

Assessment Cycle 2019 – 2020

University Registrar

Division or Department: N/A

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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 Registrar ensures the integrity, accuracy, and security of all academic records of current and former students; facilitates effective student registration and enrollment; builds secure student data files and sets policy and procedures for their responsible use; maintains up-to-date course schedules, catalogs, final examination schedules; manages efficient use of classrooms; and supervises and maintains the Banner and degree audit systems. The Registrar supervises the processes for the articulation of transfer credits, graduation and certification of graduate, baccalaureate, and associate degrees, enrollment and degree verification, production of official transcripts, diplomas, and commencement ceremonies. The Registrar counsels and advises students, faculty, and staff on academic matters; and interprets and enforces policies and regulations of the University, Board of Regents and Supervisors, and FERPA.

Methodology: The assessment process includes:

- (1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative and qualitative) are collected and submitted to the Unit Assessment Coordinator.
- (2) The Unit Assessment Coordinator will analyze the data to determine whether or not 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 needed.
- (5) The Unit Assessment Coordinator, in consultation with Unit Coordinators, will determine proposed changes to the measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and any appropriate service changes.

Academic Services and Veteran Affairs

Service Outcomes:

SO 1. The Academic Services and Veteran Affairs Unit ensures the timely processing of Veteran Affairs documents and certifications of enrollment each semester for new,

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transfer, visiting, and continuing VA students; facilitates the class schedule information for access by students and faculty for effective registration and enrollment; and facilitates the commencement ceremonies.

Source Map:

U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs – Education and Training
University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors
Louisiana Board of Regents Legislative Response (Louisiana Military Friendly Campus)

Measure 1.1 (Indirect - Survey)

The Veteran Services Office coordinates all veterans, dependents, guardsmen, and reservists' benefits for those attending classes and using the G.I. Bill. We will survey VA students receiving in-person service and ensure that all VA certifying officials attend at least one VA training each academic year. We should reach our goal of a 75% satisfaction rating by the end of spring 2020.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In 2018-19, the target was met. Based upon the analysis of the 2018-19 results, we found it evident that we are providing satisfactory service to our VA recipients but to drive improvement we changed our population of students surveyed to only include those with VA benefits and receiving in-person assistance in our VA area. We surveyed 100 VA students. There was a total of 77 who completed the survey as meeting their satisfaction with the services provided resulting in a 77% satisfaction rating. The favorable responses provided an accurate view of the satisfaction with the services rendered. An additional layer of service was made through training of the Director of Academic Services on veteran qualifications and processes. Based upon the analysis of the results, in 2019-20, our two VA Certifying Officials and the Director of Academic Services attended the fall VA training. We surveyed all VA students as they received in-person service by semester. As a result, in 2019-20, the target was not met. We had a total of 31 out of 50 surveys completed by VA students by the end of fall 2019. This gave a 62% satisfaction rating for fall 2019. When the spring semester began, we had 1 VA student to complete the survey prior to the COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Order in March. We had to revise our method of providing service to our VA students during that time. All assistance was handled by email. We have 465 VA students. The volume of email communication from VA students was a total of 109 which was more than the number for in-person service. Most of the VA students do not reside within the same city as the University's main campus, so this gave us a good view of how many more students we are servicing by email. Although we had to restructure our service method, we were still able to provide sufficient service to our VA students.

Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the 2019-20 results, the following changes will be implemented to drive improvement in 2020-

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21. We will change our method of service to VA students to volume by email. This change will give us a broader view of the service we are providing to the VA students as well as expanding our service beyond office visits.

Measure 1.2 (Indirect – Survey)

Academic Services coordinates all aspects of the commencement ceremonies to ensure a successful and memorable experience for the graduates, parents, faculty, staff, visitors, and community. Early preparation of and retrieval of the participants on the program and script, stage and sound preparation instructions, effective communication with the Graduation/Audit Unit on program completion and diplomas/covers, photographer confirmation, confirmation of floral decorations, etc. will minimize problems on the day of commencement. The satisfaction rating of the graduates will increase to 100% by the end of spring 2020.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: Based upon the analysis of the 2018-19 results, we did not meet our target goal. In 2018-2019 we chose to continue to provide exemplary service to our graduates and survey those participating in the ceremony. By doing so we received the following results: 816 out of 827 graduates responded as being satisfied with the entire ceremony resulting in a 98.67% rating. A total of 11 graduates did not respond favorably which could be attributed to the fact that these students may not have actually graduated but were allowed to participate in the ceremony since the commencement program is unofficial until all candidates have been certified by their dean, or the fact that the air conditioning went out during the second spring ceremony. The unfavorable response resulted in a 1.33% unsatisfactory rating. Although we did not meet our target, the analysis does reflect that we are providing a satisfactory service to our graduates. As a result, in 2019-20, with the calendar being changed by the administration, we were able to determine true graduates from the deans' certifications submitted to our office prior to the printing of the commencement program for the fall ceremonies. Because of this clarity we were able to distribute diplomas to all graduates at the end of both ceremonies. The fall programs given to the candidates and attendees were official programs. We had a total of 685 expected graduates for whom we prepared seating on the arena floor. After both ceremonies, we distributed a three-question survey to each graduate. Question #1 Was the entire ceremony organized to your satisfaction?; Question #2 What is your opinion of the arena (decorations, lighting, etc.) once you entered to begin the ceremony?; and Question #3 What is your opinion of the sound during the ceremony? A total of 373 graduates completed the survey resulting in a 54.5% participation rate. Of the 373 who completed the survey, 366 indicated good/very good for question #1 giving a 98.1% satisfaction rating. A total of 373 graduates indicated good/very good for questions #2 resulting in a 100% satisfaction rating. Only one graduate indicated bad to question #3 resulting in a 0.27% unsatisfactory rating. Seven graduates indicated "No" to question #1 of the survey.

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One of the graduates who indicated “No” to Question #1 wrote at notation “more information for online students please”. For the spring semester, the calendar date was adjusted again for the submission of candidate grades which compressed our timeframe to verify final grades for graduates for commencement. We also had to revise our processes for the spring semester due to the COVID-19 social distancing requirement. The commencement ceremony was conducted virtually. Because of this adjustment, we were not able to survey the graduates on commencement day; therefore, we did not meet our target goal. After the dean’s certifications were received in our office, all true graduates’ diplomas and covers were mailed. There was a total of 993 spring graduates with 1,015 degrees awarded. There were no complaints to our office from the graduates who participated in the virtual ceremony. We also did not receive any complaints afterwards from graduates who received their diplomas and covers by mail. By not receiving any complaints after the virtual ceremony, this was an indicator that they were satisfied with our modified graduation service provided to them.

Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the results in 2019-20, the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement in 2020-21. Instead of having a survey completed right after each commencement ceremony, we will have a drop box for complaints or concerns from graduates placed on our table in both concourses and the N-Club Room. This will also aid us in quickly distributing diplomas and clearing the concourse areas. The satisfaction rating of the graduates will increase to 100% by the end of spring 2021.

Student Academic Services and Transcript Evaluation

Service Outcomes:

SO 2. The Student Academic Services and Transcript Evaluation Unit ensures the accuracy of information and assistance provided to current and former students, faculty, and staff, and accuracy of transfer credits.

Source Map:

University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors
Louisiana Board of Regents’

Measure 2.1 (Indirect - Survey)

Student Academic Services is the first point of contact for current and former students, parents, faculty, and other staff. It is essential that accurate information is provided as well as processing their requests within a timely manner. The service we provide to students is our main focal point. The students’ satisfaction rating with the completion of their requests, our staff’s attitude, and our staff’s assistance will increase to 75% by the end of spring 2020.

Finding: Target was met.

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Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was not met. For the Academic Year 2018-19, we chose a plan to focus more on the services we provide to the students versus faculty and staff because the result of every service is for the students. As a result, in 2018-2019 we implemented the change to survey only the students and only when services were rendered within our front office area. We had a total of 36 students who participated in the survey. There were 35 out of the 50 students surveyed who gave a very good/good response for the assistance needed, completion of their requests, and staff's attitude resulting in 70% satisfaction rating. A total of 35 out of 50 responded with very good/good for their overall visit resulting in a 70% satisfaction rating. Only 1 student responded unfavorably resulting in a 2% unsatisfactory rating. Although we did not meet our goal, the analysis indicates that we are providing satisfactory service to our students. As a result, in 2019-20, we surveyed only students who received services. We implemented the change to have our front office staff randomly hand out surveys as well as having the surveys accessible in our front office area to drive continuous improvement. For the fall semester 25 surveys were placed in the reception area, and 25 surveys were given to both front desk staff for a total of 75 surveys. By doing so, persons who walked away too quickly could still complete a survey on the table in the reception area. The survey consisted of three questions: Question #1 Did you receive the assistance you needed or were you directed to someone who could help you?; Question #2 How was our staff's attitude during your visit?; and Question #3 How would you rate your overall visit today? A total of 75 students indicated "Yes" to question #1 resulting in a 100% satisfaction rating. A total of 75 students indicated very good/good to questions #2 and #3 resulting in a 100% satisfaction rating. For the spring semester, the surveys were distributed in the same manner as in the fall semester. The exception for the spring semester was that we had hired another employee at our front desk area which gave us four employees who were able to assist students in the area. More surveys were handed out during the beginning of the semester. Before the COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Order, a total of 75 students receiving service had already completed the survey. All 75 of the students indicated "Yes" in response to question #1 resulting in a 100% satisfaction rating. All 75 indicated very good/good to questions #2 and #3 resulting in a 100% satisfaction rating. While teleworking from home with only two staff members in Student Academic Services having access to Banner, we primarily communicated with students by email through the Registrar account. All incoming questions, outgoing responses, and documents submitted for processing were all handled through emails from students, parents, faculty, staff, deans, administrators, etc. Beginning March 20th through May 8th, a total of 5,319 emails were received with a total of 5,598 forwards and responses made to those emails. Emails were being monitored 7 days a week from 6 a.m. to Midnight and sometimes beyond. After the semester ended and these numbers were provided from ITS, it was evident of the satisfactory service we were providing to our students in that 8-week time period as well as from the beginning of the semester.

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Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the results in 2019-20, the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement in 2020-2021. The experience gained through this pandemic has given us a different outlook on how we can still provide satisfactory services to our students. We will change our goal to the volume of email contact instead of in-house surveys as service is provided. By the end of spring 2021, the volume of emails received and responded to/forwarded will reach 5,000.

Measure 2.2 (Indirect – Survey)

Transcript Evaluation is critical in determining admission eligibility, pre-requisite requirements for registration, and degree completion determination. The students are our main focal point for services rendered. We changed our focus to the volume of transcripts evaluated into the Banner system since our participation was so low. By making this change we will be able to establish the student's satisfaction rating based on the volume of transcripts successfully evaluated. The volume of transfer credit evaluations entered into the Banner system will reach 3,000 by the end of spring 2020.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In 2018-2019 the target was not met. We changed our plan for the 2018-2019 Academic Year to focus on the students with transfer credits rather than their advisors. The goal was to reach at least a 60% satisfaction rating by the end of spring 2019. We surveyed 1,341 students who had transfer credits added to their records during the academic year. A total of 85 students responded to the survey resulting in a 6.34% participation rate. A total of 72 students responded that their transcripts were evaluated in a timely manner resulting in an 85% satisfaction rating. There were 71 students who responded that they were satisfied with the accuracy of the equivalent credits given resulting in an 83.5% satisfaction rating. When asked if they were able to contact an evaluator for assistance regarding questions, 72 students responded yes resulting in an 84.7% satisfaction rating. Even though we did not meet our target, the responses are evidence that we are providing satisfactory services that benefit our students. As a result, in 2019-20, we changed our focus to the volume of transcripts evaluated into the Banner system. We had an IT programmer generate a report of all students who had transfer credits entered during the fall semester. The report contained each student and each institution from which credits were entered. With the data in the report, we were able to determine how many transcripts were evaluated. During the fall semester, a total of 1,598 credits were entered into the system for 461 students. A total of 1,683 credits were entered into the system for 560 students during the spring semester for an overall total of 3,281 credits. A key factor in our ability to enter more credits during the spring was due to the hiring of another employee at our front desk area. This allowed both evaluators the needed time to enter credits in a quicker timeframe as well as having the new employee assist with verifying the accuracy of the entered credits. During the COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Order period from

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March 20th through May 8th, it was noticeable that there was a decrease in transcripts received from other institutions. From January 7th through March 20th, a total of 1,585 credits were entered into the system for 521 students. From March 24th through May 7th, we only entered a total of 98 credits into the system for 39 students. With the onset of the pandemic and minimal staff access, we were still capable of providing timely entry of transfer credits; thus satisfactorily meeting the needs of our students who were able to be quickly advised and registered for the upcoming summer and/or fall semesters.

Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the results in 2019-20, the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement in 2020-21. We will include the receipt of electronic transcripts from the Admissions Office since this worked very well during the time we were teleworking from home. Receiving transcripts electronically ensures that we receive them in a timely manner for quicker entry of the credits. By the end of spring 2021, the volume of transfer credits entered into the system will increase to 3,500.

Records and Transcript Production

Service Outcomes:

SO 3. Records and Transcript Production ensures the accuracy and security of all current and former students' records. The primary focal points are to facilitate effective student registrations and enrollments, generate enrollment and degree verifications, and production of official transcripts. This unit builds secure data files for current and former students and counsels/advises current and former students, faculty, and staff on academic policies and regulations.

Source Map:

University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors
Louisiana Board of Regents'
National Student Clearinghouse

Measure 3.1 (Indirect - Survey)

Records monitors all students' records daily. Updates and adjustments are made to records using student requests (major changes, residency redetermination, catalog changes), Registration Credits and Graduation Council appeal committee decisions, approved grade change requests, approved academic standing reinstatements, and approved out-of-state waivers from the Scholarship Office. By completing all updates and adjustments in a timely manner, this aids in the students being eligible to register and/or enroll in the appropriate courses for their degree programs as well as having an accurate accounting of tuition and registration fees. By the end of spring 2020, the volume of grade changes processed to students' academic records will reach 2,500.

Finding: Target was not met.

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Analysis: In 2018-2019 our target was not met. We surveyed 5,147 students who had grade and/or major changes processed on their records. A total of 60 students responded to the survey resulting in a 1.2% participation rating. After discussion with an IT programmer, it was discovered that most updates to the students' records cannot be clearly identified except grade changes. We had 47 out of 60 students respond that their major change was processed in a timely manner resulting in a 78.33% satisfaction rating. There were 19 students who responded that their grade change was processed in a timely manner when received in our office resulting in a 31.67% satisfaction rating. Even though we did not meet our target, the analysis indicates that we are satisfactorily meeting the needs of our students. Based on the analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results, we focused on grade changes processed for each student. By doing so, we were able to determine the students' satisfactory rating with the timeliness and accuracy of their grade changes by the volume of changes made. We had an IT programmer generate a list from the Banner system of all grade changes processed for students during the fall semester. As a result, there was a total of 517 grades changed during the fall semester. We discovered that the students who had appealed through RCGC to resign for the current term or a previous term were included in this count. This is a good thing because it is an update or adjustment to the students' records which can result in an improved academic standing. For the spring semester, a total of 663 grades were changed by an actual grade change submitted by the instructor or by approved appeal to resign. By the end of spring 2020, a total of 1,080 grades were changed. Although we did not meet our goal, it is evident that we are providing a satisfactory service to our students since all grades received were processed.

Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the results in 2019-20, the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement in 2020-2021. We will have IT revise the report of grade changes to include the reason for the changes since that field is filled in when changes are made. This will allow us to determine which are actual grade changes and which are approved resignation appeals. By the end of spring 2021, the volume of grades changes and approved resignation appeals will increase to 1,200.

Measure 3.2 (Indirect)

Records ensures that all current students' enrollment data is uploaded every 30 days to the National Student Clearinghouse during each semester, and degree completions are uploaded at the end of each semester. Timely uploading allows for the enrollment data to be accessible for students' self-service enrollment verifications, the National Student Loan Data System' accessibility for students' financial aid eligibility statuses, and employer/prospective employer verification of degree completions. With this information being readily available at the beginning of each semester and making students aware of this service, the volume of on-line self-service for students and employers/prospective employers will increase to 5,800 for Academic Year 2019-20.

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Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In 2018-19, we met our target. Our plan to notify all currently enrolled students that this service is available 24 hours a day proved to be beneficial. We saw the volume of on-line verifications increase to 5,573 which exceeded our goal. This result is an indication that we are meeting the needs of the students and employers. Based on the analysis of the results from 2018-19, in 2019-20, we decided to send an email notification at the beginning of the fall semester to all currently enrolled students (10,899) to inform them of the availability of this verification service. Instead of sending only one notification for the year, we chose to send the notification by semester with the expectation that this would generate more of an on-line demand. We had a total of 2,259 enrollment verifications, 1,146-degree verifications, and 68 dates of attendance processed successfully on-line during the fall semester. Since we are not able to upload the enrollment information until after registration has ended, we had to accommodate the students who needed verifications of current enrollment through our manual process. The date for the initial upload of enrollment data is something that cannot be change. We did not send out the email notification to students enrolled during spring 2020. We had a total of 1,884 enrollment verifications, 776-degree verifications, and 80 dates of attendance. When comparing both semesters, we could see the difference in not sending out the email notification. However, we did exceed our volume goal by reaching 6,213 online verifications which was an indicator that we are providing an effective and efficient service.

Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the results in 2019-20, the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement in 2020-2021. We will send out email notifications to all enrolled students after the census date for fall and spring. By the end of spring 2021, the volume of online verifications will increase to 6,400.

Measure 3.3 (Indirect - Survey)

Transcript Production ensures that all current and former students' official transcripts of their academic work are generated in a timely manner upon request. The validation of each student's record is completed first before generating the transcript whether electronically or a paper copy. Unofficial transcripts are readily available on-line and contain all of the students' academic information. The volume of on-line self-service requests processed will increase to 8,500 by the end of spring 2020.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was met. In the 2018-19 Academic Year, we changed to only focus on the volume of transcripts produced through our on-line service. As a result, in 2018-19, our staff informed students in need of a transcript of

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the on-line service and its availability 24 hours a day 7 days a week to drive continuous improvement. The on-line service also includes an electronic method of sending transcripts. We exceeded our goal of 4,000 in on-line transcript volume by reaching 8,306. This increase in the on-line volume of transcripts processed was an indication that we are meeting the needs of the students. Based on the analysis of the results from 2018-19, in 2019-20, we changed our plan to notify all currently enrolled students (10,899) by email at the beginning of the fall semester about the availability of this on-line service. Students requesting official transcripts on-line have two delivery options (electronic or mail). During the fall semester, there were 3,735 transcripts processed online. During the spring semester, there were 3,798 transcripts processed online for a total of 7,533 transcripts at the end of spring 2020. The decrease in transcript volume was most likely affected by the University's decision to reactivate the Transcript Hold on 10/30/2019 for any student (current or former) owing a previous balance of at least \$5. Students with this hold received an alert message when beginning the online process. Many of these students called or emailed us inquiring about the hold message. For those students who completed the process despite receiving the message, their transcripts were not generated, and an automated email notification was sent at variable times (maximum 4) during a 30-day period. After the 30 days and the holds not cleared, the requests expired. There was a total of 263 requests placed on hold because of an outstanding balance (232 expired; 31 pending).

Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the results in 2019-20, the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement in 2020-2021. We will post an alert message on the transcript landing page regarding the minimum \$5 transcript hold. To ensure that all current students are aware of the online transcript service, we will send an email notification after the census date for fall 2020 and spring 2021. At the end of spring 2021, the volume of online transcript requests processed will increase to 8,000.

Measure 3.4 (Indirect)

Records ensures that all permanent student records' documents, of current and former students, are scanned into Paperflow, our digital imaging system. Each document type is batch scanned, matched, and merged with the identifying number and name on the Banner system, and indexed to the corresponding data file. These data files can be accessed for retrieval from Papervision. The volume of scanned documents will increase to 90,000 by the end of spring 2020.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was met. For the 2018-19 Academic Year, we changed our plan to include the hiring of another employee who would work primarily with records and scanning documents. By doing so, this should increase the volume of documents scanned to 50,000 by the end of the 2018-19 Academic Year. As a result, in

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2018-19, we were able to move an employee into the records area to primarily scan documents. We exceeded our goal of 50,000 by scanning 87,129 documents into students' files. This increase in scanned documents is an indicator that we are satisfactorily meeting the needs of the students. Based on the analysis of the 2018-2019 results, in 2019-20, we assigned several other staff members to verify the scanned documents which allowed room for more scanning. Unfortunately, during the fall semester the scanner was temporarily broken which slowed us down resulting in less documents being scanned. A total of 24,856 documents were scanned during the fall semester. During the spring semester, we were assigned a new student employee who helped to organize the documents for scanning. This made it easier to scan a large number of documents. From January 9th through March 16th, a total of 13,884 documents had been scanned. As a result of circumstances beyond our control (COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Order), all scanning was placed on hold until being cleared to return to campus. We had a total of 38,740 documents scanned, we did not reach our target goal.

Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the results in 2019-20, the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement in 2020-2021. We will ensure that at least half of each workday is dedicated to scanning of student documents. By the end of spring 2021, the volume of scanned documents will increase to 80,000.

Measure 3.5 (Indirect - Survey)

Records ensures that it disseminates the current NSU, Board of Supervisors, Board of Regents, and FERPA regulations and policies when communicating with and advising current and former students, faculty, and staff. Continuing to provide the most current policies and regulations will help reduce any violations that could negatively affect the unit and University. At the beginning of each fall semester, faculty and staff will be encouraged to review and complete the FERPA tutorial and students to review the Student-Right-To-Know information on the Registrar's Office web page. The faculty and staff's Average and Superior Understanding of the FERPA regulations is our focal point. We will increase the completion of the FERPA Tutorial to 80% by the end of spring 2020.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was not met. In 2018-19, we had the FERPA Tutorial set up online. A message from the Registrar was sent out by Messenger to all faculty and staff with the intent of those who have access to student information such as Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions, Student Accounting, academic advisors and instructors, administrative staff and support staff, etc. to access the link provided in the message and complete the tutorial. We ran into the problem of some faculty and

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advisors not being able to access the link off-campus. The IT staff created another link through Moodle for any faculty and staff member to access. With the assistance of HR, we were able to identify approximately 471 employees who had access to student information. There were 357 faculty and staff who completed the FERPA Tutorial resulting in a 76% completion rate. Some faculty and staff completed the tutorial more than once which lets us know that they want to have a better understanding of the privacy rights of students. Even though we were close to meeting our target, the results reveal that the FERPA Tutorial is beneficial to faculty and staff, therefore, increasing their Average and Superior Understanding of the privacy rights of students. Based on the analysis of these results, in 2019-20 our plan was to incorporate the FERPA Tutorial as an annual requirement for those employees who have access to confidential student information. The Registrar sent out an email during the fall through Messenger to all faculty and staff notifying them of the FERPA Tutorial and the link to access it. The message did not include a completion due date as did last year's message. Some employees contacted our office about having to complete the tutorial again after already completing it last year. Some had just completed it during the latter half of the assessment year. They expressed their resistance to completing it again. After reviewing the data collected from fall, it is apparent that they do not want to complete this training annually if already completed in the past. We have 525 employees who have access to confidential student information. There were only 11 employees (1 faculty; 10 staff) who completed the tutorial in the fall resulting in a 2.10% completion rate. This was a large decrease in the participants. The tutorial is very beneficial and should continue to be completed each year by all faculty and staff who have access to confidential student information. During the spring semester, only a total of 7 employees (3 faculty; 4 staff) completed the tutorial resulting in a 1.33% completion rate. These low participation rates clearly indicate that we did not meet our anticipated goal. The low participation could be an indicator that most employees are not willing to complete the tutorial annually or believe that they have enough knowledge to abide by the regulations. Because of the constant changes in how students' confidential information is handled and by whom, it is essential that we ensure that all pertinent employees with access to confidential student information are knowledgeable of the federal regulations and have it readily accessible to them.

Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the results in 2019-20, the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement in 2020-2021. The Registrar will send an annual notification of the FERPA Tutorial and the accessible link through Messenger to all faculty and staff. Completion information will be maintained each year, but we will not continue it as a measure. Requiring the tutorial completion should be an administrative requirement that we cannot enforce.

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Graduation and Degree Audit

Service Outcomes:

SO 4. Graduation and Degree Audit ensures the accuracy of the degree audit system, graduation and certification of graduate, baccalaureate, and associate degrees, and diplomas for the commencement program.

Source Map:

University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors
Louisiana Board of Regents'

Measure 4.1 (Direct - Knowledge)

Graduation and Degree Audit updates and maintains the tables in the Banner system that upload data into Degree Works. This data is directly linked to program requirements, compliance, and possible substitutions. Since Degree Works is not a Banner product, the assistance of programmers in the IT Department is needed to complete technical updates to the Degree Works software and batching of data. By changing our survey focus to only include faculty and advisors, we should be able to reach our target of decreasing them not having any knowledge to 25% by the end of spring 2020.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was not met. Our plan for the 2018-19 Academic Year was to have the Degree Works Manual accessible on the web for advisors/department heads/deans with the goal of decreasing their No Knowledge to 25%. As a result, in 2018-19, we surveyed all students, faculty, staff, advisors, and administrators. A total of 198 out of the 11,760 responded to the survey resulting in a 1.68% participation rate. According to information we received from IT, there is a total of 321 faculty and advisors which were our true targets to be surveyed. A total of 45 participated (10 advisor and 35 faculty) in the survey resulting in a 14.02% participation rate. The number of faculty responding that they never use Degree Works was 3 resulting in an 8.6% no knowledge rating which is good for those who responded. No advisors responded to never using Degree Works, so this lets us know that the 10 advisors who participated in the survey have knowledge about Degree Works. Even though our responses were low, and our goal not met, it is evident that our manual is working, and the faculty and advisors' knowledge of Degree Works is increasing. Based on the analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results, in 2019-20, our plan was to send an email to all faculty and advisors to review the Degree Works manual at the beginning of each semester and follow-up at mid-point with a survey of their knowledge. During the fall semester, the email notification was not sent. A survey was sent to 667 employees that included faculty, advisors, support staff, and other university employees. The survey contained three questions: Question #1 Do you have any knowledge of Degree

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Works?; Question #2 Do you use Degree Works?; Question #3 Do you need additional training for using Degree Works?; Question #4 Does the Degree Works Training Manual help you with the Degree Works system?; and Question #5 What is your primary role at Northwestern State University? As a result, a total of 195 employees responded to the survey resulting in a 29.24% participation rate.

Question #1

	Response	Number	%	Response	Number	%
Faculty	Yes	104	80	No	26	20
Advisors	Yes	12	100			
Staff	Yes	9	64.29	No	5	35.71
Other	Yes	25	64.10	No	14	35.90

Question #2

	Response	Number	%	Response	Number	%	Skipped
Faculty	Yes	90	69.77	No	39	30.23	1
Advisors	Yes	12	100	No			
Staff	Yes	7	53.85	No	6	46.15	1
Other	Yes	18	47.37	No	20	52.63	1

Question #3

	Response	Number	%	Response	Number	%	Skipped
Faculty	Yes	44	34.11	No	85	65.89	1
Advisors	Yes	5	41.67	No	7	58.33	
Staff	Yes	3	23.08	No	10	76.92	1
Other	Yes	13	33.33	No	26	66.67	

Question #4

	Response	Number	%	Response	Number	%	Skipped
Faculty	Yes	44	35.48	No	81	65.32	5
Advisors	Yes	4	33.33	No	8	66.67	
Staff	Yes	2	16.67	No	10	83.33	2
Other	Yes	11	30.56	No	25	69.44	3

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Question #5

The responses from each participant helped define which University group to place him/her under. A total of 130 were faculty, a total of 12 were advisors, a total of 14 were support staff, and a total of 39 were other employees.

Based upon our analysis, each group of employees have knowledge of Degree Works and its use. Most of the employees in each group indicated that the manual does not help them with Degree Works, but they also indicated that no additional training was needed. Most of those grouped as other had knowledge of Degree Works do not use it or need training. We were able to identify those in the other group. This group included adjunct instructors, deans, assessment coordinators, student affairs support staff, department heads, administrators, directors, chairs, interpreter, student accounts, coaches. Of this group, some of them more than likely fall within the advisor and/or faculty group or staff group. Even though our participation rate was low, the responses indicate that 20% of faculty have no knowledge of Degree Works (0% for advisors). This was a good indicator to us that those using the Degree Works system have enough knowledge of its use to effectively advise students.

Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the results in 2019-20, the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement in 2020-2021. The Degree Works manual will be updated prior to the beginning of the fall semester so that any new advisors/faculty as well as current advisors/faculty can readily access the manual on the web. Graduation staff will be readily available during the 2020-21 year to assist or train any advisor/faculty.

Measure 4.2 (Indirect)

Graduation and Degree Audit ensures that all candidate certifications are received from the deans' offices by the established deadline for each semester. The timely submission of the certifications affects the timely awarding of degrees, the commencement program, and the accuracy of the graduation count. The timeliness of the receipt of the certification of candidates will reach 100% by the end of spring 2020.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In AC 2018-2019 the target was met. In 2018-19, we worked with the advisors' and dean's offices to help with discrepancies before the calendar due date. By doing so, this ensured a 100% on time submission rate by the end of spring 2019 resulting in our meeting our target. Based on the analysis of the AC 2018-2019 results, in 2019-20 we worked closely with the deans especially during the fall since we had two new deans and wanted to stress the importance of the due date for candidate certifications. The end-of-semester graduation calendar which includes the certification due date was sent to all deans and advisors at the beginning of the fall semester. As a result, all deans submitted their candidate certifications on time for fall semester. For the spring semester even though we

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had to make some adjustments in our processes for preparing for the spring 2020 awarding of degrees, the due date for certifications of candidates did not change. We continued to communicate with the deans by email throughout the COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Order. All candidate certifications were received on time from all 5 deans' offices resulting in a 100% submission rating. We were successfully able to award 1,015 degrees to 993 candidates for spring 2020.

Decision, action, or recommendation. Based on the analysis of the results in 2019-20, the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement in 2020-2021. We will work closely with the deans' offices to assist in reviewing the degree audits of candidates not clearing to determine any feasible options that will lead to degree completions. We will send the end-of-semester graduation calendar to all deans and advisors after the fall and spring census dates. By the end of spring 2021, we will have a 100% timely submission rate for candidate certifications.

Comprehensive Summary of Key evidence of seeking improvement based on the analysis of the results.

- We had to revise our method of providing service to our VA students during the COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Order. All assistance was handled by email. Although we had to restructure our service method, we were still able to provide sufficient service to our VA students because we were able to reach more students.
- We changed from survey of graduates for the spring semester to satisfaction of the virtual ceremony and satisfactory delivery of their diplomas and covers by mail.
- Handed out surveys at our front desk area to students receiving in-person service. Additional surveys were also made available in our front desk area.
- We hired another employee at our front desk area which helped with providing services to students.
- After the COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Order, we modified our method of service to primarily email through the Registrar account. Emails were monitored 7 days a week from 6 a.m. to Midnight and sometimes beyond.
- The hiring of a new employee at our front desk area allowed both evaluators the needed time to enter credits in a quicker timeframe as well as having the new employee assist with verifying the accuracy of the entered credits.
- We focused primarily on grade changes processed to student records. Since grade changes is an auditable function, we were able to obtain a report from IT.
- We decided to send an email notification to all currently enrolled students notifying them on the online verification self-service.
- We notified all currently enrolled students by email at the beginning of the fall semester about the availability of the online transcript self-service.

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- We assigned several staff members to verify scanned documents to allow room for more scanning.
- A new student employee was hired and assigned the task of helping organize documents for scanning.
- We planned to have the FERPA Tutorial included as an annual requirement for those who have access to confidential student information. We placed the tutorial online so that it would be readily accessible for pertinent employees.
- We planned to send an email to all faculty and advisor to review the Degree Works manual at the beginning of each semester and follow-up at mid-point with a survey of their knowledge.
- An email was sent to all faculty, advisors, and staff instead of everyone
- We worked closely with the deans especially during the fall since there were two new deans and to express the importance of the due date for candidate certifications.

Plan of action moving forward.

- We will change our method of service to VA students to volume of email communication although we will continue to assist students in-person.
- We will begin using a drop box for candidates' complaints that can be submitted after each ceremony. Drop boxes will be placed on the table in each concourse and the N-Club Room.
- We will change our goal to the volume of email contact instead of surveys for those receiving in-person service. The experience proved that we can satisfactorily assist more students by email.
- We will include the receipt of electronic transcripts from the Admissions Office since it worked very well during the time we were teleworking from home.
- Receiving transcripts electronically ensures the timely receipt for quicker entry of credits.
- We will have the change reason added to the IT report for grade changes. This will allow us to separate grade changes from approved resignation appeals.
- We will send an email notification of the online verification self-service to all currently enrolled students after the census dates for fall and spring.
- We will post an alert message on the transcript landing page regarding the minimum \$5 transcript hold. We will also send an email notification after the fall and spring census dates to all currently enrolled students informing them of the online transcript self-service.
- We will ensure that at least half of each workday is dedicated to scanning of student documents.

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- The Registrar will send an annual notification of the FERPA Tutorial and the accessible link through Messenger to all faculty and staff. We will not continue it as a measure since it is more of an administrative requirement outside our area.
- The Degree Works Manual will be updated prior to the beginning of the fall semester for any new advisors and faculty as well as current advisors and faculty can readily access the manual on the web.
- The graduation staff will be readily available to assist or train any advisor or faculty.
- We will work closely with the deans' offices to assist in reviewing the degree audits of candidates not clearing to determine any feasible options that will lead to degree completions.