B or better average in all economics courses including shadow grades
• must be paired with an honors major in another discipline

* Some preparations combine a course and a 1-credit seminar (e.g., ECON 035+135).
4. Know how to prepare a sophomore plan

A good plan has three simple pieces:

• **What personal interests and goals motivate your academic plan?** Two sentences should do it.

• **What is the basic structure of your plan?** Write a paragraph or two identifying the major(s) and minor(s) you will complete, whether you will participate in the honors program, whether you will pursue off-campus study, and the reasons for making these choices.

• **What specific courses and seminars will you take and when?** Provide a semester-by-semester listing of courses and seminars you plan to take in your junior and senior years. Our department posts its two-year forecast of course offerings, as do others.
  
  • Show you can satisfy all major, minor, and College-wide graduation requirements.
  
  • Clearly identify your desired seminars in Economics (number, title, semester) so that we can put you on the list. Honors students have priority, but course majors usually get admitted to honors seminars too.
  
  • If there's a chance you may want to go to econ grad school, take some more math courses. (The most relevant areas are calculus, differential equations, linear algebra, and real analysis.)
5. Consider all opportunities and resources

Including:

- PhD in Economics – this is do-able if you want it! – for jobs in academia, public policy, & private sector
- Your assigned Sophomore Plan advisor
- Your peers – and Student Activities
- Your professors’ office hours
- Our administrative coordinator, Megan Salladino (msallad1@swarthmore.edu, Kohlberg 216)
- Summer research in economics (often requires ECON 031 as well as a willingness to learn new skills)
- Other employment and internships and events - Jobs and opportunities

https://www.swarthmore.edu/economics