

Assessment Cycle 2020-2021

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.

The mission of **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 of assessment tools for the next assessment period.

Service Outcome (SO):

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

Measure 1.1 (Direct) 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:

2019-2020: Target was met.

2020-2021: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2019-2020, the target was met. The testing center did a better job in reaching faculty and students. Communication was obtained through periodic emails to faculty and students reminding them of services offered by the testing center. The NSU Student Concern's Facebook page was monitored and answered any questions a student or faculty member may have had regarding testing. For Fall 2019, the testing staff mentored incoming freshman which was an opportunity to advise students on the services offered at the testing center. Spring 2020 brought campus closures due to COVID-19. Campus employees worked remotely which impacted students trying to take the placement exams. In addition, no Freshman Connections were held on campus. Working remotely presented challenges since the Accuplacer placement exam could not be administered directly in person. To help students during this difficult time, beginning Spring 2020, the Testing Center offered the Accuplacer to students who wanted to take it online. This was an excellent opportunity for students. For Spring 2020, there were 14 online exams given to students. By offering the Accuplacer online, it made a positive impact on student success.

Based on the analysis of AC 2019-2020 results, the testing staff made the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. The staff monitored NSU's Student Concerns page daily including weekends and holidays. By reaching out to students on this page, it allowed us to keep in contact with students about testing, scores, and services. In addition to answering questions for students, the Testing Center updated the page with any information pertaining to testing that included certification tests, campus news, COVID updates, etc. We increased communication with incoming freshman by participating in all Freshman Connection sessions and becoming Demon success coaches. Fall 2020 semester brought Hurricane Laura which delayed the start of school and Accuplacer appointments, however, the online placement test was an option for the students. For Spring 2021, the Testing Center relocated to Russell Hall for each Freshman Connection session. We administered 17 exams in person which was an increase from the previous year since Freshman Connection was cancelled. In addition, students taking the online version increased from 14 to 35 which was over 100% increase.

As a result of these changes, AC 2020-2021 was met. While majority of classes were online for AC 2020-2021, we were able to reach some UNIV 1000 classes and offer our services. These changes made a positive impact for students, giving them a sense of security during these transitional stages of their life. It allowed the center to provide the best service to faculty, staff, and students.

Decision. In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, the testing center will implement the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. The testing center will offer Accuplacer testing daily for students needed to take it in person. We will continue to offer online testing to help students who cannot physically be on campus. The Director of Testing will contact Director of Academic Advising and provide information that can be incorporated with UNIV 1000 curriculum. The Testing Center will visit University 1000 classes. If this cannot be done in person, then information will be given to University Studies instructors about what services are offered through the testing center. Contact information will be provided in these classes for students who have questions about testing. We will continue to reach out to new and continuing instructors about proctoring their tests and allowing them to use the testing center. We will mentor incoming freshman through Demon success for both fall and spring semesters. We will continue to participate in all sessions of Freshman Connection. We will offer the testing session later during Freshman Connection. We believe this will improve the scores if taken later in the day instead of early morning.

Measure 1.2 (Direct) 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%

Findings:

2019-2020: Target not met.

2020-2021: Target not met.

Analysis. In AC 2019-2020, the target was not met. For AC 2019-2020 there were 3626 proctored exams. For Fall 2019, the number of proctored exams were 2501 but Spring brought COVID-19 which made a huge impact on proctoring. For Spring 2020, there were 1125 proctored exams. The campus closed and we worked remotely. Students were converted to online classes and all events were cancelled. This included finals which is the busiest time of the year for proctoring. When the center opened, the center went from 35 computers to 17 computers due to COVID restrictions. Most professors did not have tests proctored during this time which decreased the total number of students coming into the center.

Based on the analysis for AC 2019-2020, results, the testing center made the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. The center offered early and late testing hours during midterms, finals, and Saturday testing. During busy times, the center reserved the Academic Success lab to accommodate more testers at one time. For Fall 2020, Hurricane Laura brought a delay in the start

of the semester. This impacted the number of exams being proctored. The center proctored 1888 exams for Fall 2020. For Spring 2021, there were more delays due to snowstorm that hit the area, closing some days in the semester. The total number of exams proctored was 1590 for Spring 2021. We participated in N-Side View which included Credit Connection to reach prospective students. Several events were cancelled again due to COVID-19 safety concerns.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2020-2021 the target was not met. The total number of proctored exams were 3478 which was a decreased of 4.1%. Having to decrease the number of computers used at one time had a negative impact on accommodating testers. In addition, professors did not assign as many proctored exams, and/or they gave midterm and finals outside normal hours. They allowed students to test weekends and had to pay for proctoring services. During this time, the Testing Center administered National Tests. This made it hard to accommodate testers on weekends.

Decision. In AC 2020-2021, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, the testing center will implement changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. The commitment to accommodate as many testers as possible and stay within COVID-19 guidelines will be done for AC 2021-2022. As COVID-19 guidelines ease, the center will increase the computer usage back to 35 which will allow for an increase in the number of testers. The Director of Testing will work with Provost and Instructors to increase times available for midterms and finals. By doing this, it will allow additional flexible times for students to come test. In addition, the Testing Center will have extended evening hours and open on Saturday during midterms and finals if National Testing is not scheduled. The Center will seek other opportunities to participate in various events, if available, whether in person or virtual to reach more prospect testers. Possible events include Scholar's Day, Literary Rally, and Freshman Connection Campus Quest, and Credit Connection.

For AC 2021-2022, data used for this Measure 1.2 (Direct) will include all proctored exams such as Praxis, Pearson, etc. This change will give a more accurate direct measure of the number of all testers using the center. Due to this change, the wording of SO 1 will reflect the total number of testers instead of only NSU students.

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

Measure 2.1 (Direct), 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

2019-2020: Target was not met.

2020-2021: Target was not met.

Analysis. In AC 2019-2020, the target was not met. Due to COVID-19, Spring 2020 semester was interrupted after midterms. The school went online, and professors did not require proctoring for the remainder of the semester. The university staff worked remotely which contributed to the decrease. Fall 2019, we worked with professors to accommodate whole classes and had 26 whole class appointments and 6 for Spring 2020 giving a grand total of 32 whole class appointments. The data reflects that COVID-19 had an impact on whole class proctoring. Since classes went online, professors were not reserving the center to give exams. Most professors removed the required proctor rule for Spring 2020 semester.

Based on the analysis of AC 2019-2020 results, the center made the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. The center reminded professors that the testing center was open and available for their use. We reminded them of the number of students allowed at one time that could test due to COVID guidelines. This impacted the whole class appointments as more computers were needed for some professors. In addition, some professors did not give whole class test and allowed each student to test on their own since several professors were still working remotely.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2020-2021 the target was not met having 10 whole class appointments. Professors did not test whole classes due to COVID-19 restrictions and allowed students to take tests outside of class time.

Decision. In AC 2020-2021, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, the testing center will implement the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. The center will remind professors to use the center as a resource for students. We will send reminders at the beginning, middle, and before finals. Reminders will be sent out about how the center adheres to COVID-19 precautions by wiping and disinfecting the center before and after each student use of the computer. We will assure them of strict guidelines to protect the health and safety of everyone. As COVID guidelines disappear, additional computers will be available will be available for use, allowing more testers at one time. We will update all professors regarding the increase in computers. All traditional classes will be available for Fall 2021; professors and students will return to campus and be made aware of our services.

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

Findings:

2019-2020: Target was not met.

2020-2021: Target was not met.

Analysis. In AC 2019-2020, the target was not met. For Fall 2019, there were 3095 proctored exams. Exams dropped off close to 50% during Spring 2020 due to

COVID-19 giving a total of only 1581 exams proctored. Spring 2020 semester brought the closure of campuses and the transition to online classes in which less proctoring was done. All proctored tests were affected by closure including professor exams and all certification test from Pearson VUE, ETS, and Scantron. Final exams are the busiest time of the semester and where a high percentage of proctoring is done. This had a negative impact on our totals. The total number of proctored exams for AC 2019-2020 were 4676.

Based on the analysis of AC 2019-2020 results, the testing center made the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. The center continued to proctor exams as the campus offered some traditional classes as well as online for AC 2020-2021. We encouraged the use of the testing center for student needs and reaching out to faculty by sending reminders before each test. The center showed increases in areas of certification test offered by Pearson VUE. Many Pearson centers were closed and not open to testers. This allowed our center to administer an additional 115 exams from the previous year during this time since we were open. In addition, CLEP exams were increased during AC 2020-2021, an increase of 45 exams.

As a result of these changes, however, in AC 2020-2021 the target was not met. For Fall 2020, a total number of exams proctored were 2461 and Spring 2021 were 2065. The total number for AC 2020-2021 were 4526 which is a 3.2% decrease. The decrease is attributed to continued COVID-19 restrictions and professors not requiring proctored exams and using Respondus Lockdown or third-party online proctoring. This allowed students to stay home and take their exams. As the next semester approaches, professors will return to campus and began requiring proctored test. This should increase the numbers at the testing center. In addition, testers will continue to take certification tests at our center.

Decision. In AC 2020-2021, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, the testing center will implement the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. We will remind instructors who are not taking full advantage of the Testing Center that we are open and here to help them with their students. We will send them emails and address this in the faculty meetings. We will remind them of COVID-19 restrictions, and that we are still open to students. With less COVID restrictions, walk ins will be welcome along with a larger capacity to allow more testers at one time into the center. We will remind students of the current link to schedule a test, they can also utilize email or phone contact as an alternate way to schedule their tests. We will work with the Education department to administer Praxis testing on Saturday. This will help candidates that cannot take the exam during the weekday. We will work with FAA to get certification to deliver exams for the new Drone program on campus. This will increase our numbers and cater to the surrounding communities.

For AC 2021-2022, data will be used for Measure 2.2 (Direct) from the number of proctored exams from NSU classes. This number will clearly indicate the number of students utilizing the testing center for NSU course work.

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

Measure 3.1 (Indirect) 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 an exam. The target is for respondents to respond favorably concerning the facility and services and make recommendations for improvement.

Findings:

2019-2020: Target was not met.

2020-2021: Target was not met.

Analysis. In AC 2019-2020, the survey was not met. For Fall 2019, emails went out to students asking them to complete the survey. Fall 2019 surveys recorded “above average” for timeliness of scheduling, responsiveness to communication, and professionalism during the testing process. Average responses were recorded in areas of Technology, Physical Safety, and Security of Electronic testing. The survey reported that were a low response for below average that included room temperature, noise level, and headphones. Spring 2020 surveys were not completed due to COVID-19. Most surveys responded favorably.

Based on the analysis, in AC 2019-2020 results, the center made the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Once a tester visited the center, emails were sent out to complete the survey and give feedback on how to improve on their testing experience. We reminded the tester if they completed the survey, their name would be placed in a drawing for a NSU shirt.

As a result, the target for AC 2020-2021 was not met. We did not send surveys to Fall 2020 testers however, sent them to Spring 2021 testers. For Spring 2021, the survey showed favorable responses in areas of timeliness of scheduling, responsiveness to communication and professionalism during the testing process. Feedback on the areas of noise level, room temperature, and headphones were not favorable. The Testing Center’s door will make noise when you turn the knob. We addressed the issue to see what could be done to stop the noise. Suggestions were to replace the knob. The headphones are for noise distractions, but due to construction behind us and the delivery door next to testing, all noises could not be eliminated. The temperature in the room varies and is controlled by the library.

Decision. In AC 2020-2021, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021 results, the Testing Center will implement the following changes for AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. We will survey students during fall and spring semesters. We will email the survey weekly and encouraged participation by raffling off a NSU T Shirt at the end of the semester. For AC 2021-2022, the Testing Center will continue to see where improvements are recommended in areas of space, timing, availability, noise, security, and comfort to better serve the students. We will invest in better headphones or optional ear plugs. We will replace the door handle to help eliminate the noise coming into the testing center. Construction on LSMSA dormitory will be complete, and the noise will be reduced. 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:

2019-2020: Target met.

2020-2021: Target met.

Analysis. In AC 2019-2020, the target was met. NCTA provided feedback to centers to improve in various areas of testing. We renewed our membership and registered for various workshops since all were virtually due to COVID-19.

Based on the AC 2019-2020 results, NSU Testing Center made the following changes in AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. We renewed our membership to remain an active member of the NCTA.

As a result of these changes, AC 2020-2021 target was met and will continue to take advantage of any workshops and conferences.

Decision. In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021, NSU testing Center will implement the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Testing Center will renew their membership to NCTA. This certification will allow the NSU Testing Center to be recognized at the national level. It will allow the staff to attend virtual or in person workshops and conferences.

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 satisfaction survey.

Findings:

2019-2020: Target was not met.

2020-2021: Target was not met.

Analysis. In AC 2019-2020, the target was not met. Fall 2019 surveys were sent out but did not receive any feedback from professors. The survey was not sent out Spring 2020 due to COVID-19.

Based on the analysis for AC 2019-2020 results, the center will implement the

following changes to AC 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. These changes will help the center get favorable responses from faculty and show what the needs of the faculty are from the testing center.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2020-2021, the target was not met since surveys were not sent out both semesters.

Decision. In AC 2020-2021, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021, the Testing Center will implement the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. These changes will help the center work closely with instructors across NSU's campuses to implement security measures to ensure the highest level of test integrity. We will remind faculty to complete surveys once they use the testing center. The center will push harder to get surveys completed.

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

- The Testing Center participated in Demons Success Coaching for incoming freshman.
- The Testing Center participated in Saturday N Side View/Credit Connection, administering Accuplacer exams.
- Face to Face and Online Accuplacer exams were made available to students needing placement.
- The Testing Center monitored NSU Student Concerns Facebook page.
- Implementation of extended hours of operation gave students more test time options.
- The relationship with all instructors and students improved through surveys.
- The testing staff reached out to faculty members to remind them of services offered.
- 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.
- Accuplacer will be offered daily in person and online.
- The Testing Center will host Praxis on various Saturdays.

- The Testing Center will allow walk-in testers and increase computer usage once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.
- The Testing Center will work towards FAA Certification.
- The Testing Center will participate in Literary Rally, Scholar's Day, Freshman Connection, and Freshmen Connection Quest, either in person or virtual.
- The Testing Center will attend UNIV 1000 classes to make students aware of what is offered at the center, either in person or virtual.
- 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.
- Membership to the National College Testing Association will be renewed.