Report to Provost Mark Searle:

Allegations of Unethical Conduct in the

Department of Economics

W. P. Carey College of Business

From

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May 24, 2019

I.

On April 18, 2019, Brian Goegan, a clinical assistant professor in the Economics Department at the W. P. Carey School of Business, Arizona State University, sent an email to all students in the department. See Exhibit 1. The email stated that the Economics Department "has been enforcing two policies I believe to be unethical, and I feel obligated to disclose them to you." Professor Goegan alleged first that, "[i]n order to convince Cengage[1] to give the Provost a large monetary grant, the department agreed to require all ECN 211 and 212 students[2] to use MindTap – a Cengage product." The policy, he said, required students to pay to turn in their homework although free services such as Blackboard and Canvas were available. "Students," he wrote, "are being saddled with unnecessary costs so the Provost can fund a pet project."[3]

Professor Goegan then alleged that a second policy was put in place "to ensure that the Provost's project[4] was made to look good . . . ." The second policy, he said, required instructors in ECN 211, 212 and 221 to "prevent at least 30% of students from passing the class." The instructors were told to enforce that policy, he continued, "to set up a baseline against which the Provost's project could be compared . . . setting up students to fail so it could seem like the Provost swooped in and fixed a problem that doesn't exist."

ASU Provost Mark Searle responded on April 18, stating that ASU had found no factual evidence to support the claims "that students are required to pay for use of the platform to turn in homework, that Cengage gave ASU a grant for using the program, that a requirement exists to prevent at least 30 percent of students from passing the class, and that a professor was dismissed after expressing his disapproval of the platform." Exhibit 2. The Provost also stated that the economics courses using MindTap were optional and that students could take the same courses using traditional university grading/textbook platforms.

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[1] Cengage Learning provides print and digital textbooks and related technology and educational materials to colleges and universities, as well as other entities.

[2] ECN 211 and 212 are the basic or foundational courses required of all students majoring in economics and selected by many other students as well. The courses enroll approximately 13,000 students each semester.

[3] Professor Goegan later made other, related allegations of unethical behavior related to Cengage. I discuss those allegations in Section III.

[4] This reference is to a project designed to develop adaptive learning courses for a number of foundational, or basic courses in several departments. See Section III.

In a second, more detailed rebuttal to the claims and to some additional allegations by Professor Goegan (Exhibit 3), the Provost described the department's reasons for focusing on Economics 211 and 212 and for choosing a uniform text for those courses. Exhibit 4. He recognized, as Professor Goegan had stated, that all students in Economics 211 and 212 classes must use a common text (the Mankiw text[5]) and MindTap, a learning platform that includes interactive features. He explained the discounted fee that students pay for the bundle of the common textbook and MindTap. He described the adaptive learning approach being developed at ASU and stated that the research for that program has been funded by the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. See Exhibits 5 and 6.

On April 23, 2019, the Undergraduate Student Government Tempe adopted Senate Resolution 15, which noted Professor Goegan's allegations and called on the Office of the Provost to launch and cooperate with an external investigation. Exhibit 7. The students found it "concerning" if ASU received money from student fees and lined someone's pocket with that money, particularly if justifying that action required certain fail rates. (May 8, 2019 interview with student representatives.) Because the students did not know whether Professor Goegan's allegations were accurate, they asked for an independent investigation.

On April 29, 2019, ASU retained me to conduct the requested independent review, covering the period from January 1, 2014, to the present and considering the following information:

1. The terms of any contracts between Arizona State University and any provider of adaptive courseware.
2. The terms and amounts of any grants or donations received by Arizona State University from Cengage for any purpose.
3. The terms and amounts of any grants or donations received by Arizona State University from any entity for the development of adaptive learning courses in any subject, including Economics.
4. Any payments received by Arizona State University from Cengage, including the date, amount, recipient, and purpose.
5. Any payments made by Arizona State University to Cengage, including the date, amount, recipient, and purpose.
6. A comparison of the costs of required materials (text, courseware, and/or course fees) between adaptive and traditional sections of ECN 211 and 212.

[5] N. Gregory Mankiw, *Principles of Economics* (8th Ed.).

7. A comparison of the actual distribution of grades in ECN and 211 and 212 between adaptive and traditional sections of the course.

In response to that request, I have examined contracts related to adaptive courseware between Arizona State University and a number of providers, including Cengage, CogBooks, Smart Sparrow and McGraw-Hill. The provisions of those contracts related to the issues raised by Professor Goegan are discussed below.

I have reviewed payments to and from Cengage and other providers under their contracts with Arizona State University, as well as grade distributions in the economics department and in other departments, comparing adaptive and traditional courses.

I interviewed, either in person or by telephone, Provost Mark Searle; Vice-Provost Arthur Blakemore; Amy Hillman, Dean of the W. P. Carey College of Business; Economics Department Chair Gustavo Ventura; Assistant Department Chair Jose Mendez; Professor Brian Goegan, and those fellow clinical professors to whom either Professor Goegan or Chair Ventura suggested I speak, including Professors Kelvin Wong, Kacey Douglas, William Foster, Joana Girante, Stefan Ruediger, and Daniel Marburger. In addition, I spoke with four members of student government and with a student who worked with Professor Goegan in his role as faculty advisor to the Economics Club, a student organization.

I received prompt and thorough responses to requests for documents and information from the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Executive Vice President, Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer, the Office of Knowledge Enterprise Development, the W. P. Carey School of Business, the Department of Economics, and the ASU Foundation.

## II.

In his initial email, Professor Goegan raised two issues, which are discussed in this section. Later correspondence raised other related issues, which are discussed in Section III.

### A.

The first question is whether the Economics Department or Vice-Provost Blakemore required all students to use Cengage products for the ECN 211 and 212 classes in return for a large monetary grant from Cengage. This alleged *quid pro quo* arrangement, Professor Goegan asserts, was unethical.

I found no evidence that Cengage ever offered or gave ASU a large monetary grant. To test the assertion, I reviewed all payments received from Cengage, either by ASU or by the ASU Foundation, which might have been the recipient of such a grant.

Exhibit 8 sets out all payments made to ASU by Cengage since 2014. Most of the payments, which total less than $5,500.00, are royalty payments to the School of International Letters & Culture or to the Center for Medieval & Renaissance Studies. Exhibit 9 summarizes all payments made to the ASU Foundation by Cengage since 2014. Those contributions include two $5,000.00 payments to appear as a sponsor at conferences. Four individuals who identified Cengage as their employer also made contributions that total less than $450.00.

I also reviewed contracts entered between ASU and Cengage and related to the economics and psychology departments, both of which used Cengage materials in their development of adaptive learning courses. See Exhibits 10 (the contract or economics contract) and 11 (the psychology contract). (The contracts are discussed in detail in Section III.B.1 and 2 below.) None of these contracts require or refer to any grant from Cengage to ASU.

In addition, none of the persons with whom I spoke who would have been involved in a contract calling for such a grant knew of any such agreement. May 13, 2019 interviews with Provost Mark Searle (Searle interview) and Dean Amy Hillman (Hillman interview); May 7 and 19 interviews with Vice-Provost Arthur Blakemore (Blackmore interviews). Finally, Cengage denied providing any grant in return for the selection of its textbook and learning platform. Exhibit 12.

Professor Goegan provided no evidence to the contrary. He recalls being told that Cengage would provide a grant but does not recall who provided that information. In addition, he explains that he raised his concerns about the *quid pro quo* agreement on several occasions in department meetings, and no one ever said his view was mistaken. May 9, 2019 interview with Brian Goegan (Goegan interview). I do not doubt that Professor Goegan believed that Cengage had promised a grant in return for the agreement of the Economics Department to require use of Cengage products, but no evidence exists of such an agreement, and considerable evidence exists to disprove the statement.

I conclude that ASU did not agree to use Cengage products in return for a large grant to the university.

B.

The second question is whether instructors in ECN 211, 212 and 221 classes were directed to prevent at least 30 percent of students from passing a class and whether that instruction was designed to set up students to fail so that the Provost's adaptive learning project would be made to look good when compared with the baseline of grades.

To test this assertion, I examined correspondence and presentations made within the Economics Department. Because Professor Goegan asserts that the policy was expressly announced at a clinical faculty meeting in Fall 2018, I spoke with those professors identified by Professor Goegan as being present and able to provide information. I also spoke with Assistant Department Chair Jose Mendez, who presided over the meeting. I spoke with Provost Mark Searle, Vice-Provost Arthur Blakemore, Dean Amy Hillman, and Economics Chair Gustavo Ventura to inquire whether they had instituted or supported that policy. Finally, I reviewed grade distributions for those professors who taught ECN 211, 212 and 221 classes during the 2014-2018 period.

Professor Goegan asserts that the clinical instructors were told to conform to the Economic Department's historic distribution[6] because any other distribution would obscure the information needed to measure the effectiveness of the adaptive learning Principles Project. He states that the instructors were specifically instructed that they should award 10 percent D and 10 percent E failing grades that, when coupled with 10 percent of students withdrawing from the course and receiving a W, would reach the required 30 percent. (Goegan interview.)

None of the instructors to whom I spoke agreed with Professor Goegan. They recalled that Professor Mendez discussed the historic grade distribution and said that they should avoid large deviations at either end of the scale. None of them regarded the discussion as an instruction to adhere to a grade distribution that would require 30 percent of the students to fail to complete the course successfully. (Interviews with Professors Wong, Douglas, Foster, Girante, Ruediger, and Marburger.) None had ever been told that they were required to fail 30 percent of the students in a class. Several professors commented that requiring a 30 percent failure rate would be completely contrary to the emphasis in the department on

[6] See Exhibit 13.

retention and adaptive learning, which is designed to improve student performance.[7]

Those persons who would have been involved in establishing such a requirement stated unequivocally that no such policy exists. Dean Hillman, with whom any required grade distribution would have been discussed, said she has never heard such a conversation in her time at ASU, which began in 2001. (Hillman interview.) Provost Mark Searle described the assertion as "ludicrous." (Searle interview.) Professor Mendez, who allegedly made the comment, said he never would have proposed such a practice. (Mendez interview.) And Chairman Ventura commented that imposing such a requirement would be entirely inconsistent with the department's goal of reaching a student retention rate of 91 percent. (Ventura interview.)

The only evidence presented by Professor Goegan of a required grade distribution is his own statement. Given the consistent memory of others who attended the Fall 2018 meeting, which differs from the memory of Professor Goegan, the lack of any written policy for something as basic as a required grade distribution, and the statements of those who would have been responsible for adopting such a policy, I conclude that the Economics Department did not establish, and Professor Mendez did not direct, a required grade distribution under which instructors were mandated to fail 30 percent of the students.[8]

III.

Professor Goegan also called into question other practices of the Economics Department, describing them as inappropriate if not unethical. He raised questions about the department's decision to require all ECN 211 and 212 students to use a common textbook; about the decision to require all students to use MindTap; and about ASU's retention of a portion of the student fee that covered the purchase of the Mankiw eTextbook and MindTap. These issues are related to one another and to ASU's move to adaptive learning.

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[7] At a faculty meeting that followed the meeting at which grade distribution was discussed, Professor Foster asked all in the room whether any had been asked to change their grade distribution, and all said they had not. (Foster interview.)

[8] It is accurate that the historic distribution of grades in ECN 211 and 212 reflects a combined failure rates (D and E) of approximately 15 percent and a withdrawal rate of approximately 12 percent. See Exhibit 13. Improving those rates is part of the reason these courses have been slated for adaptive learning. See Section III. It is also true that Professor Mendez had counseled Professor Goegan that his grades were considerably higher than the department distribution. See Exhibit 14. That fact may explain Professor Goegan's reaction to the discussion of grade distribution.

A.

1.

Adaptive learning is a type of digital learning that "involves using software to guide students along their own particular learning pathways, with assistance often provided by intelligent tutoring software, which uses artificial intelligence to deliver customized responses." *Making Digital Learning Work: Success Strategies from Six Leading Universities and Community Colleges*, The Boston Consulting Group (March 2018) at 11. The approach allows students a personalized experience with feedback and additional content that responds to a particular student's needs. In adaptive learning courses, students typically work on-line to read the textbook and do exercises involving manipulation, applications, collaborations, and communication. That work largely replaces the lecture, leaving students and their professor free to apply the knowledge gained during class periods. The issues identified by Professor Goegan relate to the Economic Department's decision to use the Mankiw eTextbook and MindTap, a tutoring software, in their non-adaptive classes and to the Department's use of a student class fee to cover the cost of the textbook and software in the adaptive sections.

2.

In approximately 2011, when Arthur Blakemore was serving as both Chair of the Department of Economics and as Vice-Provost, the Department began its move to developing adaptive learning.[9] ASU had experienced considerable success in using adaptive learning for a non-credit course designated Developmental Mathematics, designed to assist students who were underprepared for college level mathematics. Eventually, ASU was able to eliminate the basic non-credit course and mainstream underprepared students into College Algebra (MAT 117), using adaptive learning.

The university's success in using adaptive learning for mathematics convinced then-Provost Elizabeth Capaldi-Phillips and Vice-Provost Blakemore to consider using the adaptive learning approach in other lower-level courses in which the DEW[10] rate was high. The goals of developing and using adaptive learning courses were to aid the students in developing higher learning skills and, in the process, mastering the standard course content, which should result in higher retention and graduation rates. The additional courses identified for adaptive

[9] Much of the information in this section came from Vice-Provost Arthur Blakemore, in correspondence and an interview on May 9, 2019.

[10] D and E (ASU's replacement of a F grade) are failing grades; W refers to students who withdraw from a course for any reason.

learning, all large introductory courses with relatively low pass rates, included courses in biology (BIO 100, in which ASU partnered with Cogbooks), psychology (PSY 101, in which ASU partnered with Cengage), and economics (ECN 211 and 212). Funding from grants supported that expansion. See Exhibits 5 and 6.

The results have been promising. In the math course, students' success rate, measured by attaining an A, B, or C, improved from 62 percent in 2015, the last year the course was taught traditionally, to 79 percent in 2018. Exhibit 15. The biology course, which had been steadily losing enrollment, has regained all losses, and the success rate increased from 80 percent in 2014 to 91 percent in 2016. Exhibit 16. Perhaps equally important, the withdrawal rate fell from 10 percent in 2014 to 5.5 percent in 2016. When ASU controlled for instructor, comparing the students' success rate in traditional lecture classes with the success rate in adaptive learning classes taught by the same biology instructor, it found substantial increases in success rate, even holding the instructor constant. Exhibit 17. The success rates in psychology similarly increased when holding constant for instructor. Exhibit 18.

B.

1.

In 2011, the tenured economics faculty voted, with almost no dissent, to move to adaptive learning for teaching the fundamental Principles of Economics classes ECN 211 and 212 (referred to as the Principles Project). (Blakemore interview.) Prior to that vote, the Undergraduate Committee, a committee of tenured faculty, had evaluated and recommended the move. (Mendez interview.) The department began its work by collaborating with Pearson and Knewton, a relationship that had worked successfully with the mathematics courses. After several years of limited progress, Vice-Provost Blakemore concluded that Pearson could not provide the courseware required for the Principles Project and approached Cengage. The reason for doing so was that Cengage was one of a very few providers that could offer a wealth of textbook content and supplemental add-ons, including MindTap, and was therefore one of a few providers appropriate for adaptive learning courses. (Blakemore interview.) On January 7, 2016, ASU signed a contract with Cengage. See Exhibit 10.

Under the terms of the contract, Cengage and ASU agreed to work together to build and distribute courses for Microeconomics (ECN 211) and Macroeconomics (ECN 212) (the Courses). Under Article I, sections 1.1 and 1.2, Cengage and ASU granted each other a license to incorporate the content provided by the other into the Courses and to distribute the Courses as provided in the contract. Article III provides that, in consideration of the License granted, the revenue from the distribution of the Courses was to be shared as set out in Exhibit B of the Contract.

Under Exhibit B, each ASU student end-user who accessed either of the Courses would pay $100.00 during a one-year pilot project. During that year, ASU retained $21.00 of the $100.00 fee. Under the original contract terms, after the one-year pilot, ASU would retain $1.00 of the $100.00 fee. Students would access the Courses through a platform provided by Cengage. Access depended upon obtaining an instant access code from ASU, from the ASU bookstore, or from the Cengage website. Exhibit 10, Exhibit B.2.

If the Courses were provided to non-ASU users, ASU would receive a defined revenue share, ranging from two percent to five percent, depending on the amount of sales. Exhibit 10, Exhibit B.4.[11]

2.

The terms of the economics contract closely track those of a March 20, 2015 contract between Cengage and ASU that governs the development and distribution of an active adaptive learning course, Psychology 101, also powered by MindTap. Exhibit 11. Each requires the student end-users to pay a fee.[12] The revenue sharing provisions of both contracts allow ASU to retain a higher percentage of the student fee during a one-year pilot period. In the psychology contract, ASU retained first $25.00 and then $5.00 of the $100.00 user fee, with the shared revenue being in consideration of the licensing agreement. The shared revenue if the psychology course were distributed to non-ASU users is similar to that in the economics contract. See Exhibit 11, Exhibit B.

Contracts with other courseware providers include similar provisions. ASU had entered a similar contract with CogBooks, another provider of course content, on June 16, 2015. Exhibit 20. In that contract, Cogbooks agreed to develop courseware that would be distributed on CogBooks' proprietary technology platform for Biology and United States History courses. Each party received a license to incorporate the content of the other, and CogBooks granted ASU a

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[11] Exhibit B of the economics contract refers to the development of the MindTap Adaptive Psychology Platform at ASU. This language appears to have been carried over from an earlier Cengage contract. See Exhibits 10, 11. Exhibit A to the economics contract makes it clear that the contract governs the production and distribution of the economics courses.

[12] Assessing course fees has been a fairly common practice at ASU. See Exhibit 19 for a list of classes within the W. P. Carey School of Business that assessed a student fee from 2014 to the present. Any issue involving course fees apparently will be resolved by changes ASU is making in its tuition and fees structure, effective Fall 2019, including rolling most fees into the new structure. See https://students.asu.edu/yourtuition.

limited license to use its platform to convert the content into courseware. "In consideration of the licenses granted hereunder," the parties agreed to share revenue from distribution of the courseware. Exhibit 20, Article 3.2. After a pilot period, ASU received 5 percent of the gross revenues derived from sale of the course to ASU student end-users. Exhibit 20, Exhibit B. Cogbooks also paid ASU $149,732.60 for development of the courseware. See Article III.a.

On April 15, 2016, ASU contracted with McGraw-Hill (MHE), including an ALEKS user agreement, to provide content for algebra and pre-calculus courses, to be accessed through MHE's platform Solution. Exhibit 21. From fees collected from registered students, ASU paid MHE $100.00 per student, a fee that could be reduced to $35.00 per student. Exhibit 21, Exhibit D.

3.

The contracts above all reflect an agreement between ASU and the provider that both parties will provide content to develop the courseware and that each party retains intellectual property rights in the content it provides. The revenue sharing agreements are not unusual and acknowledge the contributions of each party. Disagreement about the use of course fees certainly exists (see footnote 12 above), but I see nothing unethical about the parties sharing revenue under the circumstances of these contracts.

ASU has retained a portion of the course/licensing fee, as provided by the contracts. See Exhibit 22. The fees retained have been earmarked for course design and instructional support. (Blakemore interview.)

C.

In 2014, Arthur Blakemore resigned as chair of the Economics Department and assumed fulltime duties as Vice-Provost. Gustavo Ventura, who became department chair, concluded that, given the very large number of students taking ECN 211 and 212 and the number of instructors teaching the courses, his paramount objective was to move to a common textbook to provide uniformity of student experience in all the class sections. (Ventura interview.) After communicating that decision to the clinical instructors, Assistant Department Chair Jose Mendes asked which textbook they would recommend. Following a series of email communications, the clinical faculty, at least those taking part in the discussion, concluded as of March 27, 2015, that the widely-used textbook *Principles of Economics* ($8^{th}$ edition), authored by N. Gregory Mankiw (the Mankiw book) was the preferred choice. Exhibit 23.

The discussion among the clinical instructors took place as the Vice-Provost considered options to replace Pearson for the economics adaptive learning project. As noted above, the Vice-Provost's search ended with the selection of Cengage and the subsequent contract finalized in January 2016. Because the Mankiw book is the "flagship" economics textbook published by Cengage, the choice of common textbook was essentially made when ASU contracted with Cengage. (Blakemore interview.) Perhaps fortuitously, that fact coincided with the choice of the clinical instructors and with that of Department Chair Ventura, for whom the Mankiw book was the first choice. (Ventura interview.) In any event, with no stated opposition at the time, the Mankiw text was designated the common textbook for use in ECN 211 and 212.

1.

The Economics Department required all instructors to use the Mankiw e-textbook for ECN 211 and 212 in 2016. Although a few instructors, including Professor Goegan, were allowed not to use MindTap in 2016, all instructors were required to use the eText+MindTap combination in 2017. (Mendez Interview.) Vice-Provost Blakemore had negotiated a reduced "bundle" price for ASU student end-users. The bundle included both MindTap and the Mankiw eText.[13]

Although Professor Goegan did not disagree with the choice of the Mankiw book as the common textbook or with the use of MindTap, he did raise concerns about the requirement that the students purchase the eText and MindTap as a bundle. Apparently as a result of his belief that ASU had contracted with Cengage in return for a large grant, Professor Goegan regarded the use of MindTap as an illegal bribe. (Goegan interview.) He argued that, if MindTap were not required, students could purchase a used hard copy of the text or share the textbook with another student. In addition, he argued, all the features available on MindTap can be duplicated on Blackboard or Canvas, two services available to students for no charge. His objection, he explained, is that the students cannot avoid paying the fee. (Goegan interview.) He is joined in his view by another clinical instructor, Professor William Foster, who agrees that requiring students to purchase both the eText and MindTap is unethical, as each professor should be able to decide individually whether to use these resources. (Foster interview.)

[13] The discounted price is $93.35 before tax, which is considerably less than the $133.00 price posted at that time on the Cengage website. Cengage has put in place a new subscription rate for next year, which allows a student access to all Cengage products for $119.00 for four months. See https://www.cengage.com/unlimited/student-ISBN-calculator. Students in adaptive learning sections do not purchase this bundle. Instead, they pay a $100 course fee and receive access to the Mankiw eText, MindTap, and Learning Objects.

The view that requiring students to purchase a bundled book and platform raises ethical issues is not shared by most of those with whom I spoke. For those professors who regard MindTap as a positive teaching force, the issue is one of pedagogy, not ethics. For Vice-Provost Blakemore, the essential question is which approach best serves students. Using MindTap with the eText allows students immediate feedback and the ability to identify any weaknesses. (Blakemore interview.) Chair Ventura emphasized that, with enrollment in these classes involving a very large group of students, consistency in approach is essential. He observed that MindTap is particularly useful for disadvantaged students and students with less quantitative background. (Ventura interview.)

A number of the instructors using MindTap emphasized that it includes features that cannot be duplicated on Blackboard or Canvas, including the ability of the program to identify students' weaknesses and then loop back to correct them with text and videos (Marburger interview, Ruediger interview, Douglas interview); the quality of the text, data and upgrades, coupled with the ability to build and manipulate graphs and the Advanced Test Practice tool, which allows students to create their own exercises and test their knowledge (Girante interview, Ruediger interview); the fact that MindTap frees instructors from spending time grading homework and the fact that it provides immediate feedback with corrective content (Wong interview). Professor Girante echoed the Vice-Provost's view that the goal is to define and adopt the best way of teaching. In her opinion, one could teach the Courses without MindTap, but doing so would deprive the students of unique and useful resources. (Girante interview.) Although Professor Goegan referred to MindTap as a vehicle for students to turn in homework, it clearly provides many additional features.

Professor Goegan relies upon a statement from the American Association of University Professors to support his argument that ethical issues arise from requiring eText and MindTap. See *Statement on the Freedom to Teach*, American Association of University Professors, published November 7, 2013. That statement, however, while it defines the freedom to teach as "including the right of the faculty to select the materials, determine the approach to the subject, [and] make the assignments," expressly recognizes that, in a multisection course taught by several faculty members, shared responsibility "trumps the freedom of an individual faculty member to assign a textbook that he or she alone considers satisfactory." While university faculty no doubt can and do disagree about when and to what degree an individual can govern the choice of teaching materials, the issue seems one of teaching approach rather than one of ethics or morality.[14]

2.

As a result of the delays described above, fewer adaptive learning classes have been taught in the Economics Department than in other departments moving to adaptive learning. The success rates, by instructor, with the adaptive learning class results shown in the shaded areas, are as follows:

**PRINCIPLES OF ECONOMICS SUCCESS RATES**

| | Fall 18 | Sp 18 | Fall 17 | Sp 17 | Fall 16 | Sp 16 | Fall 15 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ECN 211** | | | | | | | |
| **F1-E211** | 76% | 69% | 75% | 61% | | | |
| **F2-E211** | 73% | 76% | 78% | 74% | | | |
| **ECN 212** | | | | | | | |
| **F1-E212** | 85% | 67% | 79% | n/a | 69% | n/a | 67% |
| **F2-E212** | 74% | 68% | 75% | | | | |

Because the method of teaching adaptive courses is so different from the teaching method used in traditional lecture courses, the benefits of the adaptive learning method may not be immediately evident. (Blakemore interview.) Based upon ASU's experience in other departments, Vice-Provost Blakemore anticipates continued improvement in success rates in the adaptive learning economics courses and emphasized that continuous monitoring is essential.

[14] Professor Goegan also objected to being required to place materials on MindTap that he had developed and previously provided on Blackboard. Doing so, he asserts, requires students to pay to access materials previously provided free. Because all students already must be able to access MindTap, however, no additional payment is required.

IV.

I found no evidence to support the allegation that ASU agreed to use Cengage products for developing and distributing the adaptive learning course for economics in exchange for a large grant from Cengage and no evidence that Cengage has proposed or made such a grant.

I found no evidence, other than the statements of Professor Goegan that were contradicted by other clinical professors, to support the allegation that economics professors were directed to fail 30 percent of the students in Economics 211 and 212.

I confirmed that students in ECN 211 and 212 are required to pay to access MindTap and the Mankiw eText. Students in adaptive learning sections obtain access by paying a $100.00 course fee; students in non-adaptive learning sections purchase access from Cengage at a discounted rate made available to ASU student end-users. The general view among professors who teach ECN 211 and 212 is that the Cengage products are useful and that the features of MindTap cannot be duplicated by using Blackboard or Canvas. Although Professor Goegan and other educators may disagree about the requiring the use of these products, I found no ethical issue.

I also confirmed that ASU retains a portion of the student fee assessed in economics and other courses, consistent with the terms of governing contracts and made in recognition of ASU's contribution to course content and development.

I did not address pedagogical disagreements, except as related to the issues raised by Professor Goegan, and did not address personnel issues.