

Assessment Cycle 2019-2020

Testing 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.

Academic Support and Auxiliary Services is to provide a variety of services, defined as food service, bookstore(s), student housing and communications service – cable and internet, campus vending, post office and one card service, thereby supporting a living and learning environment fostering personal, professional, and academic growth for the University community.

The Testing Center at Northwestern State University (NSU) exists to provide a variety of testing options for students at NSU and the surrounding communities. We strive to assist individuals in achieving their academic and professional goals by offering the most advanced options in a quiet and secure environment. The Testing Center adheres to the National College Testing Associations (NCTA) standards and guidelines to provide quality services to NSU and the surrounding communities.

Methodology: The assessment process for the Testing 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 Outcomes:

SO 1. Students will be able to identify the Testing Center as a place to take exams and one that encourages student success through the services provided, which will increase the number of proctored exams given each semester.

Measure 1.1 Provide information/handouts to each department & students at Freshman Connection regarding the services offered through the Testing Center. The number of students using the lab will be tracked through the Testing Center's calendar and sign in sheets each quarter.

Findings: Target met.

Analysis. In 2018-2019, the target was not met. Based on the analysis for 2018-2019, it was clear that the Testing Center needed better communication with departments regarding our services. For Fall 2019 and Spring 2020, we reached out to faculty via emails. In addition, we sent periodic emails to messenger and student messenger reminding everyone of our services and instructions on how to schedule a test with us. The number of students requesting Accuplacer testing at Freshmen Connection for Summer 2019 was low, however, we were able to advise these students face to face about our services. In addition, we gave study guides to any student who did not meet the required score for admissions. Due to COVID 19, Freshman Connection Session One for May 2020 was virtual which interrupted our face to face advising for Accuplacer. We offered Accuplacer online to assist students and provided them with an opportunity to test during COVID 19. As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met.

Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results, the Testing Center has met the goal and will continue to reach out to faculty and students. For 2020-2021, we will begin to reach out to students via Facebook Student Concerns to let them know about what services are available at the Testing Center. This will give us another way to interact with students. We will visit the classrooms of University Studies and provide information to students. University Studies is an excellent tool to utilize to come face to face with students and introduce them to services that we provide. We will continue to offer different options for students who need placement testing that includes face to face and online testing. We will mentor incoming freshman by becoming Demon Success Coaches during Freshman Connection.

Measure 1.2 Extend the Testing Center's hours of operations to accommodate more testers. The unit goal is to increase the proctored exams given each semester by 10%.

Finding: Target not met.

Analysis. In 2018-2019, the target was met. Based on the analysis for 2018-2019, there was an increase greater than 30% of exams proctored (4,581). We extended our office hours to accommodate late testers. For Fall 2019, we proctored a total of 2,501 exams, however, this total does not reflect a great increase from Fall 2018. For Spring 2020, we proctored a total of 1,125 exams which decreased from previous year. Due to COVID 19, we closed and could not proctor any exams which includes finals. Finals is our busiest time for proctoring. Since we could not extend our hours and closed, it did not allow the students to take advantage of our proctoring services. We did not participate in Credit Connection due to low numbers, however, we will did participate in Literary Rally in which over 2,500 students attended. In AC 2019-2020 the target was not met.

Decision. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results, the commitment to accommodate more testers was not accomplished due to COVID 19. For 2020-2021, the Testing Center will have extended evening hours and open on Saturday during midterms and finals. The Center will seek other opportunities to participate in various events on campus which includes Scholar's Day, Literary Rally, and Freshman Connection Campus Quest, and Move-In Week.

SO 2. Increase the number of instructors using the lab for class use.

Measure 2.1. The number of instructors using the lab, will increase by 15% per semester as tracked by the Testing Center's calendar and sign-in sheets for the class.

Findings: Target not met.

Analysis. In 2018-2019, the target was met. Based on the analysis of 2018-2019, we did increase the appointments by 15% that includes 49 whole class appointments. For Fall 2019, we had 26 whole class appointments by professors, which is a slight decrease from Fall 2018. Some of the decrease was contributed to increase number of students in a class, which the Testing Center only has 32 computers for testers at one time. Some professors had to schedule a bigger facility due to their large class enrollment. We offered to split the class into two different times, however, some professors did not want to test this way. For Spring 2020, the number of whole class appointments were a total of 6. This was due to COVID 19 and closing of the University to protect the interest of students, faculty, and staff with orders from the Governor. Majority of professors did not require proctored test due to COVID 19 and the University switching to online classes. In AC 2019-2020 the target was not met.

Decision. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results, the Testing Center percentage for 2020-2021 may decrease if professors continue to have large number of students in a class. We will meet with the professors to create a plan of action to accommodate all the testers. The Testing Center will meet with Academic Services

for possible usage of their room to help with overflow during midterms and finals. This will help with the bigger classrooms. We will continue to accommodate the students that we have room for and offer split times. We will welcome new faculty and encourage them to reserve our testing center for their needs. Online classes are increasing so we expect testing center reservations to increase. We will reach out to online students, encouraging them to take advantage of the free service provided for them. The Testing Center will work with Deans and Department heads to identify new faculty who may not know about our testing services.

Measure 2.2. Promote the Testing Center/Proctoring Lab to professors on campus to increase the total numbers of testers by 10%.

Findings: Target not met.

Analysis. In 2018-2019, the target was met. Based on the analysis, the Testing Center proctored 6,121 testers which was an increase of over 40% of the previous year. Fall 2019 results showed 3,095 testers coming into the center to take a test. These results show a slight increase but not 10%. Some of the instructors had our old link, which makes it difficult for students. As we became aware of this issue, we emailed the correct link to instructors. We update them every semester with the correct link, however, some do not update their syllabus. For Spring 2020, results showed a decrease of testers coming into the testing center. The total number of proctored tests was 1,581 which was due to COVID 19. We closed and were not able to proctor one-half of the semester. In AC 2019-2020, the target was not met.

Decision. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020, the instructors could not take full advantage of the Testing Center due to COVID 19. For 2020-2021, the Testing Center will reach out to instructors and encourage them to use the Testing Center. We will remind them of the correct link and encourage them to update their syllabus with new information. We will make it easy for a student to schedule a test by ways of website, email, phone, or walk-in. Being able to offer various ways of scheduling helps to meet the student's educational needs.

SO 3. Decrease the number of Co-requisite Course Placement.

Measure 3.1 Survey students who utilize the Testing Center to determine their thoughts on the facility, the testing process, and what they consider to be useful in helping them prepare for the exam. The target is for respondents to respond favorably concerning the facility and services and make recommendations for improvement.

Findings: Target not met.

Analysis. In 2018-2019, the target was met. In 2018-2019, the survey was created.

Based on the analysis, in 2018-2019, the target was met. For Fall 2019, we emailed each student coming into the testing center, encouraging them to take the survey and their name would be entered into a drawing for NSU gift bag. We felt this would get more response. We received 236 surveys for Fall 2019, however, still low in terms of how many proctored exams were administered. For Spring 2020, we began the survey, however, did not complete it due to COVID 19. The overall results were favorable in terms of comfort and professionalism. Some of the negative response included students asking for better headphones and noise disturbance outside. In AC 2019-2020 the target was not met.

Construction for the new LSMSA dorms is behind the Testing Center and this could not be avoided. Testers responded favorably concerning the Testing Center in terms of safety, professionalism, and comfort. The Testing Center staff encourages the testers to feel relaxed and to let them know if they need anything from the staff members. Communication is the key to success and will make the student feel comfortable while in a safe and secure environment. We encourage students to let us know what we can do to serve their needs better. In AC 2019-2020, the target was not met.

Decision. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020, The Testing Center will continue to survey students during fall and spring semester. For 2020-2021, the Testing Center will see where improvements are recommended in areas of space, timing, availability, noise, security, and comfort to better serve the students. There are some areas that we cannot control, however, we will continue to work on student satisfaction. The goal is to have a drawing every semester to help promote the survey. The goal is to promote satisfaction and help each student reach their educational goals.

SO 4. Faculty will identify the Testing Center as compliant with the NCTA's standard testing operations and one that handles exams with academic integrity.

Measure 4.1 Be certified Testing Center through the National College Testing Association.

Findings: Target met.

Analysis. In 2018-2019, the target was met. Based on the analysis, the certification process was established. Based on the 2019-2020 results, NSU Testing Center became a member of the NCTA. As a result, for Fall 2019, the Director attended NCTA conference to network with other schools and their testing process along with vendors offering new services. As a result of these changes, in AC 2019-2020 the target was met.

Decision. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020, NSU testing Center has recertified their membership to NCTA. This has certification through the NCTA's standard testing operations. The recognition of this certification will allow the Testing Center to be

recognized at the national level bringing recognition to NSU. For 2020-2021, we will re-certify our membership and attend workshops online.

Measure 4.2 Abide by the instructions provided by the instructors and report any incidences that go against them thereby receiving favorable responses in the satisfactions survey.

Findings: Target not met.

Analysis. In 2018-2019, the target was not met. Based on the analysis, the survey was not created, but communication between the professors and testing staff were open. In Fall 2019, the survey was designed. The interaction between the Testing Center and professors is favorable, with no major incidents to report. The participation for Fall 2019 survey were low. For Spring 2020, we did not complete the survey due to COVID 19.

Decision. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020, the Testing Center will work closely with instructors across NSU's campuses to implement security measures to ensure the highest level of test integrity. In 2020-2021, instructors will be encouraged to complete the surveys and make suggestions to the Director on how to improve the services of the Testing Center.

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

The Testing Center participated in various events throughout campus. This allowed the testing center to reach students and inform them about our services.

The Testing Center relocated during Freshman Connection to meet the needs of incoming students who needed to take the Accuplacer Placement Test. This allowed face to face advising of scores.

We offered online Accuplacer to the students during COVID 19 since we could not meet with them in person.

Targets were met for Fall 2019 with the implementation of extended hours of operation.

Testing Center encouraged split times for large classes.

The relationship with all instructors and students improved through outreach.

The center counseled each student about the importance of placement scores and the availability of NSU tutors. By reaching out to the students and encouraging good study habits, along with tutoring recommendations and study guides, co-requisite classes should have decreased.

The Testing Center recertified membership of the National College Testing Association which brought NSU recognition at the National level.

Student learning and service outcome data were collected from information obtained on sign-in sheets and the Testing Center's calendar.

Plan of action moving forward.

The Testing Center will reach out to faculty, staff, and students to encourage use of the center for their proctoring needs through means of email, messenger, social media, and the university website. We will provide the most updated information, links, etc.

The Testing Center will offer several options for students that need the Accuplacer test which includes face to face and online.

The Testing Center will participate in Literary Rally, Scholar's Day, Freshman Connection, and Freshmen Connection Quest.

The Testing Center will attend UNIV 1000 classes to make students aware of what is offered at the center.

The Testing Center will host extended hours during midterms and finals to accommodate more testers.

The Testing Center will provide exceptional service to the students by evaluating the surveys taken by students about their testing experience and implement suggestions when possible.

The Testing Center will continue to create a plan to encourage more survey participation from students and faculty.

The Testing Center will evaluate surveys for improvements to the student's testing experience.

Membership to the National College Testing Association will be renewed.

