

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Institutional Research

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Human Resources

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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.

The **Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Human Resources** is a responsive administrative service and support unit that provides University leaders with information to be used in strategic planning and evidence-based decision-making and human resource programs and services. The Office assesses, collects, analyzes, reports, and disseminates data on behalf of the University and supports all University units in assessment-based improvement efforts. Reporting of information is in accordance with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and federal and state regulations. The Office develops and delivers innovative human resource programs and services designed to support the mission of the University, including its core services and competencies such as staffing, employee relations, organizational and employee development, risk management, compensation and benefits, human resource information management, and regulatory compliance.

Methodology: The assessment process includes:

- (1) Data from assessment tools (direct & indirect and quantitative & qualitative) are collected and returned to the executive director;
- (2) The executive director will analyze the data to determine whether the applicable outcomes are met:
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the appropriate staff;
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with staff as required (show cause);
- (5) The executive director, in consultation with the staff and senior leadership, will determine propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, service changes.

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Institutional Research (OIR)

SO 1. Provide expertise and support for strategic planning, assessment, program design, and continuous improvement.

Measure 1.1

The OIR regularly interprets, validates, and manages student and program assessment data at predetermined intervals to facilitate organizational planning and program design. Data validation ensures compliance with federal and state reports such as Institutional Post-secondary Educational Data System (IPEDS), accreditation report requirements, and various Board of Regents reports to facilitate organizational planning and development.

Target: 100% compilation and dissemination of census data comparison and summary reports and document data validation reports at each census date.

Finding: Target Met. 10 of 10 data validations completed for 100% completion rate. Semester census comparison and summary reports compiled and disseminated for the University and 17 Academic Departments, for a 100% completion rate. 28 of 28 census processes and reports validated, compiled and disseminated timely and accurately for an overall success rate of 100%.

Analysis: All state and federal reports and inquiry responses were completed timely. All census validations processes, departmental and University comparisons and summaries completed. Processes are effective.

Decision/Recommendation: Consistently compile and disseminate census data comparison and summary reports each semester and document data validation reports at each census date.

Measure 1.2

The University consistently utilizes historical enrollment, retention, and completion data to analyze performance trends and develop forecasts to assist leadership with strategic and operational planning decisions. The OIR contributes data for the University Strategic Plan and University Operating Plan on an annual basis utilizing enrollment, retention, and graduation rate data. The University submits enrollment, finance, facilities, human resource, financial aid, library, graduate and completer data reports each semester and annually to the Louisiana Board of Regents and the Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System. The information submitted is reviewed at the system level to ensure data accuracy and to monitor compliance with and the attainment of state and system level goals and objectives. Additional reports of significance include the Statewide Student Profile System, the Student Credit Hour

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report, the Facilities and Utilization Report, Louisiana Performance Accountability reports, and the Operational Plan.

Target. 100% completion of federal and state reports.

Finding. Target Met. All 47 of 47 major state and federal reports completed timely and accurately for an overall success rate of 100%.

Analysis. Processes have been implemented to improve data collection and reporting. The state reports have been reviewed for data efficiency and accuracy for use as base reports to provide student and personnel data consistently. The student data process are significantly improved. IR, Human Resources and IT are working together to implement processes to more adequately and accurately capture personnel data to increase accuracy and efficiencies in reporting.

Decision. Ongoing process improvements for full implementation in the AY 2017-2018. Target date of fall 2017 for use of state reports as a basis for student and personnel data reporting. The OIR will work with the Registrar's Office, the Admissions Office, the Financial Aid Office, University Facilities, Business Affairs and Information Technology to identify process inefficiencies that may inhibit data accuracy. The OIR will improve accuracy and consistency in data reporting by formulating improved data collection and reporting processes for approval by all affected departments

SO 2. Develop, provide, and maintain timely and accurate institutional data to internal and external audiences.

Measure 2.1

The OIR ensures accuracy, consistency, and timeliness among federal, state, and internal reports (IPEDS, Louisiana Board of Regents, Louisiana Performance and Accountability System, and internal assessment reports) through data validation protocols and audit and balancing of state and federal standardized reports. The Louisiana Legislative Auditors, (the independent audit body for the state of Louisiana), has the authority to audit as they deem appropriate to verify data accuracy.

Target. Document and source 100% of data source files for federal and state reports to audit standards to pass all audits with success (no substantial findings).

Finding. Target Met. 5 of 5 Board of Regents inquiries regarding reported data were addressed successfully. Two (2) of two (2) IPEDS inquiries were addressed successfully. Seven (7) of seven (7) inquiries addressed successfully for an overall success rate of 100%.

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Analysis. All inquiries for regarding data submissions to IPEDS and Board of Regents have been satisfactorily addressed. Processes have been implemented to more adequately document source files for report data.

Decision. Continue to develop processed to maintain report source files for continuity in operations.

Measure 2.2

The OIR consistently reviews data collection and reporting processes to identify relationships among reports and across department to synchronize data reporting and to validate accuracy employing different data extraction and reporting methods in compliance with reporting standards as established by the Louisiana Board of Regents. Report procedures exist for all major state reports that are compiled by the OIR, however, the Board of Regents often issues modifications to specifications for the required reports. The Office of Institutional Research will implement continuous improvement processes to continuously revise reporting methods to comply with Board of Regents reporting specification revisions.

Target. 100% compliance with Board of Regents' modifications to report specifications.

Findings. Target Met. Modifications to 15 of 15 report specifications completed successfully for success rate of 100%.

Analysis. Modifications to all state reports to reflect BoR specifications have were implemented and reflected in report submissions. Not all prior revisions were adequately notated for ease of use by new personnel. Many of the reported variables required manipulation prior to reporting. Revisions have been noted in reporting procedures and syntaxes.

Decision. Develop better methods to document source files and methodologies to ensure repeatability of processes and validity of data. Develop function and syntaxes in conjunction with IT to extract data more consistently with less manipulation prior to reporting.

SO 3. Conduct project-based research and analyses.

Measure 3.1

The OIR compiles, analyzes and reports student and program data in a timely and accurate manner to assist departments with new program initiatives, grant applications, compliance/accreditation, recruiting, and other strategic and planning initiatives as appropriate.

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Target. 80% overall completion of requests for ad hoc data reports and surveys. 100% completion of all requests for ad hoc and recurring data requests related to accreditation, planning and compliance.

Finding. Target Met. 225 of 275 requests completed for 81.8% overall completion rate. 137 of 137 for 100% completion rate for accreditation, planning and compliance reports.

Analysis. OIR has adequately and timely responded to requests for data related to new programs (Ed.D. and Graduate Certificate Programs), new course offerings (program expansions for ET, English, Teaching, etc.), grant applications (ET and Carl Perkins), and surveys, as well as reports for strategic planning, compliance reporting (departmental and University wide accrediting agencies) and recruiting. 137 of 137 Accreditation, planning and compliance reports completed.

Decision. Acquire additional personnel to increase the ability of the office to provide data for program review, expansion and improvement. Develop periodic information sessions for college personnel regarding data collection and reporting process to stimulate information sharing and substantive discussions regarding departmental data and reporting needs and OIR capabilities. Improve reporting efficiencies and accuracies as well as identify efficient and effective use of existing reporting processes to improve business communications and processes to reduce redundancy. The Office of OIR will develop control processes for continuous, systematic improvements in data reporting.

Comprehensive summary of key findings and decisions.

Key Findings. The OIR has evolved into a data reporting office with less focus on research and institutional process improvements necessary to validate data for accuracy and consistency in planning and reporting. It is imperative that the OIR identify information process inefficiencies to improve data collection and reporting accuracy and validity.

Decisions. Effective improvements to existing data collection and reporting processes will stimulate information sharing and substantive discussions regarding departmental data and reporting needs and OIR capabilities. The Office of OIR should proactively participate in the development and implementation of control processes for continuous, systematic improvements in data reporting throughout the University.