

AY 2018-2019 Assessment

Academic Success Center

Department: Academic Support and Auxiliary 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 **Academic Success Center** provides peer support, learning resources, and academic guidance to all students by building one-on-one relationships between students and tutors, thereby helping to ensure that students are academically prepared to earn a college degree. The Center's environment encourages good study habits and learning across all disciplines, especially the humanities and STEM subjects.

Methodology: The assessment process for the Academic Success Center is as follows:

- (1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative and qualitative) is collected and returned to the unit head;
- (2) The unit head will analyze the data to determine whether the staff has met the measurable outcomes;
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed in an open forum with the staff and unit head's supervisor;
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with staff;
- (5) The unit head, with the assistance of staff, will determine if changes are required to meet the measurable outcomes or assessment tools for the next assessment period.

Service Outcome (SO):

SO 1. Provide peer tutoring by appointment with limited drop-in tutoring times to Natchitoches-based students as well as online via WebEx.

Measure 1.1 (Direct) NOTE: New measurement added Spring 2019 The Academic Success Center provides tutoring in a variety of subjects. Tutoring is provided by peer interaction and the center attempts to accommodate as many students as possible through face to face tutoring or online via WebEx. The target is for the Academic Success Center to accommodate at least 75% of all tutoring requests.

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Findings: Target met. (spring 2019 only)

Analysis: For Spring 2019 there were a total of 1300 tutoring sessions, making an average of 81.25 sessions per week. Approximately 77% of tutoring appointments were scheduled online. The remaining 23% were drop in appointments. Data indicates that the ASC was able to accommodate 90% of all tutoring requests. The remaining 10% were referred to other resources on campus.

Decision: These data points were not collected in AY 2017-2018 or in fall of 2018. While compiling data for AY 2018-2019, it was decided that the following data points would be collected: total tutoring sessions, average number of sessions per week, % scheduled online, % drop-in appointments, and % of tutoring requests accommodated. The spring 2019 data will be considered a baseline and SO 1.1 has changed to 1.2. This new SO 1.1 will give a more accurate direct measure of the ASC's impact on meeting student needs.

Measure 1.2 (Indirect) At the end of the tutoring session, students will be given a paper survey to assess the appointment itself and the tutor. Respondents will be able to respond with strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree as well as other open-ended questions and rating of the experience of below average, average, and above average. The unit goal is for at least 75% of the students surveyed will respond with average or above average.

Finding:

AY 2016 – 2017: Target Met.

AY 2017 – 2018: Target Met.

AY 2018 – 2019: Target Met.

Analysis: In 2017-2018, the target was met. Based on these results, we changed our delivery system for the surveys in AY 2018-2019 in order to collect more results. In-person clients were given surveys to complete at the end of the tutoring appointment with instructions to return the surveys to the director or graduate assistant on duty. Additionally, students who received services weekly (re-occurring appointments) were surveyed at three points through the term: at the second appointment, midterm, and the week before finals. Surveys were recorded on a weekly basis. Additionally, students who received online services were sent a digital survey.

In AY 2018-2019, we met our goal. A total of 129 responses were recorded; 124 from in person appointments and 5 from the online appointments. 97.67% (126 of 129) of students surveyed responded with "average" or "above average" to the question regarding their opinion on both the value of the tutoring and their personal experience with the tutor. This was an improvement from 93.85% of students the previous year.

In spring 2019, the number of responses declined considerably from the spring 2018 period. A total of 40 responses were collected as compared to 65 responses the

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previous year. This decrease may have been due to a change in ASC Directors mid-way through AY 2018-2019.

Decision: Based on results from AY 2018-19, in AY 2019-2020 we will utilize more tools available to students to better meet their specific needs. With access to “Handshake”, the ASC will incorporate this service to schedule tutoring appointments, administer student surveys, and collect student data for AY 2019-2020. Using the “Handshake” application will allow students to schedule tutoring appointments directly through their “Handshake” NSU student accounts without having to submit a tutoring request to the Academic Success Center. We will also be able to more accurately monitor data regarding the total number of tutoring sessions, average sessions per week, number of online (WebEx) appointments scheduled, and the reasons students are requesting tutoring, including what information within subject areas they are having trouble with.

Measure 1.3 (Direct) With assistance from the Academic Advising Services, students under an academic suspension appeal will be reminded via email about tutoring opportunities. The unit goal is for at least 50% of this cohort to use tutoring at least three times over the course of one term.

Finding:

AY 2016 – 2017: Target not met

AY 2017 – 2018: Target not met

AY 2018 – 2019: Target not met

Analysis: In 2017-2018, the target was not met. Based on these findings, we changed the number of times students were contacted beginning in 2018 – 2019. GA mentors contacted these students via email between five to nine times through the term to remind each student of the terms of the Readmission from Suspension Contract and services available to them. In AY 2018-2019, the process of creating academic success plans was changed due to personnel changes and only four students were assigned mandated study hours at the ASC as opposed to 20 students the previous year. One of the students from AY 2018-2019 did attend the required appointments at the ASC, making 25% of these students utilize the center for tutoring.

Decision: Based on results from AY 2018-2019, the focus of the implementation of this target will change for AY 2019-2020 to more specific goals for students. As an example, a student with an academic success plan for summer 2019 has been instructed to use tutoring services for a specific course instead of a specific number of times. We will increase our online tutoring options for students and reach out to departments for additional resources. We will also build on our student data through incorporating the Handshake app to get more specific information about the type of tutoring our students need.

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SO 2. Provide faculty-led and peer-led workshops to contribute to the academic and personal success of all students.

Measure 2.1 (Indirect) At the end of each workshop, participants will be surveyed to determine the quality of the workshop experience. Respondents will answer with “strongly agree”, “agree”, “neutral”, “disagree”, and “strongly disagree” as well as answer open-ended questions. The goal is for at least 75% of the participants to provide an answer of average or above average on the quality of the workshop.

Finding:

AY 2016 – 2017: Target Not Met.

AY 2017 – 2018: Target Met.

AY 2018 – 2019: Target Met

Analysis: In AY 2017 – 2018, the target was met. Based on these results, workshops for 2018-2019 were presented based on what students had requested from surveys. We also launched three online workshops which were recordings and videos of previously presented workshops for our online students and advertised these workshops on the ASC webpage and on social media.

For Academic Year 2018/19, 100% (49 of 49) of the respondents answered average or above average to the question regarding the overall quality of the workshop. This was an increase from 94% the previous year. The total number of attendees, however, remains low. The number also dropped considerably from fall 18 to spring 19 and no data was collected from online students.

Decision: Based on results from AY 2018-2019, the focus of providing workshops will shift during AY 2019-2020. As the number of students on academic success plans increases, the focus on workshop design will change to providing information to these specific students with workshops focusing on academic success instead of general workshops for all students. For Academic year 2019/20 we will start using the “Remind” app to disseminate workshop information to students on academic success plans.

Measure 2.2 (Direct) With assistance from the Academic Advising Services, students under an academic suspension appeal will be reminded via email about workshops. The unit goal is for at least 50% of this cohort to attend the workshops over the course of one term.

Finding:

AY 2016 – 2017: Target Not Met.

AY 2017 – 2018: Target Not Met.

AY 2018 – 2019: Target not met.

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Analysis: In 2017-2018 the target was not met. Based on the analysis of these results, information about the workshop schedule was made available on the unit's website as well as via Student Messenger and various social media platforms. Additionally, in Spring 2018, all students on Readmission from Suspension Contracts were offered the opportunity to test the online workshops via Microsoft Stream with a direct link to the site before they were available to the general NSU population.

For AY 2018/19, a total of 84 students were required to attend student success workshops. Of these, 34 students (40%) attended at least one workshop. This number increased from 34.9% of students attending workshops the previous year but remained short of the target. Most of the attendance for the workshops took place during the fall 2018 semester.

Decision: Based on data from AY 2018-2019, we plan to improve our mentor program by adding the "Remind" and "Handshake" app for student contacts in AY 2019-2020. As the number of students on financial aid appeals increases, we feel that these apps may be a more effective way to reach students with information regarding tips for academic success and opportunities for tutoring at the ASC.

SO 3. The Academic Success Center will help students construct individualized academic plans for students who have filed an appeal to receive financial aid.

* **Note: Measure 4.1 moved to Measure 3.1**

* The decision was made to reassign this SO, based on a change in personnel and job duties for the Director of the Academic Success Center. The current director does not provide direct academic advising (which was formerly measured in SO 3). The current director does help chart academic progress for students on Academic Success Plans. Therefore, the former SO 4 is still measured. The reassignment to SO 3 seems to be a better fit for this measurement moving forward.

Measure 3.1 (Direct) At the end of each semester, the unit goal is for at least 10% of the students to either reach SAP (Satisfactory Academic Progress set by the Department of Financial Aid) or graduation.

Finding:

AY 2016 – 2017: Target Not Met.

AY 2017 – 2018: Target Met.

AY 2018 – 2019: Target not met.

Analysis: In 2017-2018 the target was met. Based on these results, we increased the number of student contacts via student email: at the 6-week, 11-week, and 16-week mark. These points of contact remind the student of their unique academic plan's requirements while also urging them to use the resources available to them, such as tutoring, disability support, and counseling services.

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In AY 2018-19, 422 students were on Academic Success Plans. A total of 39 students (9.24%) completed their plans by reaching SAP or graduating. This percent decreased from 13% the previous year. While the target was not met this academic year, the academic plans continue to allow students who would not typically be allowed to receive aid the opportunity to receive financial aid and better their life circumstances. The department will focus on better ways to disseminate information to students.

Decision: Based on results from AY 2018-2019, in AY 2019-2020, the “Handshake” and “Remind” Apps will be added to our outreach efforts for students. The Academic Success Center will enhance individualized academic plans for students who filed an appeal to receive financial aid by using these apps to contact students. The number of students on academic plans changes as each semester passes. Many of the students are assigned term lengths of up to eight semesters while some are given lengths as short as one. Additionally, the number of students who are on the academic plan changes due to resignations, graduations, and failure of the academic plan. Thus, it can be difficult to pinpoint ways to assist these students in improving their chances of success. We can, however, improve the way outreach is made to these students.

Measure 3.2 (Indirect-to be added AY 2019-2020) At the end of each semester, students on Academic Success Plans will complete a survey for feedback regarding their academic progress. One question will state, “Completing an Academic Success Plan in order to receive my financial aid has helped me reach my goal of earning a college degree.” Respondents will be able to respond with “strongly agree”, “agree”, “neutral”, “disagree”, and “strongly disagree.” The unit goal is for at least 75% of the students surveyed to respond with agree or strongly agree.

SO 4. (To be added AY 2019-2020) The director will chart academic progress for those students on academic success plans who do not have a clear path to graduation.

Note: SO 4 has changed from the last assessment cycle due to a change in Academic Success Center personnel and job duties at the midpoint of AY 2019-2020.

Measure 4.1 (Direct- To be added AY 2019-2020) By the end of each semester, students on academic plans who do not have a clear path to graduation will be required to meet with their academic advisor, construct a graduation pathway plan and provide a copy of the pathway plan to the Academic Success Center. The graduation pathway will then be incorporated into their Academic Success Plan. The unit goal is for at least 75% of the students with no path to graduation to meet with their advisor and provide a copy of their plan to the Academic Success Center by the end of their first semester on an academic plan.

Finding: No data. See note above.

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Analysis: From the initial analysis of academic success plans conducted by the new director of the Academic Success Center, 47% of students' Academic Success Plans have no pathway to graduation in place or the students are in programs which they do not have the overall GPA to be admitted into upper level classwork required for degree completion.

Decision: Requiring students to provide a copy of a pathway to graduation will help the Academic Success Center more accurately track information in SO 3. This may also encourage students who are struggling academically to establish a mentoring relationship with their advisor and/or Academic Success Center Director

Measure 4.2 (Indirect-to be added AY 2019-2020)) At the end of each semester, students who are required to provide a copy of their graduation pathway will complete a survey for feedback regarding their academic progress. One question will state, "Completing a plan for a pathway to graduation has helped me reach my goal of earning a college degree." Respondents will be able to respond with "strongly agree", "agree", "neutral", "disagree", and "strongly disagree." The unit goal is for at least 75% of the students surveyed to respond with agree or strongly agree.

Finding: No data. See note above.

Analysis: Almost 50% of student on an Academic Success Plan do not have a clear path to degree completion. Several of these students also have low grade point averages, which will make it hard for them to enter upper level coursework. In addition to requiring copies of their graduation pathway to the Academic Success Center, many of these students will also be referred to Career Counseling Services.

Decision: Due to a change in personnel, some student advising services provided through the Academic Success Center were shifted to other departments. It remains vital, however, that the Academic Success Center provide a bridge for struggling students to other services provided on campus, including academic advising and career counseling. Incorporating these services into Academic Success Plans will help ensure that students are able to reach their goals.

Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results.

Beginning in spring, 2019, The Academic Success Center (ASC) began tracking the average number of tutoring sessions for all students. This will continue to be a part of our yearly assessment as SO 1.1. The target is for the Academic Success Center to accommodate at least 75% of all tutoring requests. In spring 2019 we accommodated 90% of our tutor requests. This can be attributed to a net increase of 5 tutors in Spring 2019. 80% of these new tutors were gained via outreach to department heads regarding the center's needs. 40% of the new tutors work within other departments but come to the Academic Success Center to provide tutoring services a few hours each week.

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Based on AY 2017-2018 results, we changed the delivery system for student surveys for AY 2018-2019. These changes were made in order to collect more data from students. The target for SO 1.2 for at least 75% to rate their tutoring experience as “average” or “above average” was met in AY 2018-2019 with 97.67% (126 of 129) of students surveyed rating the value of tutoring and their personal experience with their tutor as “average” or “above average”. There were, however, fewer student responses in the spring. This decrease is attributed to a change in ASC Directors mid-way through AY 2018-2019.

In AY 2017-2018 the target for SO 1.3 was not met. To meet the unit goal of at least 50% of students required in their academic success plan to utilize tutoring, the number of times these students were contacted was increased in AY 2018-2019. As a result, the ASC did see an improvement (25%) in the number of students with Academic Success Plans who attended tutoring, but the goal of 50% was not met and the number of students on plans required to use the center decreased considerably. This was attributed to a change in the way academic success plans were processed in spring, 2019 during the transition to a new ASC director.

For AY 2018-2019, the target for SO 2.1 continues to be met. The goal of SO 2.1 is for at least 75% of ASC workshop participants to provide an answer of “average” or “above average” on the quality of the workshop. 100% of students rated workshops as “average” or “above average”. This can be attributed to workshops for 2018-2019 being presented on topics students had requested via the satisfaction surveys from the year prior.

Despite improved communication efforts as outlined in AY 2017-2018, SO2.2 was not met. The ASC fell short of the goal of 50% of students on academic success plans attending workshops in AY 2018-2019. The percentage of students increased from the previous year, but most of these students attended workshops in fall, 2018. We attribute the number of students dropping off in the spring due to the transition of the new ASC director.

Due to personnel changes, SO 4.1 has been moved to 3.1. This SO states that 10% of students on academic success plans will be removed due to graduation or reaching SAP. In AY 2018-19 this SO decrease from the previous year where the target was met. The percentage for this SO has fluctuated from 6%-13% since 2016. As this program continues to grow, this number will continue to fluctuate but the percentage decrease this semester is attributed to the change in directors. More data is also needed to accurately address SO 3.

Direct advising duties completed by the Director of the Academic Success Center as outlined in AY 2017-2018 have shifted due to personnel changes and this led to a change in the way assessment could be conducted during the last half of AY 2018-2019. While no longer providing direct academic advising, the Director still constructs

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Academic Success Plans. SO 4.0 is being revised to reflect this change in the Academic Success Center.

Plan of action moving forward.

While compiling data for AY 2018-2019, it was decided that specific data points would be collected: total tutoring sessions, average number of sessions per week, % scheduled online, % drop in appointments, and % of tutoring requests accommodated. SO 1.1 was changed to 1.2. and SO 1.1 states that the Academic Success Center will accommodate at least 75% of all tutoring requests. This new SO 1.1 will give a more accurate direct measure of the ASC's impact on meeting student needs and will be measured in AY 2019-2020 compared to baseline numbers gathered in SO 1.1 for AY 2018-2019.

In AY 2019-2020, The Academic Success Center will use new platforms to optimize tutoring options for students. The "Handshake" app will replace the current program used by the ASC to schedule appointments. This change will allow students to schedule their own tutoring appointments through their existing Handshake accounts. By continuing to increase staffing in AY 2019-2020, we will also create more options for students to schedule either face-to-face or online appointments. We will continue to build on the communication between departments and sharing of resources to optimize student success in AY 2019-2020.

Because SO 1.3 continues to not be met, the focus of the implementation of this target will change for AY 2019-2020 to more specific goals for students. As an example, a student with an academic success plan for summer 2019 has been instructed to use tutoring services for a specific course instead of a specific number of times. We will also increase our online tutoring options for students build on our student data by incorporating the "Handshake" app to get more specific information about the type of tutoring our students use.

The focus on workshop design will change in AY 2019-2020 to providing information to students on academic success plans. Because the number of students on academic success plans continues to increase, workshops will focus on academic success instead of general workshops for all students. For AY2019-20220 we will use the "Remind" app to disseminate workshop information to students on academic success plans.

Based on data from AY 2018-2019, we will improve our mentoring program in AY 2019-2020 by adding the "Remind" and "Handshake" app for student contacts. As the number of students on financial aid appeals increases, these apps will be a more effective way to reach students with information regarding tips for academic success and opportunities for tutoring at the ASC.

From the initial analysis of academic success plans conducted by the new director of the Academic Success Center in spring 2019, 47% of students' Academic Success Plans have no pathway to graduation in place or the students are in programs which

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they do not have the overall GPA to be admitted into upper level classwork required for degree completion. In AY 2019-2020 providing a copy of a pathway to graduation will be required for these students. This information will help the Academic Success Center construct more effective success plans and will encourage students to establish a mentoring relationship with their advisor and/or Academic Success Center Director

SO 4 has been added for AY 2019-2020 to reflect the change in personnel and job duties. SO 4 will measure the ASC's ability to chart academic progress for students on academic success plans. Although direct academic advising provided through the ASC in AY 2018-2019 has shifted to other departments. It remains vital that the Academic Success Center continues to provide a bridge for struggling students to other services provided on campus in AY 2019-2020. These services include academic advising and career counseling. Incorporating these services into Academic Success Plans will help ensure that students are able to reach their goals.