

Assessment Cycle

Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Department of Student Life

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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

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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Department of Student Life Mission

Northwestern State Department of Student Life serves to build campus community among students, faculty, staff, alumni and guests by providing opportunities for students to learn and practice leadership, program planning, organizational management, social and civic responsibility, and interpersonal skills. Through educational, social, and cultural programs, services, and facilities, the Department of Student Life enhances the quality of campus life.

Methodology: The assessment process includes:

- (1) The assessment process for Student Life will be evaluated through multiple direct and indirect assessment tools;
- (2) Each area Director will analyze the data to determine whether the applicable outcomes are met and report to the Executive Director;
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the appropriate students and constituent groups;
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with students and constituent groups as required;
- (5) The executive director, in collaboration with the area directors, will determine proposed changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, service changes.

Student Life Effectiveness

Service Outcomes:

SO 1. Build campus community by providing opportunities for student to learn and practice leadership and social & civic responsibility.

Measure 1.1. Develop a sense of campus community among students that foster civic competency through Student Government Association programs. Internal assessment using portions of the US Citizenship Test and key components of university resources is completed at the beginning and the end of the year for student government leaders. Success through this initiative is defined by the quantitative results of the pre and posttest instrument distributed to the students involved with the Student Government Association. Goal will be for students to score at least 80% on posttest.

Finding: Target partially met due to no pre-test administered to entire senate. The focus for the assessment was the members of the Student Government

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Association Cabinet which is comprised of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Speaker of the Senate, Commissioner of Student Affairs, Commissioner of Academic Affairs, Commissioner of External Affairs, and Secretary.

Analysis: A 2016 report by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni demonstrates the need to focus on developing civic competence in college students. For the last 20 years there has been a decline in students' understanding of even the most basic functions of government and a weakened ability to competently participate and engage in the democratic process.

Members of the Student Government Association have demonstrated an increased capacity for competent engagement in local, state, and national government. Members demonstrated an increase in knowledge of basic functions of government and applied that new knowledge in their experience as representatives on the university student government association, particularly in addressing the needs of their respective constituencies (i.e. student concerns, drafting of legislation, debate, and implementation of programs and initiatives.)

Further, SGA members have demonstrated an increased interest in following developments in government on a local, state, and national level through news, meetings, and attendance of programs and events.

These findings demonstrate that membership in student government can positively affect the development of civic competencies in students who participate in executive leadership. There is a need to further assess the effect of student government on general membership (senators) and if the programs provided can increase civic competence in the student body.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: All members of the Student Government Association should be assessed in the areas of civic competence. The SGA Retreat will feature a designated time for taking the assessment as well as desired stated learning outcomes for their experience. At the last meeting of the spring semester, each member will then take a post survey that will better gage the development of their civic knowledge of and participation in local, state, and national government.

Measure 1.2. Promote and encourage active participation in campus and community life through student program planning and assessment. Program evaluation forms will be distributed to students and student leaders to evaluate effectiveness of programs and provide suggestions on future programming options. Evaluation procedures will yield evidence relative to program's success by the achievement of the program goals, responsiveness to expressed interest in our constituents, program attendance, and staff performance. Success is defined as 80% of the respondents responding satisfied for higher.

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Findings: Target Met. Of the evaluations submitted, 83% were satisfied with the programs.

Analysis: Evaluations were completed by the SAB member in charge & students who attended the events. Based on the evaluations the participants rated our staff at a satisfied (50%), very satisfied (33%) or very dissatisfied (17%) rate. Event participants stated they were 86% satisfied or very satisfied with the events hosted by SAB, while 14% stated they were very dissatisfied.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: In order to increase the satisfaction of our attendees at the events, the student activities board will appoint individuals at each event to be in charge of survey distribution and collection to better understand the needs of students during events. The survey will also be adjusted to separate question #8. As of now, question #8 asks, "What other programming would you like to see on campus?" and "Any additional comments about the event?"

Measure 1.3. Educate students as it relates to health and safety management through risk management initiatives. Offering educational sessions regarding risk management and assessing the knowledge gained by providing a pre-session survey and a post-session survey. Success through this initiative is defined by the quantitative results of the pre and posttest instrument distributed to NSU students during the trainings held each academic year. Goal will be for students to score at least 80% on posttest.

Finding: Target met. Each Greek social organization and governing council executive membership underwent training and education by national renowned experts in the fields of risk reduction and hazing prevention.

Analysis: 96 individuals whose attendance was required underwent trainings by Dr. Lori Hart and Dr. Gentry McCreary on risk management and hazing prevention. The risk management training focused on achieving a better understanding of the framework of stages of change, harm reduction, and brain development, as well as compliance with and understanding of the FIPG Risk Management Guidelines as adopted by the Fraternity Executives Association.

Learning outcomes for the hazing prevention training was for students to demonstrate less tolerance for hazing within their organization, be able to identify key strategies for reducing hazing within their organization, demonstrate increased willingness to hold individual members accountable for hazing activities, and demonstrate increased motivation for replacing hazing with meaningful new member activities.

Those attending demonstrated an increased capacity for learning to plan safe events in compliance with the FIPG Risk Management Guidelines as well as demonstrating less tolerance for hazing within their organizations, and an

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increased willingness to replace hazing with meaningful new member activities specifically.

During the semester following the training there was only one reported risk management or hazing violation with merit.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: There will be more focused assessments that gather additional data and allows for more input by the individuals attending the assessment. The assessment will be made available electronically. There will be a continued effort to increase training on these topics throughout the academic year and to get feedback from students on their efforts to improve health and safety initiatives.

SO 2. Provide opportunities for student leaders to develop program planning, organizational management, and interpersonal skills.

Measure 2.1. Insure student input is included in the planning and execution of programs and initiatives. Students are appointed to university committees by the Dean of Students, the Student Government Association, and Student Activities Board Presidents in order to have the student provide their input regarding events, policies and procedures at the university. An assessment of their experience will occur at the conclusion of the appointments. Success is defined as 80% of the respondents to the surveys by responding agree or higher in terms of their voice and input.

Finding: Target Met. 84.62% felt as though their voice and input is well received through the committee's to which they serve.

Analysis: University committees offer a wide variety of services to the campus community. Some committees meet on a regular basis and some meet when needed. The "university committee membership survey" was distributed at the end of the academic year, which worked for some committee structures but not for others. Several student committee members stated they enjoyed the conversations within the committee meetings, the information they had to discuss and that their feedback was welcomed. 38.46% disagreed that the meetings were held regularly and with appropriate frequency.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: The student committee members indicated that they would like to have more meetings. The committees function and purpose may need to be explained to committee members at the beginning of their term or before they are appointed to ensure the committee members know what to expect for the academic year. Furthermore, the distribution of the survey should occur at the conclusion of the committee work and not at the end of the academic year to help increase the number of submitted evaluations.

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Measure 2.2. Participation in trainings, retreats, workshops and conferences are offered through a variety of experiences that develop organizational management competency. Students will attend retreats and trainings as well as regional and national conferences to learn from and share experiences with peers at other institutions. Students will have the opportunity to reflect on their experience after events. Skills and knowledge obtained at retreats and conferences will be measured by surveys distributed at the conclusion of the experience.

Findings: Target Met. There were 41 submissions of the Organizational Management Survey (OMS) and 13 submitted the Leadership NSU Evaluation.

Analysis: Individuals who submitted the OMS indicated that most popular type of event attended was a retreat with 39.02% and the top four skills learned due to these events were communication skills (85.37%), leadership skills (73.17%), collaboration (68.29%), and social skills (64.41%). The most popular purpose of these events, as indicated by the survey results, were to learn and grow as a team, to know how to use Orgsync, and to develop and improve their leadership skills. Out of the 35 responses, only one individual indicated that they did not change anything after attending an event such as a training, retreat, workshop or conference. Those who attended Leadership NSU and completed a survey, stated that they were very satisfied with the event (77%), 69% strongly agreed that the event was organized, and 84% stated the topics presented were relevant.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: These surveys offer assistance with program planning and evaluation so it is imperative that these students reflect on their experiences. More than 34 students attended some type of retreat, workshop, conference or training during the 2016-2017 academic year and did not complete the OMS nor the Leadership NSU survey. To help increase the submissions for either survey, we will distribute this survey to all groups who receive grant money (Student Government Association ORF grant) to attend an event away from campus. Furthermore, we will reach out to the groups that attend yearly retreats, workshops, conferences, and so forth, requesting that they have their participants fill out the OMS upon return of their trip or conclusion of the event and not at the end of the semester.

SO 3. Enhance quality of campus life through educational, social, and cultural programs, services, and facilities.

Measure 3.1. Provide excellent customer service and ensure facility usage satisfaction of all patrons. Assessing the use of the Friedman Student Union and other campus facilities by students and patrons provides an indicator of the extent to which students and patrons are aware of spaces in the building(s) and in a general sense how those spaces meet their needs. Customer service surveys are attached to the event confirmation emails sent by the facility coordinator in order to gain customer feedback. Usage reports as well as attendance figures are generated monthly, quarterly and

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annually and are compared to previous time-periods. These quantitative components are retained from one assessment cycle to the next and are used for comparative analysis of the services and facility usage through time. Success is defined at 80% or higher in terms of Satisfaction of their overall experience based on question #6. (*Satisfaction survey from Facilities-booking, amenities, space*).

Finding: Target Met. 32 individuals completed the Student Union Reservation Survey. 62.5% were very satisfied and 37.5% were satisfied with the Student Union. The overall satisfaction score was 100%.

Analysis: The data shows that the majority of reservations are made for the Student Union Ballroom, Cane River Room and the President's Room all located on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. About 58.75% of respondents stated they strongly agreed that the Student Union booking system/confirmation/pricing, contract/rules, and booking staff were reasonable, convenient and helpful, respectively. In terms of location, building cleanliness, restroom cleanliness, and special requests, the surveys indicated a satisfactory level of 59.38%. While 68.75% of respondents are very likely to recommend the rental of the Student Union in the future and 78.13% are very likely to host another event themselves at the venue.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: They will continue to provide excellent customer service to our constituents but based on the recommendations from the survey participants, the student union staff will focus on three key areas of concern. The first area will include cleaning high traffic areas on the second floor in order to maintain or increase the level of satisfaction. In particular, the second floor restrooms will be the major focus if funds are available for the coming years. The second focus area will include a student life beautification assessment of areas used on campus for events. Furthermore, the student union staff will work with RRS on the cleanliness of the student union. The last focus area will be to educate and inform constituents about EMS policy and procedures.

Measure 3.2. Foster diverse participation in campus activities and programs. Initiatives and programs are inclusive and embraces community members with diverse backgrounds and life experiences, and supports the free and open exchange of ideas and civil discourse. University officials from a myriad of areas on campus collaborate each week to provide inclusive and diverse programming. With the exchange of ideas weekly, the accountability of fostering diversity collaboration within our programs is an ongoing initiative. Evidence of the adoptions of or the interaction with diversity related programs and departments will be a strategic indicator of success and will be documented in the weekly minutes.

Finding: Target Met. The Student Programming committee met 34 times during the course of the 2016-2017 academic year and invited over 14 non-committee members to the weekly meetings.

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Analysis: Each week the committee members that represent areas of Student Life such as facility management, SGA, Greek Life, SAB and Student Activities; First Year Experience; Housing; Baptist Collegiate Ministries, intramurals and Athletics; Center for Inclusion and Diversity; International Student Office, meet to discuss programming and planning initiatives across campus. The committee visited with 10 community and/or campus entities throughout the year to promote and support their initiatives and to foster collaboration. Events that were supported included N-Side View days with NSU recruiting, Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame, National Guard, Dragon Boat races with NSU Alumni, and the Natchitoches Paddle Sports. This committee also hosted events such as the Polar Bear Splash which supported non-profit organizations such as the Red Cross, Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, American Cancer Society, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Team Gleason, USO, Pay it Forward Networking, and Broadway Cares/Equity Fights Aids. Another event that was hosted was the Remember the Dream Day, to raise awareness and pride for the work that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr did for our country.

Action - Decision or Recommendation: To continue to invite outside groups to our meetings in order to foster collaboration and exchange of ideas among faculty, staff, students and our third party partners to enrich the campus culture.

Comprehensive Summary of key findings and or decisions.

Student Life serves to build the campus community among its constituents by providing opportunities of leadership, program planning, organizational management, social and civic responsibility, and university pride. Through data collection processes such as pre-test and post test, program evaluation forms, trainings, and surveys, the student life staff will assess the impact each area within the department makes with our constituents regularly.

To ensure that the Student Life staff continue to serve our constituents, the results from the assessments will be discussed with the appropriate student and/or constituent groups and will encourage any positive changes to the outcomes and/or assessment tools used.

The findings of the Student Life Service Outcomes yielded positive results with all measures with the exception of the civic competence internal assessment of the student government association members.

Action steps that will be taken as we look forward include:

- That all members of the Student Government Association take the pretest and posttest regarding social and civic responsibility;
- To assign students on the Student Activities Board to actively participate in data collection during events;

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- There will be more focused assessments that gather additional risk management data through electronic means and provide increased number of health and safety trainings throughout the year;
- To educate the individuals who are appointing students to university committees as well as student members of the functions and purposes of each of the university committees. The distribution of the survey will occur at the conclusion of the committee work to help increase the number of submitted evaluations;
- To increase survey submissions by actively reaching out to groups or individuals that attend yearly retreats, workshops, conferences, and especially to those who receive grant money through the Student Government Association to attend such events;
- To focus on cleaning high traffic areas on the second floor, especially restrooms of the Friedman Student Union; to gain insight on what beautification projects are of high priority to students a survey will be disseminated; and to educate and inform constituents about EMS policy and procedures;
- To continue to invite outside groups to the Student Life meetings in order to foster collaboration and exchange of ideas among faculty, staff, students and our third party partners to enrich the campus culture.

Source Map: *Minutes from meetings and focus groups; Post-event Member Evaluation; Post-Event Evaluations; US Citizenship Test; University Committee Survey; Facility Use Survey; Orgsync; Institutional Research; Event Management System; North American Interfraternity Conference; National Panhellenic Council; Dyad Strategies; Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education)*