

Department of Economics
Undergraduate Studies Report, September 6, 2006
Submitted by Mary Hansen

This report contains updates on Principles, Intermediate, and upper level undergraduate enrollments, plus updates on advising and on student activities. Also included is a report on the grade distribution in Principles courses, which I prepared at the request of the department chair. The source of data for these enrollments and grade distributions is the Eagedata Warehouse, accessed between September 1, 2006, and September 4, 2006.

Trends in Principles Enrollments

Last Spring I reported that Fall Principles of Macro enrollments had fallen from a peak of almost 800 in Fall 2002. Fall enrollments this year are back up, to 744. Micro enrollments are up slightly. Trends are shown in the figure attached.

We are at capacity in the sections offered. Both large Macro sections are at about 250 students. Every “regular” Principles (both Macro and Micro) section has at least 30 students. Only one Honors section has less than 25.

Trends in Enrollments in Intermediate Theory Courses

Enrollment in Intermediate Macro is steady; enrollment in Intermediate Micro is up a few compared to last fall. A graph of trends is attached. Again, sections are full; each section of intermediate has 30 or more students. Recall that the trend in declared and intended majors was up overall last year, so we can expect these numbers to continue to creep up.

Upper Level Course Enrollments

Eight upper level courses (3xx), plus 480 (Senior Seminar) are being offered this semester. This is one fewer offering than last fall, but the enrollment of 294 students is the highest of any semester since before 1999 (when the current database starts). Average enrollment in upper level courses is 29 students per section. If 322 (Econometrics, enrollment=15) and 480 (Senior Seminar, enrollment=14) are excluded, the average is 33 students.

Implications: I am beginning to worry that double majors and intended majors will have a hard time finding open sections of intermediate theory and upper level courses.

Updates for Advising

The Virtual Advisor web pages are up-and-running (thanks, Aaron!). They are available from the Department home page by navigating through student resources:

<http://www.american.edu/cas/econ/student/virtualadvisor/virtualadvisor.htm>

We will also have some new print materials for the undergraduate programs (as well as the MA program, thanks to Larry!) available for distribution after they are approved.

Student Activities

Omicron Delta Epsilon: A total of 13 students joined our revived ODE last semester. The leaders of the group are Frank Restagno and Chris Smith. Aside from organizational meetings, we had time for only one event, a Strategy Games Tournament (sponsored by ODE, EGSU, and the department).

Frank and Chris submitted an ODE Chapter Activities Grant application at the end of the semester, and they were awarded \$1700 from the ODE Board to cover the expenses of inviting an external speaker this semester. More on this soon.

Very soon I will be sending out a new round of invitations to students who are eligible to join.

ODE cannot receive student activities monies because Honors Societies are not open to all students. I am hoping to recruit a small group of ODE members and other students to form a committee to establish an Economics Club that will be open to all so that the students can access their share of activities funds.

Upcoming Dept. Sponsored *Esprit-de-Corps* Events:

- The department will partner with the Career Center for a “Choosing a Professional or Graduate Program” on Thursday, November 9, 2006, at 5 p.m. Location TBA. I’ll be sending an announcement closer to the date. All are welcome to attend.
- The department will partner with Alumni Affairs and the Career Center for an **alumni networking event** on Thursday, February 15, 2007, at 6 p.m., in the Atrium. Please put this date on your calendar so you can catch up with former students. Again, I’ll be sending more info as the day approaches.
- Once we have a sense of which graduate student(s) will be testing the academic job market this year, I’ll set up a meeting of ODE (and the Econ Club?) late in the semester so at least one student can practice the job talk. In the spring I plan to invite someone from the Fed or the federal government to speak to majors and interested students (next year I will ask an NGO speaker). I’ve asked some of you for suggestions; thanks to those who responded.

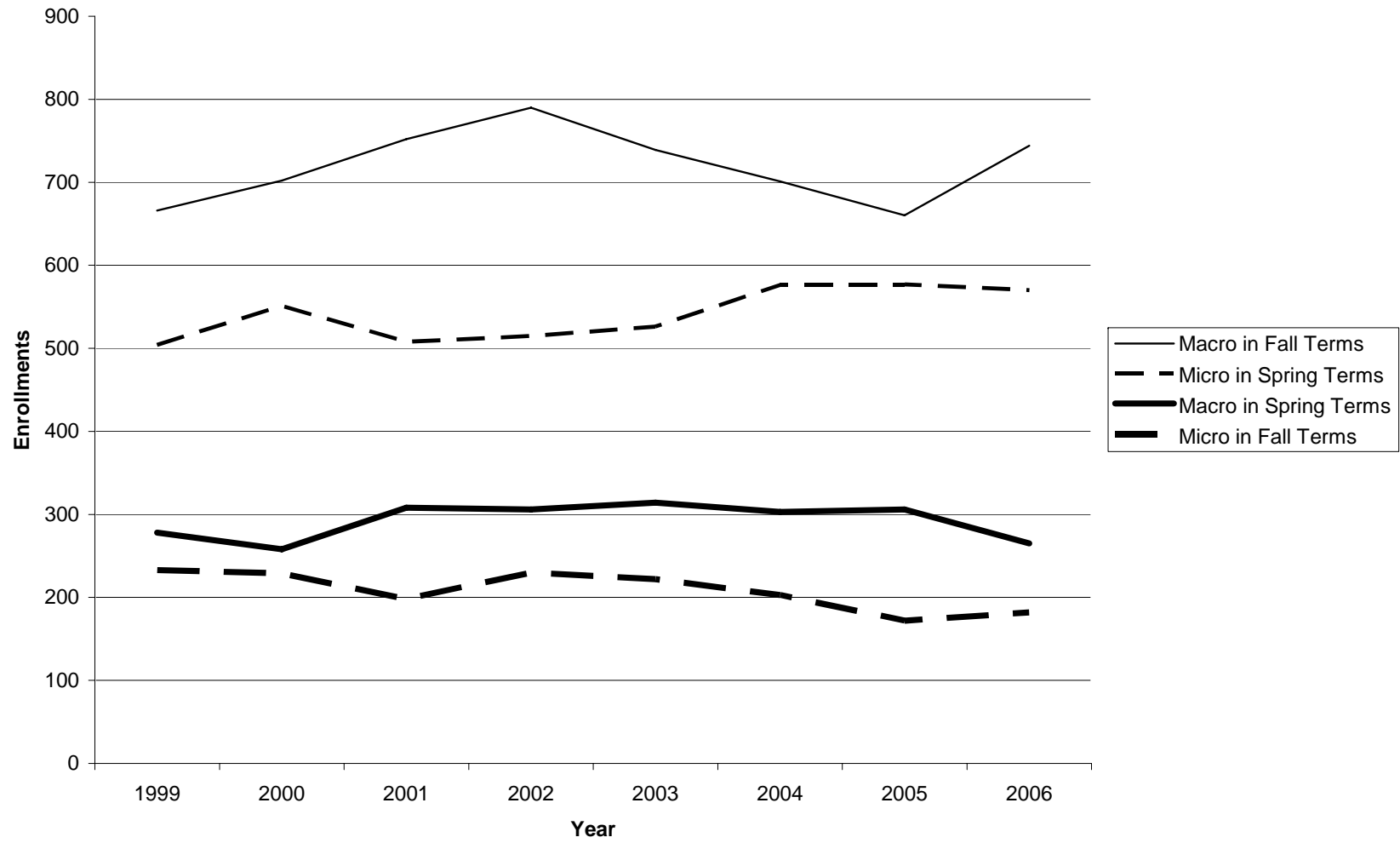
Grade Distributions since Fall 2003

The table below shows the average of the grade distribution in sections of Principles of Macro and Micro. The unit of observation is the section; the table gives the average of the percent of As, Bs, and Cs given in each section. Honors sections of the Principles courses are excluded. The occasion for generating this table is the notable increase between Fall 2005 and Spring 2006 in the number of students receiving high grades in Principles courses. The range of observations in the Principles courses for As is 6 to 69 percent; the range for Bs is 21 to 67 percent, the range for Cs is 0 (yes, zero) to 47 percent.

For comparison, I provide all ECON undergrad, CAS, and AU undergrad averages. The unit of observation for the latter three columns is the student-course.

	ECON-100 (excludes Honors sections)	ECON-200	ECON Undergrad	CAS Undergrad	AU Undergrad
	Percent As				
2003F	0.25	0.36	0.34	0.44	0.47
2004S	0.21	0.32	0.35	0.43	0.48
2004F	0.33	0.43	0.38	0.43	0.48
2005S	0.25	0.45	0.40	0.43	0.48
2005F	0.28	0.33	0.37	0.44	0.48
2006S	0.40	0.44	0.45	0.45	0.50
	Percent Bs				
2003F	0.51	0.40	0.41	0.36	0.36
2004S	0.44	0.40	0.41	0.36	0.35
2004F	0.37	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.36
2005S	0.37	0.41	0.41	0.36	0.35
2005F	0.38	0.47	0.40	0.37	0.36
2006S	0.38	0.41	0.38	0.35	0.35
	Percent Cs				
2003F	0.17	0.16	0.17	0.11	0.10
2004S	0.29	0.17	0.19	0.12	0.10
2004F	0.24	0.12	0.17	0.11	0.09
2005S	0.25	0.09	0.12	0.12	0.10
2005F	0.25	0.15	0.16	0.11	0.09
2006S	0.13	0.11	0.11	0.10	0.08

Principles Enrollments



Intermediate Enrollments

