

M. A. Economics Orientation

Department of Economics

Delhi School of Economics

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Preliminary remarks

- The Delhi School of Economics (DSE) consists of Delhi University's departments of Economics, Sociology, and Geography. Although 'D. School', or 'the School', is an important institution for historical reasons, branding purposes, alumni nostalgia, or as a postal address (in some quarters), 'Delhi School of Economics' will not appear on your degree diploma.
- M. A. Economics is a rigorous **academic** programme. At the end of the day, you might choose to be in the 'real world' and not an academic, but the programme will emphasise the academic Economics discipline. **It is (hopefully) quite unlike an MBA programme.**

The meaning of 'academic'

- 'Academic' does not mean irrelevant and impractical. It stands for conceptual clarity and analytical rigour.
- Recall Mr. Keynes:
Practical men who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influence, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back.
- We seek to uphold high standards in scribbling.

Programme's training and impact

- The presence of its graduates in top Ph. D. programmes and faculties around the world is evidence of the high quality of **academic training** that the M. A. programme offers.
- The **professional impact** of the analytical, quantitative, and problem-solving skills imparted is evident from the placement of graduates, who abound in
 - the public sector (e.g., government, civil services, regulatory agencies, etc.),
 - NGOs, and
 - the professions (e.g., management, consultancy, media, law, journalism, etc.).
 - Some even become entrepreneurs.

Structure of programme

The programme consists of Part 1 (Semesters I and II) and Part 2 (Semesters III and IV). Promotion from Part 1 to Part 2 depends on your performance in Part 1.

Table : Distribution of courses and credits

| Semester | Courses (Credit per course) | Semester credit |
|-----------------|---|------------------------|
| I | Compulsory 3($\times 6$) | 18 |
| II | Compulsory 3($\times 6$) + Elective 1($\times 5$) | 23 |
| III | Elective 4($\times 5$)* | 20 |
| IV | Elective 4($\times 5$)* | 20 |

*An Economics elective may be replaced by an Open Elective offered by another department, but the Open Elective will be worth 4 credits only.

Qualifying for M. A. degree

- Your span period begins when you are admitted into the programme.
- You need to accumulate a minimum of 80 credits over the span period of 4 years.
- There are two ways to do this:
 - Pass 6 Compulsory and 9 Elective Economics courses to get 81 credits.
 - Pass 6 Compulsory and 8 Elective Economics courses, and 1 Open Elective of another department, to get 80 credits. An Open Elective may be taken in Part 2 only.
- If you fail Part 1, i.e., are not promoted, you become an ex-student. As an ex-student, you have the remaining part of the span period to earn the remaining credits.

Student evaluation in a course

- For each course,
Internal assessment = 30 marks
Final examination = 70 marks
- The dates of Final examinations are fixed and announced at the beginning of a semester. They should be taken into account when choosing Elective courses.
- Depending on the course, Internal assessment may depend on
 - Mid-semester examinations
 - Assigned problem-sets
 - Project work
 - Term paper and presentation

Passing a course

- In order to Pass a course, you need to get
 - $\geq 40\%$ in its Final examination, and
 - $\geq 40\%$ in the aggregate for the course (i.e., the combined marks for the Final examination and Internal assessment).
- Failing a course results in an Essential Repeat (ER).
- An ER may be cleared by Passing the course in a subsequent year.

Promotion

- Promotion from Part 1 to Part 2 requires the student to Pass at least 4 out of the 7 courses taken in Part 1.
- If promoted, ERs collected in Part 1 may be completed in Part 2, or later during the span period as an ex-student.
- If not promoted, a student has three options:
 - Seek a fresh admission into the programme. This redeems all your sins and gives you a fresh 4 year span.
 - Somewhat less drastic: Repeat all the Part 1 courses *ab initio*. This wipes the entire slate clean, but the effective span period reduces to 3 years.
 - Finally, the student may retain the marks in the courses that have been Passed and re-appear for the Final examinations of the courses that have been Failed.
 - **In the third case, only the Final examination may be re-taken. Internal assessment is fixed and cannot be repeated.**
- **Repeating a course is possible only in the matching semester of a future year.**

A word to the wise: Avoid ERs!

- Take Internal assessment very seriously as
 - it cannot be repeated and improved (unless you take the extreme step of beginning all over again), and
 - it may guide your preparation for the Final examination.
- Although Final examinations can be repeated within the span period, repeating courses along with the mandatory Part 2 Elective courses in Semesters III and IV may be difficult.
- Participation in the Placement programme requires you to meet **stiffer standards than merely passing Part 1. Look out for Placement Cell orientation.**
- Failure to complete the degree requirements in the first two years may mean that you lose your placement as the employer might insist on a completed degree.

Learning process

The learning process is not confined to the classroom and self-study at home or the library. The other venues are:

- Tutorials and discussing problems individually with faculty.
- Learn from each other by working in groups. So, begin to form a network for intellectual support and learning.
- The department has numerous seminars where scholars present their research. There is a weekly faculty seminar and one for research students.
- The department organises conferences and an annual Winter School. The conferences are a good place to learn about ongoing research in specific areas. The Winter School gives broad exposure to active fields of research through lectures by eminent experts from around the world.
- The Placement Cell organises talks by experts on 'real world' and policy issues. It also organises Workshops for preparing students for the modern workplace.

Institutions linked to the department

- The *Centre for Development Economics* organises seminars, workshops, conferences, and the Winter School.
- The *Indian Economic Review* is a department-run peer-reviewed journal, now published by Springer.
- The *Ratan Tata Library*. **Look out for its orientation.** Become its member and use it as a place to study, borrow books and journals, and use its online resources.
- The *Placement Cell*. **Look out for its orientation.**
 - Mainly run by student coordinators, with oversight by faculty trustees.
 - Separate fee structure and rules of membership.
 - **Students must fulfil mandated academic requirements in order to participate in Placement activities such as recruitment for internships and jobs.**

Student initiatives

- ShARE (Sharing Analysis on Regional Economies) is an organisation for students striving for better understanding of local socio-economic issues through presentations, conferences, and projects. It is present in more than 24 prestigious universities in 11 countries.
- Prayaas - DSE is a social service organisation that strives to serve humanity and to make a difference in the lives of the underprivileged in our society. Its activities over the past years include blood donation camps, collection of old clothes, and signature drives on appeals for social and environmental issues.
- EOSTRE is the students' magazine. It is an initiative to take economics beyond the classroom.

Statutory student-relevant bodies

- Economics Joint Student-Teacher Consultative Committee
- DSE Anti-ragging committee
- DSE Committee for Students from North-Eastern India
- Delhi University Sexual Harassment Complaints Committee

To do list

Watch the notice board for information on

- I-cards,
- library cards,
- computer lab cards,
- scholarship applications,
- library orientation
- Placement Cell orientation,
- tutorial group and computer lab allocations.

On being an adult

- Unless you are a prodigy of some sort, you must be in your early twenties. **So, you will be treated as adults and we expect you to behave as adults.**
- Do not expect spoon-feeding from faculty or other staff. Know and live up to your responsibilities.
- Treat others with respect, courtesy, and consideration.
- Respect deadlines. For academic and official work, hand in relevant material before the deadline so that it can be processed in an orderly way. Do not wait until the last moment and expect other people to bail you out by working overtime or to 'condone the delay'.
- We are constantly trying to improve our infrastructure in very challenging circumstances. So, please do not destroy the furniture and other infrastructure. These things are very, very, hard to put together.

Finally...

We wish you success in all your work!
Now, you are invited for Tea outside.