The Macroeconomic Management and Policy Division of EDI (EDIMP) conducted a core course on *New Issues in Economic Growth* in Washington, D.C. from June 8-12, 1998. The five-day course was aimed at strengthening participants’ analytical and research skills in the field of economic growth. The course was designed to provide both a theoretical framework and empirical studies of the determinants of economic growth, as well as the understanding of policy issues for achieving equitable and sustainable growth. Fifty-one participants attended this course, consisting of selected participants from partner institutions in developing countries and World Bank economists.

The course was evaluated by the EDI Evaluation Unit (EDIES) using an end-of-course questionnaire. The questionnaire was completed by thirty-eight respondents, 74.5 percent of the total number of participants. There were two sections in the questionnaire. The first section asked respondents to rate the extent to which the course met performance objectives. The second section asked the level of respondents’ knowledge about topics covered in the course, before and after completing the course, based on self-assessment. A 5-point Likert type scale that ranged from 1 = minimum to 5 = maximum was used to rate respondents rating for each question in each section. Following are some of the major evaluation findings.

- All course performance ratings, including course content, organization and delivery, exceeded 3.0 on a 5-point scale. Respondents’ ratings were particularly high on the indicators measuring the adequacy of administrative assistance and the extent to which the course was a worthwhile experience. The mean scores on these two indicators were both 4.35 out of 5.0.

- Of all indicators on the relevancy of the course, respondents indicated that the course was most relevant in meeting their personal learning needs. The mean score was 4.11 out of 5.0. This result seems to reflect the richness of the course presenters. Sixteen speakers from the World Bank and universities were invited to discuss various subjects of the course. Respondents felt that the presentations were very constructive, giving them a mean score of 4.16.

- Results indicated respondents’ high approval ratings of course trainers. Ninety-five percent of respondents felt strongly that the trainers encouraged participants to engage in the discussions, rating 4 or 5 on this indicator. Ninety-two percent also indicated that the trainers were successful in communicating their messages well. The two mean scores for trainers were 4.38 and 4.17, respectively, out of 5.0.

- Indicators measuring the extent to which the course helped participants better assess various policy alternatives had relatively lower ratings, around the mid-3.0 in mean scores. One question asked respondents whether the course provided policy alternatives that were not previously considered. Respondents’ rating on this indicator was 3.43 out of 5.0, the lowest mean score among all course performance indicators. This suggests that respondents were generally familiar
with the policies presented in the course before entering the course.

- Respondents' pre/post self-assessment of their knowledge indicated positive increases in the level of their understanding of all key issues presented in the course. Pre-course mean scores of all respondents were in the 2.6-3.2 range. Respondents ratings of their knowledge after the course rose to the 3.2-4.1 range.

- Respondents from the World Bank (N=13) indicated that they had a fair knowledge of issues such as problems in alternative development strategies and incentives to promote growth-creating policies before the course. The pre-course mean scores on these two topics were 3.69 and 3.62 out of 5.0. Results showed that they felt more confident about these issues after the course, increasing mean scores to 4.23 and 4.0, respectively. The Bank respondents' largest gain was on the topic of empirical evidence on incentives, convergence and growth. The pre-course rating of 3.15 rose to 4.15 after the course.

- Non-Bank respondents (N=18) had relatively low pre-course knowledge ratings on all course topics. Pre-course mean scores ranged from the mid- to high 2.0 out of 5.0. They indicated that they had better understanding of all issues after the course. Knowledge gains were particularly large for this group on issues such as the problems in alternative development strategies and the relationship between growth, inequality and poverty. Mean scores on these two issues increased from 2.76 to 3.72, and from 2.59 to 3.83, respectively.

- Pre/post knowledge assessment serves as an indicator of how much respondents felt they knew about a topic upon entering the course and how much they felt they learned at the end of the course. It should be noted that the results do not measure how much they actually learned. The present assessment consisted of questions about respondents' knowledge of key conceptual issues. In future courses, it may be useful to include indicators measuring changes in participants' analytical and research skills before and after the course. Obtaining data on participants who have taken optional technical lab classes also may be useful for this purpose.