Overview of Proposed Doctorate in Economic Development

The Department of Economics and International Business and the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agricultural Business of New Mexico State University are currently developing a new doctoral degree program tentatively titled the “Doctorate in Economic Development.” The proposed program will be a professional doctorate that follows a model used extensively in Australia and the United Kingdom. Rather than preparing students to work in academia, as with the traditional Ph.D., this professional doctorate is aimed at providing advanced education and training for economic development professionals. Graduates of the Doctorate in Economic Development program are expected to become leaders in the application of academic skills and knowledge to actual development problems whether at the local, state, regional, national, or international level.

As proposed, students in the Doctorate in Economic Development program will include the following elements. Specific details are still being worked out.

- A Master’s degree will be required for entry into the Doctoral program. Most students will enter with a Master’s in economics, agricultural economics, business administration, or public administration although other backgrounds are possible.
- Regardless of the student’s Master’s degree, all students will receive solid Master’s level training in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and econometrics/statistics.
- Beyond the general training mentioned above, each student will complete a core program including two courses focused on the application of economic theories to development issues and two courses in which analytical tools, specific to development, are intensively applied. Examples of tools would be input-output analysis, RIMS, IMPLAN, and linear programming.
- Each student will study a four-course major area and a two-course minor area. Possible major or minor areas include (but are not limited to) international economics, resource economics, public finance, public policy, and education policy.
- Communication skills, written and oral, will be emphasized throughout the program via formal course training and extensive writing and presentation assignments.
- All students will complete a major applied research project. The projects will address specific development problems or programs. In some cases the projects will be undertaken in an internship setting.
- The program will likely have both residential (on campus) and distance education components.

Students completing the Doctorate of Economic Development should be well prepared to work for development organizations at all levels. Graduates should be prepared to analyze economic development issues, to conduct and supervise economic development related research, for example economic impact studies, and to present programs and findings to policy makers and other interested people in clear and meaningful ways.

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