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Identified Competency Focus Areas and Selected Courses for National Exit Examination:

Program: Bachelor of Science Degree in Agricultural Economics

By: Beyan Ahmed (Haramaya University)

Kedir Jemal PhD (Haramaya University)

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Courses and Competencies Iu

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Courses and Competencies Identified for Exit Exam 2015 (First Draft)

1. Introduction

Agricultural Economics is critical in enhancing agricultural development through effective mobilization of the nation's potential resources. The productivity of the peasant sub-sector must be improved in tandem with the development of agricultural enterprises, inter-sectoral linkages must be strengthened, and the country's economic development must be ensured through effective agricultural economic resources management.

The current poverty reduction effort and promotion of sustainable development in Ethiopia necessitate competent and committed Agricultural Economics professionals who meet the labour demand requirements. In response to this demand, universities developed a curriculum to contribute to the country's socio-economic development. To meet the needs of the labor market, a task-oriented, student-centered, and competency-based curriculum is desperately needed. To that end, according to Ministry of Education directives, the three-year undergraduate program will be extended to four years beginning with the 2020/21 academic year. A nationally standardized curriculum for Agricultural Economics was developed in 2021. Graduating students must acquire these competencies and, finally, be evaluated with the exit exam at the end of the fourth year. To assess students, main competencies are revised by focusing on the 15 major courses of the program. Therefore, major courses need to be selected based on the revised graduate and professional profile of competences for the assessment purpose.

The Ministry of Education intends to launch a comprehensive exit exam for undergraduate programs across the country in the 2022/2023 academic year. The exit exam's objectives are to assess students based on key competencies learned during their time at their universities, which improves educational quality. Thus, major courses drawn from the key competencies are required to assess students based on the revised competencies, allowing students to focus on those selected courses and teachers to formulate exam questions to achieve those competencies and learning outcomes. As a result, the exit exam for the Department of Agricultural Economics will be based on the guidelines identified in the revised curriculum, which is presented below.

1.1 Objectives of the Exit Examination

The national Agricultural Economics exit exam shall have the following objectives

- To produce skilled and competent manpower to national and international market

- Assessing students' educational achievement in major areas of Agricultural Economics
- Ensuring whether the graduation profile of Agricultural Economics curriculum have achieved at least common standards of knowledge and practical skills
- Improving public trust and confidence in Agricultural Economics activities of professionals
- Facilitating the efforts of students to revise the core learning outcomes of the courses covered by the exit examination
- Ensuring all graduates from Higher Education Institutions satisfy the requirements of the labor market and employability through the national wide implementation of competency-based exit exam
- Creating competitive spirit among Agricultural Economics departments in Ethiopia with the vies to encouraging them to give due attention to the national standards

1.2 Significance of the Document

It is important to set competency areas of the subject matter (program) in order to measure the how much graduates are acquired with skills, knowledge and attitudes. The following shows us the significance or setting competencies and identifying courses of the program;

- To set competencies that helps to assess the basic skills, knowledge and attitude of graduating students;
- To systematically identify the core courses which will be included the exit exam;

2. Expected Profiles of Graduates

In general, the intended graduate of Agricultural Economics is expected to develop economic information on farm production methods and technologies; the structure and efficiency of the agricultural system; production linkages with processing, distribution, and final consumer demand; agricultural trade and policy to assist farmers, agribusiness, and consumers in decision-making; and to prepare dynamic careers in business. The curriculum combines economics and agricultural fundamentals with insights into the dynamic social, technological, and environmental forces that shape production and marketing decisions. Thus, the program aims to produce qualified professionals who are knowledgeable, skilled and capable to work with appropriate and desired attitude. The Agricultural Economics graduates are expected to involve in different tasks

in the Agricultural and related sectors which demand their expertise. The graduate/ professional profile of Agricultural Economics includes the ability to:

- ✓ Design, implement and evaluate agricultural development programs and projects;
- ✓ Enhance sustainable agricultural development through effective and efficient mobilization and utilization of the scarce resources;
- ✓ Undertake feasibility studies to advise investors, financial institutions, agriculture and allied sectors;
- ✓ Undertake research and advise policy makers;
- ✓ Develop plans and strategies to enhance agricultural development;
- ✓ Advocate commercial agriculture, sustainable farming system and rural institutions for the sustainable development of the country.
- ✓ Promote national and international agricultural trade;
- ✓ Train and advise small scale farmers and agricultural enterprises; and
- ✓ Teach at HEIs and technical and vocational training institutions.

3. Competencies and Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of the training, the graduates are expected to gain the following **competence:-**

3.1. Knowledge

- ✓ Participate in design, implementation and evaluation of agricultural development projects;
- ✓ Apply effective and efficient resource utilization theories and practices for sustainable agricultural development;
- ✓ Involve in feasibility studies and advise investors, financial institutions, agriculture and allied sectors;
- ✓ Assist researchers and policy makers in agricultural production and productivity; marketing and sustainable use of natural resource and environment;
- ✓ Train and advise small scale farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs;
- ✓ Serve as planners in agricultural offices;
- ✓ Manage small scale farms and agricultural enterprises;

- ✓ Work as agricultural expert team leader, market expert, bank manager, policy maker and loan officer; and
- ✓ Assist teaching at higher institutions, and technical and vocational training institutions.
- ✓ Formulate and advocate climate change and agricultural development policies and strategies

3.2. Skill

- ✓ Use conceptual skill in understanding the complex interrelationship between agriculture sector and with the other economic sectors.
- ✓ Use marketing intelligence skills in acquiring, analysing and disseminating agricultural development and marketing information.
- ✓ Practice analytical skills of research methodology, economic models and software's in the efficient resource utilization, agricultural development, marketing and business research and innovation activities.

3.3. Attitude

- ✓ Perceive the importance of agricultural development for economic growth of a country.
- ✓ Appreciate agricultural development in social, economic, environmental, cultural and political context.
- ✓ Develop sense of enthusiasm to work with farmers, traders, bankers and managers in agricultural economics areas.
- ✓ Appreciate the agricultural profession and to be dedicated agricultural economics who love his profession.

4. Themes and courses to be included in the exit exam

S.no	Themes	Lists of selected courses	Cr.hrs	Remarks
1	Economics	Microeconomics I	3	
		Microeconomics II	3	
		Macroeconomics I	3	
		Macroeconomic II	3	
		Development Economics	3	
		Natural Resource and	3	

		Environmental Economics		
2	Research	Econometrics	4	
		Research Methods in Agricultural Economics	3	
		Operational Research	3	
3	Marketing	International Agricultural Trade	3	
		Agricultural Marketing	3	
4	Agriculture and policy	Agricultural Project Planning and Analysis	3	
		Farming Systems and Livelihood Analysis	3	
		Farm management	3	

5. Conclusions

Graduates of the agricultural economics program should be able to demonstrate the expected competencies and learning outcomes. Valid and reliable assessment in the form of a comprehensive exit exam is critical to determine whether graduates achieve the competencies and learning outcomes set in the curriculum. The MoE initiated the exit exam in order to have a standardized exit exam across higher education institutions. 14 major courses from the department were chosen for the nationally prepared exit exam based on the designed competencies and learning outcomes. As a result, the national exit exam for the agricultural economics program will be developed based on the identified competencies and learning outcomes that will be assessed from the selected major courses, ensuring assessment quality. The core competencies and learning outcomes will be subjected to revisions and including modification and adding of courses by considering emerging issues of the department.

Appendix

Lists of the validators

No.	Name of the validators	University
1.	Abdulkarim Yahiya Awol	Samara
2.	Umer Abdinasir Umer	Jigjiga
3.	Mekonnen Aklilu Tesfaye	Debere Berhan
4.	Astewel Takel Dessie	Bahir Dar
5.	Muhammed Shako Hiko	Oda Bultum
6.	Ibrahim Aliyi Abawaji	Jimma
7.	Bacha Gebissa	Wollega
8.	Mebiratu Dangia	Gambella

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