

# Assessment Cycle

## Academic Year 2016 – 2017

### Counseling and Career Services

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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 Student Experience Mission Statement

The Student Experience provides the University community with programs and services to support the academic mission of creating, disseminating and acquiring knowledge through teaching, research and service while empowering a diverse student population to achieve their highest educational potential. The Student Experience creates a stimulating and inclusive educational environment that is conducive to holistic personal growth. The commitment to students initiates prior to entrance, sustains throughout the college experience and continues beyond graduation. Enrollment Services provides equal access for education to potential students throughout the state and region and promotes economic stability and financial access to citizens. Student Affairs enhances student development and broadens intellectual, social, cultural, ethical and occupational growth. The Student Experience works closely with faculty, staff, students, and the community to ensure graduates have the capability to promote economic development and improvements in the region.

### Student Affairs Mission:

The Division of Student Affairs prepares students to be productive members of society and to improve the quality of life of students. Student Affairs provides support services in career development and placement, advocacy and accountability, academic support, mental and physical health, disability accommodations, student activities and organizations, student union life, and opportunities in leadership, community service, and programs for new students. Through hands-on involvement in programs and services, Student Affairs promotes personal development in a student-centered environment, which delivers innovative practices in an environment of respect. Student Affairs encourages integrity, diversity, and collaboration with all members of the university community.

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#### **Counseling and Career Services Mission:**

The mission of Counseling and Career Services is to foster the values of self-discovery, self-direction, and the attainment of optimal health and wellness. To fulfill this mission we will foster students' self-efficacy by providing a safe environment where students can explore their inner strengths and challenges and develop skills to successfully create, evaluate, and effectively implement a life plan for living in the ever-changing world.

#### **Methodology:** The assessment process includes:

- (1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative and 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.

#### **Counseling and Career Services Effectiveness**

##### **Student Learning Outcomes**

**SLO1** Counseling and Career services will ensure that students are provided with quality mental health prevention programming, intervention services, and counseling support to foster their resiliency, academic persistence, and attainment of personal goals.

**Measure 1.1** Students will be able to identify positive change in their functioning experienced as a result of participating in counseling using the locally developed *Treatment Evaluation Survey*. Success is defined as a respondent's identification of at least three learning statements listed in question 10.

**Finding:** *Target met. 100% of the students responding to the Treatment Evaluation Survey identified at least three student-learning outcomes they accomplished as a result of participating in counseling.*

#### **Analysis:**

*The data shows that the student responses on the survey regarding their counseling experience and learning were positive. A total number of 84 surveys were completed representing 38% of the 222 new student clients seen during the 2016-2017 academic year who completed at minimum the initial intake*

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*appointment. It is important and desirable to get a complete representation of students who receive counseling services by increasing the number of respondents to include those students who do not remain in counseling and receive their feedback regarding their counseling experience and termination. Factors resulting in the 38% response rate are the timing and method of administration of the survey. The surveys are administered towards the end of each semester to students who are currently engaged in counseling. Many students do not see a counselor for the entire semester and/or require a few sessions to meet their needs. Some students “drop out” of counseling and do not discuss their decision with their counselor. These factors must be taken into consideration when measuring student learning. It will be expected that students who terminate early may not have the same level of student learning as students who participate in counseling a minimum of 8-12 weeks. The instrument asks the questions to measure what we need to measure, but to get more complete and valid data all students receiving counseling services should be given the opportunity to complete the survey.*

**Action - Decision or Recommendation:** *The Treatment Evaluation survey will be converted to an electronic survey that students can fill out online. This will be emailed to students who received counseling services sometime during the semester, but were unable, for whatever reason, to complete the paper survey. This should increase the student response rate and the data that is collected should be more representative of the students receiving counseling services. The data will be used to inform our policy and procedures and to improve counseling services.*

**Measure 1.2** Students participating in counseling will rate their satisfaction with the quality of counseling services received using the locally developed *Treatment Evaluation Survey*. Success is defined as 80% of the respondents responding “yes” or “N/A” on questions 4, 9, 12, 13, and 14.

**Finding:** *Target Met.*

(4) *In accordance with our strict confidentiality policy, do you believe that the private information shared with your counselor was kept confidential?*  
100% Yes

(9) *I believe my counselor was genuinely interested in helping me.* 100% Yes

(12) *The support I received through counseling enabled me to remain in college.*  
65% Yes, 4% No, 31% Not applicable

(13) *If you have need for assistance in the future, would you return to Counseling and Career Services?* 92% Yes, 2% No, 6% Not Applicable

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(14) *Would you recommend the assistance provided by Counseling and Career Services to a friend?* 99% Yes, 1% No

**Analysis:** *The data shows that the student responses on the survey regarding their counseling experience and learning were positive. A total number of 84 surveys were completed representing 38% of the 222 new student clients seen during the 2016-2017 academic year who completed at minimum the initial intake appointment. It is important and desirable to get a complete representation of students who receive counseling services by increasing the number of respondents to include those students who do not remain in counseling and receive their feedback regarding their counseling experience and termination. Factors resulting in the 38% response rate are the timing and method of administration of the survey. The surveys are administered towards the end of each semester to students who are currently engaged in counseling. Many students do not see a counselor for the entire semester and/or require a few sessions to meet their needs. Some students “drop out” of counseling and don’t discuss their decision with their counselor. The instrument asks the questions to measure what we need to measure, but to get more complete and valid data all students receiving counseling services should be given the opportunity to complete the survey.*

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**Measure 1.3** Students attending outreach programs will understand factors that affect mental health, individual functioning and community health, including the connection of mind, body, and spirit and its role in optimum functioning. Students will complete a locally developed *Presentation Evaluation* after each program/presentation. Success is defined as a 75% or higher score.

**Finding:** *Target Met. Students attending stress reduction outreach programs scored a total of 94% on the student learning assessment given after the presentations. University Studies 1000 students (605) received an hour presentation on Alcohol: Making Responsible Choices. Students scored a total of 90% on the Pre-test/Posttest.*

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**Analysis:** *The instrument for the stress management presentations did not ask specific questions related to facts, but student opinion about their learning. The pre-test/posttest for the Alcohol: Making Responsible Choices asked true/false questions only, which had a low level of difficulty. Questions will be reviewed for content and formatted as multiple choice and/or fill in the blank questions to increase difficulty*

**Action - Decision or Recommendation:** *Staff providing outreach presentations for students will develop a pretest/posttest specific to the presentation as it relates to the information conveyed to provide a better assessment of student learning. The pretest/posttest will be formatted with multiple choice and/or fill in the blank questions. Success will be defined as a score of 75% or higher. Questions will provide a moderate level of difficulty.*

**Measure 1.4** Participants (students, faculty, and staff) in QPR training will learn how to effectively question, persuade and refer individuals who may be suicidal for mental health counseling. Success is defined as an increase of knowledge about suicide intervention as self-rated on the QPR pre- and post-test with 75% of the post-test questions rated as *high* or *always*.

**Finding:** *Target Met. 104 faculty/staff and students received Question, Persuade, Refer training during the 2016-2017 academic year. The average score on QPR posttest was 83%.*

**Analysis:** *The goal of an overall average of 75% for participant learning (suicide prevention and intervention) was exceeded as demonstrated by the participants' responses on the posttest instrument. The results suggest that the student learning outcomes are being met. This pretest/posttest is the not one that can be modified as it is the property of the QPR Institute. We can pay close attention to the participants' written comments to make modifications to our delivery of the training.*

**Action - Decision or Recommendation:** *The goal of 75% or better was met. However, participants' comments provided feedback regarding the absence of handouts listing community resources and the length of the presentation. This feedback will be used to improve the delivery of the training.*

**SLO2** Students will engage in individual career exploration and planning empowering them to define and achieve their career/life goals and develop a career/academic plan that is specific, achievable and realistic.

**Measure 2.1** Students enrolled in University Studies 1000 and receiving 3 career exploration lessons will be able to verify their personality type, values, and interests and demonstrate how these factors impact their career interest and choice by providing a

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written report regarding a career path of interest. Success will be measured by an average grade of 75% or higher on the three career exploration assignments.

**Finding:** *Not Met. The average score for the University Studies 1000 students completing the career exploration assignments was 73%.*

**Analysis:** *There is an inconsistency in providing career exploration instruction and subsequent assignments required within University Studies 1000. Some individual instructors do not teach the career exploration lessons at all so there are no grades for students for these three (3) assignments. Some instructors require just two (2) of the three (3) assignments and some do a very good job teaching all three lessons and requiring that students complete the three (3) assignments. This makes it difficult to get a real picture of student learning across all University Studies classes. The method of delivery and/or assignments should be designed so that any instructor can successfully teach the career exploration unit.*

**Action - Decision or Recommendation:** *The content of the lessons and the assignments will be recreated to make it easier for all University Studies 1000 instructors to deliver and for students to complete. A rubric will be created for the assignment to facilitate grading consistency across class sections.*

**SLO3** Students will be prepared for the professional job search and present themselves effectively as candidates for employment.

**Measure 3.1** Students receiving career development support will create a written resume' and/or complete a mock interview in preparation for the job search. Critiques will be provided, based on the resume rubric and/or mock interview rubric, to assess student learning. Success is defined as a rating of 75% or better.

**Finding:** *Target Met. The average for students completing the resume' was 83% and the average for students completing the mock interview was 88%.*

**Analysis:** *Though the scores were satisfactory, the resume rubric was only used for students enrolled in the SAHE 4000 class who receive a grade for the completed resume. The rubric is not for students and distance-learners who were independently seeking resume assistance through the career services office. Resume assistance is provided by the career counselor and career services graduate assistants. Feedback for improvement is provided, but may not be consistent. Using a rubric for the resume, as is done with the mock interview, will allow for consistency in feedback and provide students with clearly defined standards.*

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**Action - Decision or Recommendation:** *The resume and mock interview rubrics will be redesigned to consistently reflect the learning outcomes for all students seeking resume and mock interview assistance as well as students participating in capstone classes. Success will be defined as a score of 75% or better.*

**Measure 3.2** Students enrolled in SAHE 4000 will demonstrate job search readiness by successfully completing the course that includes resume writing, interviewing skills, conducting a job search, knowledge of self, and knowledge of their chosen career path. Success is defined as a final grade of 75% or better.

**Finding:** *The average final grade of students taking SAHE 4000 is 81%.*

**Analysis:** *Target Met. Students demonstrated job search readiness by successfully demonstrating competency in the areas of resume writing, interviewing skills, creating a portfolio, conducting a job search and knowledge of self and their chosen career path.*

**Action - Decision or Recommendation:**

*The resume, portfolio, and mock interview rubrics will be redesigned to consistently reflect the learning outcomes for the resume, mock interview, and portfolio. Success is defined a score of 75% or better.*

**Measure 3.3** Students will participate successfully in on-campus recruiting activities. Success is defined as a score of 75%, on the *Teacher Job Fair Employers Evaluation: Students Presentation*.

**Finding:** *Target Met. The score for the total number of students was 93%.*

**Analysis:** *Although this percentage is high, this assessment is used only for Teacher Job Fair. This only assesses Teacher Candidates, a small number of the students interviewing for employment and does not provide is not reflective of students in other majors.*

**Action - Decision or Recommendation:**

*There are employers who attend Career/Graduate Day and Spring/Summer Job Fair and conduct on-campus interviews who can complete this assessment. This will increase the number of students assessed. The instrument will be redesigned to fit all recruiting activities and will be distributed to recruiters and academic departments that conduct recruitment activities in-house. Success is defined as a score of 75% on the Employers' Student Interview Assessment and 20% increase in the number of students assessed.*

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#### Service Outcomes

**SO1** Ensure that current students' needs are identified and effective counseling and career services are developed to meet the identified needs.

**Measure 1.1** Conduct a population-based assessment (Core Institute's *Survey of Alcohol and Other Drug Use*) of current student alcohol and drug use, consequences, and perceptions using a valid and reliable nationally standardized instrument. The resulting data will inform the design of alcohol and drug prevention programming, social norms campaigns, and interventions. Success is defined as the identification of students' perceptions of alcohol/drug use, prevalence of use of specific drugs and alcohol among student subpopulations, and experienced consequences of alcohol and drug use. This information will be used to inform outreach programming.

**Finding:** *Target met. The data shows that there is a slight decrease in the number of underage students drinking on a monthly basis (56.1 % of underage students consumed alcohol in the previous 30 day) and binge drinking (32.7% of students reported binge drinking (5 or more drinks at one sitting) in the previous 2 weeks.) Twenty-five percent (25%) reported some form of public misconduct at least once during the past year as a result of drinking or drug use. Sixteen percent (16%) reported experiencing some kind of personal problem (suicidality, hurt or injured, trying unsuccessfully to stop drinking, sexual assault) at least once during the past year as a result of drinking or drug use. Thirty-two percent (32%) have driven a car while under the influence.*

**Analysis:** *Although student identification of problems incurred as a result of alcohol and drug use is below the national average in most problematic experiences (exception is driving under the influence), students at NSU are experiencing negative consequences while under the influence of alcohol and drugs. Sixteen percent (16%) reported experiencing some kind of personal problem such as suicidal thoughts or acts, incurring a physical injury, being unable to successfully stop drinking, or experiencing a sexual assault*

**Action - Decision or Recommendation:**

*This data will be used to inform substance abuse prevention programming and outreach activities. Data from the 2017 CORE Alcohol and Drug survey will be compared to this current data to identify areas that need to be assess the success of current substance abuse prevention programming and identify areas that need to be the current focus of prevention programming. Program planning will include collaboration with other programs and prevention efforts across campus.*

**Measure 1.2.** Design, implement, and analyze the results of a series of systematic qualitative, in-depth focus groups with selected NSU student groups identified as at greater risk and stratified by high-stress majors, gender-identity, classification, and on-

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or off-campus residential status. Success is defined as the identification of students' perceptions of student mental health, individual and community factors that support and/or hinder student mental health and help seeking, and the impact of these factors on academic persistence and success. This input will inform program design, departmental goals, and services to the campus community.

**Finding:** *Target met. Students identified multiple stressors (external and internal), limited time to get everything accomplished, lack of faculty awareness of and/or sensitivity to student mental health and developmental issues, no departmental “stress-free” zone for students to use to de-stress, student perceptions of mental illness, lack of awareness of mental health services on campus.*

**Analysis:** *Students are performing under high levels of stress and demands on their mental, physical, social, and financial resources. Many students feel overwhelmed by the multiple responsibilities and decisions they must consider every day. Students report feeling anxious and/or sad, become demotivated or rigidly perfectionistic, experience a decrease in confidence and a decline physical health. Compounded these symptoms can lead to increases in absenteeism, anxiety and depressive disorders, anhedonia, changing majors and academic failure.*

**Action - Decision or Recommendation:**

*Design and deliver outreach services to students by majors (focus on high-risk groups first), training for faculty/staff regarding mental health issues, referral services, group therapy for CAPA students (one of the high-risk groups as identified by the number of students using counseling services) accommodating their schedule and workload. Meet with the Dean of the Creative and Performing Arts program to share feedback and to collaborate regarding outreach and support. Create a presence in academic buildings via workshops, information brochures, visits by the counselors. Design creative ways to get information out to students. Increase marketing efforts to increase awareness and subscriptions to Student Health 101.*

**Measure 1.4** Design, implement and analyze the results of a graduating seniors' survey to measure student use of and satisfaction with career services, employment after graduation, if in their field of study and plans for attending graduate school. Success is defined as a participation rate of 60% or better of the respondents' participation in career assistance and a score of 80% or better on the “Were you satisfied?” question.

**Finding:** *Target not met (participation rate). 149 students responded to the survey. 51% of the respondents shared that they received career services. 88% of this percentage shared that they were satisfied with the career services they received.*

**Analysis:** *The percentage of students receiving career services is below the desired participation rate of 60%. Target met (satisfaction rate). The score for*

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*satisfaction with services is above the 80% desired satisfaction score. These findings suggest that when students engage in career services there is a high satisfaction rate. The problem is student engagement in career services reflected in the 51% participation rate.*

**Action - Decision or Recommendation:** *To increase student engagement in career services we will design, implement and analyze the results of a series of systematic, qualitative, in-depth focus groups with selected NSU student groups stratified by majors, gender identity, ability, and classification. Participants will share their perceptions regarding their needs for career information and the desired method of delivery, career development support services provided by this unit, and the factors that support or hinder their career preparation. This input will inform program design, departmental goals and career services to the campus community with the goal of increasing student engagement with career services. Success will be defined as at least 60% in student engagement as reflected in the Graduating Seniors' Survey.*

**SO2** Ensure employers' needs are identified and effective career services are developed to meet their identified needs.

**Measure 2.1** Employers participating in on-campus recruiting activities and Job Location and Development services will provide feedback regarding career-recruiting services. The resulting data will inform program design, departmental goals, and services to the campus and community. Success is defined as a score of 80% on the *Employer Evaluation: Career Fair (questions 5-9), Job Location and Development Employer Satisfaction Survey*

**Finding:** *Target met. Job Location and Development Employer Satisfaction survey Employers scored Job Location and Development services with an 87.5% approval rating, stating they were very likely and extremely likely to use JLD in the future. 75% of Employers would recommend JLD to a friend or colleague. Total score for JLD is 86.25%*

*Target met. The Employer Evaluation: Career Fair (questions 5-9) data indicates an overall 83% employer satisfaction rate of the career fairs.*

**Analysis:** *The goal of 75% or better was met. The JLD instrument generated general satisfaction responses but did not ask questions geared toward specific, actionable responses.*

*The Employer Evaluation: Career Fairs also generated satisfaction with the career fair responses. The goal of 75% or better was met. However, feedback was*

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*provided by participants in the comments section regarding the lack of clear signage providing directions for parking and registration.*

**Action – Decision or Recommendation:** *The JLD instrument will be redesigned to get more specific responses from employers to identify needs and how they are met. A plan will be developed, for targeted continual improvement with more specific feedback. Responding to the Employer Evaluation: Career Fairs feedback, frame sidewalk curb signs that are large and clearly visible will be purchased and used to provide clear directions for parking and registration.*

#### **Comprehensive Summary of key findings and or decisions:**

*Student learning and service outcomes data was collected in multiple ways using grades, pretests/posttests, skill-based rubrics, surveys that include written comments, and focus groups.*

*A review of the data reveals overall success in meeting our student learning and service objectives with the exception of the career exploration student learning outcomes in University Studies 1000.*

*This said, in analyzing the scores, there are questions regarding the veracity of some of the assessments. Are we collecting data that is relevant and/or rigorous enough to assess student learning? Are we asking the right questions? Are we assessing a representative sample of students and employers using our services? Is our method of collecting data sufficient to collect a representative sample of our clientele? Are there inconsistencies in the delivery of the University Studies 1000 career exploration unit and instructors' expectations of students resulting in poor overall student learning outcomes or is it the design of the career exploration unit and assessment of student learning?*

*To address these concerns we will review and redesign when necessary, all of our measures for service and student learning outcomes (surveys, pretest/posttest and rubrics) to ensure we are measuring what we need to measure to get meaningful, valid data.*

*To create consistency in data collection*

- *Pretests/Posttests, including written comments, will be used for all data collection in outreach programming.*
- *All students receiving career services for resume writing, and interviewing skill development (SAHE 4000, In-office, distance learner) will be evaluated and receive consistent feedback that is rubric based.*

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- *The Director of Counseling and Career Services, the Career Counselor and the Steward of the University Studies 1000 classes will work together to redesign the career exploration unit and grading rubric.*

*A web-based Treatment Evaluation survey will be created that can be emailed to students who are not currently in counseling but have received counseling services during the assessment period, to ensure that the data collected is representative of all counseling clients.*

*Focus Groups with students stratified by majors, gender identity, ability, and classification, will continue to be conducted to gain useful input from our counseling and career services stakeholders regarding their needs and suggestions for the improvement of services. We will design, implement and analyze the results identify of students' perceptions of regarding their needs for information and support, and services provided by this unit, and factors that support or hinder their participation in our services. This input will inform program design, departmental goals, and services to the campus community.*

*CORE data (2015, 2017) will be compared to identify changes in student attitudes, behaviors and experienced consequences related to student alcohol and drug use. Data will identify areas of programming success, areas of decreased or increased use, and changes in student perceptions. This data will inform programming and services and will be shared with other campus departments that provide programs that address alcohol and drug use among students.*