

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Recruiting Office

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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 to education for 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.

Enrollment Management:

The Office of Enrollment Management is a student-centered division that is future focused providing educational access to students in our region in order to improve the lives of our citizens. High School Relations, Financial Aid and Scholarships, and Admissions work collaboratively with University faculty and staff to provide services and programming that are innovative and surpasses state and federal guidelines. Enrollment Management fulfills the university's mission and commitment to academic quality, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Recruiting Office Mission:

The mission of Recruiting is to increase the quantity and quality of all new student enrollment to Northwestern State University. New student enrollment includes all first-time freshmen, transfer students, and new graduate students. Increase in quality is determined by increased ACT/SAT composite scores, GPA and leadership skills. In support of this mission, the Recruiting staff provides prospective students with accurate information necessary to the admissions and enrollment processes, while presenting the public with a positive image of Northwestern State University. The Recruiting staff are always focusing on an increase in diversity and access to higher education for all populations.

Methodology: The assessment process includes:

- (1) Data from weekly applicant and admission reports that compares applicants and admits from each parish and state to the application and admissions numbers from the previous year on the same date.
- (2) The Director will analyze the data and determine whether the applicable outcomes are met.
- (3) Results from the assessment will be disseminated and discussed with the appropriate staff.
- (4) Weekly staff meetings will be held to discuss the progress.
- (5) The director, in consultation with the staff and senior leadership, will determine and propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, service changes

Recruiting Effectiveness

Service Outcomes

SO 1. Recruitment efforts will lead to an increase in student enrollment and be representative of the regional community.

Measure.1.1 Student enrollment will increase by 8% per freshmen class. 6% is acceptable.

Finding: Target Met. First time freshman increased from 1244 for fall 2015 to 1459 for fall 2016 or by 215 students for a 17% increase.

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Analysis: Enhanced recruiting plan, increase social media exposure and an aggressive scholarship campaign all contributed to the large increase in freshmen enrollment.

Action: The successful recruiting strategies for freshman will continue for fall 2017 entering class by increasing the scholarship packaging and increased communications.

Measure 1.2. New Graduate student enrollment will increase by 3% per academic year.

Finding: Target Met. New graduate enrollment actually dropped from 282 to 253 a decrease of 29 students or 10%.

Analysis: Our competitors have increased online offerings for this market. Ten years ago, we were the leader in online offerings but many universities have increased their efforts in this market and eroded our market share for this market.

Action: Enhance the recruiting efforts for programs that are drawing new graduate students in Education and Nursing. NSU is adding a doctorate program in Education and is enhancing the doctorate program in Nursing. Form a graduate school recruiting council to develop collaborative efforts to recruit graduate students for all NSU post baccalaureate programs.

Measure 1.3. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the student body will be representative of the universities regions in terms of diversity.

Finding: Target Met. We enrolled students from 62 out of 65 parishes in the state of Louisiana meeting our regional goal. In addition, NSU recruited students from out of state representing over 20 states and several countries. International student increased from 117 students to 129 students for an increase of 10%.

Analysis: Enhanced recruiting efforts for all populations and an increase in travel to diverse populations lead to the success of this effort.

Action: The University will expand the recruiting region by adding a recruiter specifically for out of state populations to further increase our territory. Develop a specific plan with CAPA and the NSU International Student Office to recruit abroad.

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

SO 2. Students who participate in NSide View Events and personalized campus tours on campus will learn the steps necessary to apply for admission and financial aid.

Measure 2.1. Ninety percent (90%) of students who participate in Nside View and campus tours will respond these events are very helpful in understanding the admissions process by responding, “strongly agree’ on their student survey.

Finding: Target Met. 100% of students surveyed found their tour guide to be helpful and knowledgeable in our first test survey group and our second actually survey group. In our test group 100% found the tour guide to be knowledgeable. In the second group that dropped to 95.5% while 4.5 disagreed.

Analysis: The tour surveys will be re-worded to ask specific questions about the types of information they received. New questions will focus on admissions and financial aid processes.

Action: In the next recruiting cycle, students visiting the campus who are toured will first meet with a full time staff member to review information and assess where the student is in the decision process. In addition, NSU will institute a process to review student information before the student arrives so that the tour guide is aware of any paperwork and information the student needs to submit to move through the process.

Measure 2.2. Target Met. Ninety percent (90%) of students who participate in Nside View and campus tours will respond these events are very helpful in understanding the Financial Aid process and associated requirements by responding “strongly agree’ on their student survey.

Finding: 95.45% of students and parents filling out the survey indicated that their tour guide was helpful while 4.55% indicated that they strongly disagree that the tour guide was helpful.

Analysis: This question will be re-worded and expanded to include specific information about the admissions process and financial aid process

Action: Full time staff members will meet privately with each tour and their family to discuss more specific information about the information the student needs and questions they were not able to have answered. Our goal for next year will be to have 100% understanding rate for students and parents that evaluate the process.

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

SO 3. Enrollment of Transfer students will increase each year.

Measure 3.1. Transfer students enrollment will increase by 3% each year.

Finding: Target Met. The number of transfer students increased from 935 for fall 2015 to 1131 in fall of 2016 which was an increase of 196 or 20.9%.

Analysis: As more students in Louisiana are pushed to the junior and community college, the university needs to be ready to develop more cross walk agreements. When the state of Louisiana moved to selective admissions in 2005 and increased standards again in 2010, it forced more students to the community college system in Louisiana. This market continues to increase because of this influx of students as well as more non-traditional students wanting to start college.

Action: We will continue to increase our recruiting efforts by expanding our territory and increase the number of junior and community college agreements across our state and out of state. We will increase our goal for next year accordingly.

SO 4. Entering freshmen will have scores and grade point averages that are above the state average and have cited leadership skills.

Measure 4.1. Target Not Met. Freshmen ACT average for fall 2015 is 21.57. We will increase the average ACT to 22.5. Acceptable targets are 23 ACT composite averages.

Finding: The average ACT for fall 2016 increased by .30 from 21.57 to 21.87. Although we didn't reach the 22 ACT target, we were pleased with the increase especially given the increase of students with ACT score reports.

Analysis: Although we didn't reach the 22 ACT target, we were pleased with the increase especially given the increase in enrollment. We will continue to review other university scholarship scales to be sure ours is very competitive and focuses on students with higher GPAs.

Action; In order to meet our 22 ACT goal, we will re-work and analyze our scholarship packaging to aggressively increase the higher ACT students to be more competitive with other universities. In addition, we will continually work to increase the number of students attending the Louisiana Scholars' College at Northwestern State.

Measure 4.2. Ten percent (10%) of entering freshmen will have documented leadership skills as part of their application process for programs like the Presidential Leadership program and the student ambassador program.

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Finding: Target Not Met. For the fall of 2015, we had 105 students receiving either ambassador or Presidential leadership scholarships which was 8.4% of the entering freshmen class of 1244. For fall 2016, we offered approximately 115 leadership awards, however the entering class increased to 1451 which meant our % of these students decreased to 7.9%.

Analysis: With the increase in the number of first time freshman to the university, we will re-evaluate our percentages to match the number of incoming students. We will instead use the actual number of students with leadership skills as opposed to percentage.

Action: Although we missed our target of 10% of the class, we are working to be sure that we offer about 30 ambassador spots and 100 Presidential leadership spots to increase this number to 130 for the fall of 2017

Summary of key findings and or decisions.

In summary, we had a great year and exceeded many of our recruiting goals with increases in all markets except for new graduate students. In the graduate student market we will have two new programs and should increase in numbers in this area with new strategies for this market. We expect to see transfer student numbers continue to increase.

In terms of the number of documented leadership in our freshman class, as the numbers of students increase, the percentage of those we offer leadership scholarships to, will not increase in percentage due to current limits in the programs. Although we will continue to push these great leadership programs, we can no longer measure success in terms of percentages. We will investigate ways to grow outside the limits of our current leadership capacity.

Our data collection for campus tours helped us to make decisions but in the future, we need to add questions specific to financial aid and admissions. Our questions are a little too generic. In addition to the data we collect for campus visitors, we need to collect data on the effectiveness of our pre-view days. We will also add a means of data collection for our alumni recruiting receptions to be sure we are accomplishing our goals with them.