

Assessment Cycle
Academic Year 2016-2017

Business Affairs

Division or Department: N/A

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Northwestern Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. *Northwestern State University prepares its students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.*

Business Affairs provides an array of responsive financial support services to students, faculty and staff including accounting, purchasing, grants, contracts, accounts payable and reporting. These services contribute to the enhancement and delivery of the University's primary mission of being a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research and service thereby preparing our students to become productive members of society, promoting economic development, and improving the quality of life in our region.

Purpose: Business Affairs is dedicated to providing personal, prompt and efficient service to all students and campus offices, support for the University's fiscal operations and accurate and timely financial reporting that is compliant with state and federal guidelines and regulations.

Methodology: The assessment process for Business Affairs' Department is as follows;

- (1) Data from administrative assessment tools is collected:
- (2) Data is analyzed by the Business Affairs' Department Chair and Coordinator to determine if the Department has met measurable outcomes;
- (3) Results of assessment tools are discussed with the Department's staff and staff is asked for input on improving future outcomes;
- (4) The Department Chair, Coordinator and Committee Members will propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, make appropriate changes to improve future outcomes.

Service Outcome Measures:

SO 1. Provide increased online student bill view and payment process options while reducing the University's paper footprint.

Service: Student Billing Services

Measure 1.1 (Direct – Usage)

The University will transition from paper to electronic bills for students in Spring 2017. This will provide students 24/7 access to current and historical billings plus payment history and payment processing from their computer and, in the future, their phone, through the MyNSU portal. For Spring 2017, we are targeting a 30% usage rate as the system transitions. Once the transition is complete, we expect usage will increase to our target of 100%. In the interim, our targets are 30% first year, 50% second year, 70% third year, 90% fourth year and 100% at the fifth year. The percentage usage of the online system is quantitatively tracked for future outcome measures adjustments if required.

Finding: Target met. The University's electronic bill system was activated in March 2017 for Spring Term 2017, and 43% of students billed viewed their electronic bill.

Analysis: For Spring 2017, 2,589 students with active account balances were billed electronically, and, of this population, 1,105 or 43% viewed their online electronic bills through the MyNSU portal.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: The University will begin actively marketing the electronic bill system to students through web announcements, MyNSU portal announcements, and summer Freshman Connection sessions.

Measure 1.2. (Direct – Usage)

With the University transitioning from paper to electronic bills for students in Spring 2017, the number of paper bills being processed and mailed, which currently averages 6,000 paper bills per month, will be reduced annually with the goal of 0 paper bills per month once the student population becomes accustomed to viewing the online system. This could take up to 5 years. The target is to decrease paper bills by 20% per year until 0% paper bills is reached. The number of paper bills generated will be quantitatively tracked for future outcome measures.

Finding: Target met. The University's electronic bill system was activated in March 2017 for Spring Term 2017, and 43% of students billed viewed their electronic bill.

Analysis: For 2016-2017, the University printed approximately 6,000 paper bills per month, which is the baseline for measurable outcome analysis. Beginning in March 2017 and in conjunction with printed bills, the University provided students with electronic bills through the MyNSU Portal. 2,589 students with active account balances were billed electronically, and, of this population, 1,105 or 43% viewed their online electronic bills through the MyNSU portal.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: Minimize paper bill usage by 20% per year until 0% paper bills is reached. The University will begin actively marketing the electronic bill system to students through web announcements, MyNSU portal announcements, and summer Freshman Connection sessions while also working with the Office of Information Technology Services to determine a way to send electronic bill statements to student/customers who will not access the student MyNSU portal such as high school dual enrollment students and faculty/staff. The University may continue to send paper bills to this student/customer population until this can be programmed.

SO 2. The Business Affairs' Department will complete all fiscal reporting and audit requirements accurately in compliance with state and federal guidelines and regulations.

Service: Fiscal Operations

Measure: 2.1. (Direct – Compliance)

Every other year the University is audited by the Louisiana Office of the Legislative Auditor for compliance in the accuracy of the University's financial records, reporting, and compliance with all state and federal guidelines and regulations. The outcome of this SOM will be the number of audit findings related to financial activity received by the University. The target is zero (0) audit findings related to the financial activity.

Finding: Target met. The University received zero (0) audit findings related to financial activity for fiscal years 2015-2016.

Analysis: The University received zero (0) audit findings related to financial activity for fiscal year 2015-2016 according to the Management Letter received in 2016-2017 from the Louisiana Office of the Legislative Auditor in 2015 and 2016.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: The Business Affairs Office will continue to closely monitor the University's financial records to ensure zero (0) audit findings related to financial activity for fiscal year 2016-2017.

SO 3. Adequate utilization, knowledge, and training of staff among each unit of the Business Affairs' Department to provide efficient and responsive service and action/conclusion to the student, parent, and campus inquiries and concerns.

Service: Student and Campus Support

Measure 3.1. (Indirect – Satisfaction / Attitude)

Business Affairs staff will be evaluated on its customer service through an annual Student Satisfaction Survey administered by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Human Resources (OIEHR). The target is to be at or above Level 5-Somewhat Satisfied and above the National Four-Year Publics Satisfaction Ratings per the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory.

Finding: Target met. For 2017, the University was above the Level 5-Somewhat Satisfied and the National Four-Year Publics Satisfaction Ratings per the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory.

Analysis: According to the 2017 annual Student Satisfaction Survey administered by OIEHR, the University received a 5.80 satisfaction rating for “Campus Staff are Caring and Helpful.” This rating was .55 above the National Four-Year Publics satisfaction rating of 5.25.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: The University will continue to provide high-quality customer care to students, parents, campus employees and customers through staff training and evaluation, streamlined processes, and continuous review of policies and procedures.

Measure 3.2 (Indirect – Satisfaction)

Satisfaction with billing policies and reasonableness will be evaluated on annual Student Satisfaction Survey administered by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Human Resources (OIEHR). The target is to be at or above Level 5-Somewhat Satisfied and above the National Four-Year Publics Satisfaction Ratings per the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory.

Finding: Target met. For 2017, the University was above the Level 5-Somewhat Satisfied and the National Four-Year Publics Satisfaction Ratings.

Analysis: According to the 2017 annual Student Satisfaction Survey administered by OIEHR, the University received a 5.53 satisfaction rating for “Billing Policies are Reasonable.” This rating was .65 above the National Four-Year Publics satisfaction rating of 4.88 per the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: The University will continue to provide reasonable, high-quality billing services to students. The University will begin actively marketing the electronic bill system to students through web announcements, MyNSU announcements, and summer Freshman Orientation sessions.

Comprehensive Summary of findings and decisions.

After reviewing and analyzing the measurable outcome findings for each listed service outcome in the Business Affairs Assessment Cycle, all targets were met for academic year 2016-2017. The Business Affairs Office will continue to evaluate processes and procedures for quality and efficiency while further pursuing each listed service outcome action to ensure another favorable target outcome in academic year 2017-2018.