

Dartmouth College Department of Economics

First Year Student FAQ

What is Economics?

Economics is the study of how individuals, businesses, governments, and societies make decisions about the allocation of scarce resources. It seeks to understand how markets operate, how prices are determined, and how various factors influence economic activity and individual well-being. The principal value of economics lies in its ability to offer a formal framework for analyzing historical trends and interpreting current events across a wide range of topics in social science and public policy.

What can I study in economics?

In addition to offering courses that teach the basic framework of economics, students apply this framework in advanced courses in macroeconomics, development economics, industrial organization, finance, labor economics, public economics, and international economics.

Our curriculum provides students with tools to study virtually any topic in the social sciences or public policy. For example, consider the list of recent student theses:

- Evaluating the Pollution Haven Hypothesis.
- The Real Determinants of National Health

- The Impact of Imports on Local and Household Health Outcomes in the U.S.
 - Electoral Malpractice in Nigerian Presidential Elections: Evaluating the Role of the State Governors and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).
 - Covid-19 Eviction Moratoria and the Rental Market.
 - Leave Room for Jesus: The Effect of State-Level Abstinence Policies on Teen Sexual Behavior.
 - Redefining School Incentives in the Wake of Informality: How COVID-19 Induced Changes in Informality Reshaped Education in South Africa.
 - California Carbon Credits: Exploration of Impacts Upon Corporate Stock Returns.
- Spending: Income Level, Life Expectancy, and Healthcare System.
 - Decoding Labor Market Slack: The Impact of Underemployment, Non-Employment, and Inactivity on U.S. Wage Formation in the Post-Recession Era.
 - Green is Good: ESG and Stock Sensitivity to Interest Rates.
 - Missing Vaccines: Gender Disparities in India's Neonatal Immunizations over COVID-19.
 - The Predictive Power of Investment Syndicate Composition on Exit Outcomes for Venture-Backed Companies.
 - The Effect of Primary Schooling on Parent Labor Supply.

Where can I find information on the Dartmouth Economics Department?

The department web site can be found at:

<https://economics.dartmouth.edu/>. Follow us on Twitter @DartmouthEcon and Facebook (Dartmouth Economics Department).

What courses in Economics should I take this year?

Welcome to the Economics major! Your journey begins with ECON 1, the foundational course required for all other classes in the major. If you have prior experience in economics and wish to skip ECON 1, please take our placement test.

In addition to ECON 1, you will need to complete ECON 10 - Introduction to Statistical Methods, and MATH 3 - Calculus, as prerequisites for the major. If you haven't yet earned credit for MATH 3, we recommend enrolling in it as soon as possible (note that it is not offered in the spring). Should you be placed in MATH 1, you should take it this fall. After completing MATH 1, you can opt to take ECON 3 in the winter term instead of MATH 3. ECON 3 covers similar mathematical content but with a focus on economic applications.

Don't worry if ECON 1 is the only economics course you've completed this year. You will still have plenty of time to fulfill all the requirements for your economics major before

graduating.

I studied economics in high school. Do I still have to take ECON 1?

Take our placement test to determine your placement in the Economics major. You can skip Econ 1 with a score of 5 on your AP Microeconomics exam, a 6 or higher on your higher-level IB Economics exam, or an A on your British A-Level Economics exam. However, we encourage all students to take our placement test for the most accurate assessment.

I took Statistics in High School and have an exemption from MATH 10. Will I still need to take ECON 10?

You should still take Econ 10. You can use the MATH 10 exemption to satisfy the ECON 10 requirement, but we do not recommend this.

Can I take another statistics class instead of ECON 10?

Avoid taking statistics courses in other departments if you plan to continue with economics courses. ECON 10 is designed specifically to prepare you for economics classes and introduces you to the statistical software used in our curriculum. Currently, the College grants credit for only one statistics course, so we strongly recommend taking ECON 10 if there is any possibility you will major in economics.

I have an exemption for ECON 1 that I intend to use; what should I take this term?

You can enroll in any class that lists ECON 1 as its only prerequisite. Many students choose to take ECON 10 immediately after ECON 1 to fulfill the prerequisites. If you have an exemption for ECON 1 and have completed ECON 10, ECON 21 is often a good next step. Feel free to explore any course that interests you, provided you meet the prerequisites.

I see a lot of Economics classes have prerequisites. Do I really have to take courses in that order or can I ignore the prerequisites?

Paying attention to prerequisites in economics is crucial. Prerequisites are established to ensure that students have the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in a course. They are carefully selected to align with the course content, providing a foundation for more advanced material. While you can complete prerequisites in any order, they must be fulfilled before enrolling in a subsequent class to ensure you are adequately prepared.

What happens if I do not get into my preferred economics class?

Economics is the most popular major at Dartmouth, so our classes are often oversubscribed. We always reserve spaces in ECON 1 for first-year students in the fall.

If you do not get admitted to all the classes you wish to take, don't worry. Most economics courses are offered several times throughout the year, so you will have other

opportunities to enroll. It's still easy to complete your major even if ECON 1 is the only economics class you take during your freshman year.

If you are not admitted to a particular course or section and want to join the waiting list, please fill out our online [Waiting List Form](#). Do not contact the course professor directly, as all waitlist matters are handled by the Economics Department Administrator, who will inform you about your status.

When the term begins, make sure to attend the first class meeting of the course you're waitlisted for to ensure you don't fall behind if you get a spot. Also, continue attending alternate courses in case you do not get off the waitlist. Typically, all waitlists are resolved by the end of the first full week of classes.

In the future, sign up for classes before the registrar's deadline. Declared majors have the highest priority for enrollment in many upper-level classes. You can declare your major starting in your fifth term at Dartmouth.

Does the Economics Major have the STEM designation?

Yes! The Economics Major has a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code by the National Center of Education at the Department of Education of 45.0603, which has the STEM designation. The STEM designation allows international students to apply for a 2-year STEM extension of F-1 Optional Practical Training (OPT) beyond the standard 12 months of OPT for non-STEM designated degrees.

Does Economics have an FSP?

No. The Economics department participates in three exchange programs: Bocconi University in Milan; University College London; and Keble College @ Oxford. The latter is run by the [Rockefeller Center](#) but mainly chooses Economics and Government majors. Bocconi teaches their Economics classes in English. The [Guarini Institute](#) administers these programs. It is also possible to arrange for studying abroad on your own.

Are there any extracurricular activities associated with the Economics Department?

The [Dartmouth Economics Research Scholars Program](#) provides opportunities for students to learn about the economics profession and to become involved in research. Apply as early as your sophomore year.

The [Sadie Alexander Association](#) is a student-run organization aimed at helping underrepresented groups make the most of the major.

Where is the Economics Department located?

The department occupies most of the third floor of Rockefeller and Silsby Halls. When looking for professors, note which building they are in because the room numbers overlap. The Economics Department Administrator, Connie Prior, is located in 311 Rockefeller.