Sophomore planning for economics majors (& honors minors)
February 19, 2021

I’m Steve O’Connell, Chair of the Economics Department at Swarthmore, and this is a quick summary of the Sophomore Planning process for potential majors and honors minors.

Welcome to the department.

We’re looking forward to working with you.
1/ Major requirements are straightforward

• A course major in economics
  a doorway to lots of destinations

• To be admitted as a course major:
  • At least 2 credits in economics at Swarthmore, with a B or better in at least one
    (shadow grades count for this, and we treat a CR in spring 2020 as B or better).
  • No D’s or NC’s in economics courses (you’ll have to re-take those to be admitted).

• To complete the course major:
  • 4 core requirements (Ec 1, Ec 11, Ec 21, Ec 31 or equivalent).
  • Plus 4 credits of electives, which can include honors seminars.
  • Culminates in “the Comps” (3-hour exam on Ec 11, 21 and 31), senior spring.
1/ Major requirements are straightforward

• An honors major in economics
  intensive, exciting, collaborative

• To be accepted 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.

• To complete the honors major:
  • The same 4 core requirements.
  • Plus 3 honors seminars in economics (typically 2-credit preparations).
  • Must be paired with an honors minor (one seminar) in another discipline.
  • Culminates in 4 external exams, one for each seminar, senior spring.
2/ We offer an honors minor

- An option for honors majors in all disciplines
  a deep dive into one area of economics

- To be admitted as an honors minor in economics:
  - The same requirements as for the course major, plus a B or better average in all economics courses, including shadow grades.

- To complete the honors minor
  - Complete Ec 1 and one honors seminar in economics (including its prerequisites).
  - Most honors minors take at least 4-5 total credits in economics including the seminar.
  - Honors minors take external exams in each seminar, senior spring.
3/ A sophomore 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?
  • A sentence or two on each of the big decisions:
    • What major(s) and minor(s) will you complete?
    • Will you elect the honors program? Why or why not?
    • Will you go on foreign study? Why or why not?

• Work it out: What courses and seminars will you take?
  • Your best detailed guesses. Make sure they satisfy all graduation requirements.
  • Indicate the economics seminars you want to take & when, so that we can put you on the list. Honors students have absolute priority, but course majors get admitted to honors seminars all the time.
4/ Other goals can complement or inform your plan

• **Summer research in economics**
  - Topics and activities vary widely, almost always with an empirical dimension.
  - Willingness/desire to learn new skills.
  - Ec 31 or its equivalent often required.

• **Summer employment or internships in related fields**
  - Finance: consider Ec 33 and Ec 22.
  - Be aware of the 2-credit rule for business electives!

• **The job title Economist is a PhD qualification**
  - In academia, private business, or public policy.
  - This is do-able if you want it! Speak with your dep’t advisor about keeping that door open.
5/ For more information:

• Check out the Department’s web page

• Talk to your advisor in the department.

• I’m available by email (soconne1@swarthmore.edu).

• Feel free to email our Administrative Assistant, Megan Salladino (msallad1@Swarthmore.edu) with any questions.
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