

# Assessment Cycle 2020-2021

## Office of Admissions

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**Northwestern Mission.** Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

**The Student Experience Mission Statement.** The Student Experience provides the University community with programs and services to support the academic mission of creating, disseminating and acquiring knowledge through teaching, research and service while empowering a diverse student population to achieve their highest educational potential. The Student Experience creates a stimulating and inclusive educational environment that is conducive to holistic personal growth. The commitment to students initiates prior to entrance, sustains throughout the college experience and continues beyond graduation. Enrollment Services provides equal access to education for potential students throughout the state and region and promotes economic stability and financial access to citizens. Student Affairs enhances student development and broadens intellectual, social, cultural, ethical, and occupational growth. The Student Experience works closely with faculty, staff, students, and the community to ensure graduates have the capability to promote economic development and improvements in the region.

**Enrollment Management.** The Office of Enrollment Management is a student-centered division that is future focused providing educational access to students in our region in order to improve the lives of our citizens. High School Relations, Financial Aid and Scholarships, and Admissions work collaboratively with University faculty and staff to provide services and programming that are innovative and surpasses state and federal guidelines. Enrollment Management fulfills the university's mission and commitment to academic quality, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Office of Admissions Mission.** The Office of Admissions seek to enroll a full class of career-oriented students by delivering quality service and support to prospective students, faculty, and staff through interpretation of the admission criteria for Northwestern State University. Admissions also provide quality assistance to our stakeholders to assure a diverse student population has access to higher education by demonstrating consistency and fairness in the application review process. The Office of Admissions is committed to providing access to educational opportunities to meet students' academic needs.

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**Methodology:** The assessment process includes:

- (1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative, and qualitative) are collected and returned to the executive director.
- (2) The executive director will analyze the data to determine whether 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 required (show cause).
- (5) The executive director, in consultation with the staff and senior leadership, will determine propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, service changes.

## Office of Admissions Effectiveness

### Student Learning Outcomes

**SO 1** The Office of Admissions will ensure applicants, prospective students, faculty, and staff are provided with quality service and support.

**Measure 1.1** As a result of providing quality service, prospective students, faculty, and staff will be able to easily find and decipher admission criteria to the university. Surveys will be provided to new applicants to assess their thoughts on the admission criteria information and availability as they went through the admission process at NSU. Target is 90% will respond they had no issue in understanding the admission criteria.

**FINDING:** Target not met

**ANALYSIS:** Due to COVID-19, this survey did not go out to students. Admissions' new director is still gaining knowledge of her role and tasks while implementing new methods for a quicker admission turnaround, therefore, this learning outcome was not measured.

**ACTION - DECISION OR RECOMMENDATION:** Moving forward, we will work with Information Technology and Institutional Research in AC 2021-2022 to develop a simple and easy survey with no more than 3-5 questions that will automatically go to applications the minute they submit their application for admissions. In addition, we will investigate ways to better serve and measure the service provided by our faculty and staff.

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**Measure 1.2** Students will report satisfaction with the quality of the admission process. Evaluation of Admissions Survey will be emailed to all new applicants on their thoughts of the effectiveness of the admission process and understanding the admission criteria. Target is 90% will respond they had no issue with the effectiveness of the admission.

**FINDING:** Target Not Met

**ANALYSIS:** Due to COVID-19, we did not survey our students.

**ACTION - DECISION OR RECOMMENDATION:** With the expectation of our university returning to its normal state in AC 2021-2022, we will work with Information Technology and Institutional Research to develop an automatic online survey for all applicants.

**Measure 1.3** Students will report satisfaction with the quality of service provided by the Office of Admissions. Target is 90% will respond they were satisfied with the quality of service provided.

**FINDING:** Target Not Met

**ANALYSIS:** Due to COVID-19, this survey did not go out to students.

**ACTION - DECISION OR RECOMMENDATION:** With the expectation of our university returning to its normal state in AC 2021-2022, we will work with Information Technology and Institutional Research to develop an automatic online survey for all applicants.

**SO 2.1** Decrease the processing time of applications to admit students more efficiently, thereby increasing university enrollment and staff efficiency.

**Measure 2.1** Increase the number of freshmen students by 5% per semester.

**FINDING:** Fall Target Not Met  
Spring Target Met

**ANALYSIS:**

	<b>New Freshmen</b>	<b>% Increase or Decrease</b>
Spring 2021	113	31% increase
Spring 2020	86	
Fall 2020	1486	1% decrease
Fall 2019	1503	

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In 2020-2021, the enrollment for new freshmen decreased for the Fall, however, we tripled the percentage goal enrollment for the Spring. New freshmen enrollment decreased by 17 students from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 and increased by 27 students from Spring 2020 to Spring 2021. The target of 5% increase in the number of freshmen students was not met for Fall 2020. As a result, Admissions reduced the processing time of admission credentials by creating new reports, setting goals, and working within a set time frame. All paperwork was processed within three business days. Emails and messages returned within two business days. A back up schedule was provided so that the phones would be answered in a timely manner and the front desk covered to ensure that all visitors receive assistance. Freshmen Connection lists were generated earlier in the semester so that the students could be contacted for missing information to turn in sooner. Applications were reviewed, corrections made sooner, and missing documentation requested with the assistance of the Recruiting Department. Acceptance letters were generated daily.

**ACTION - DECISION OR RECOMMENDATION:** Although we did not meet our goal of 5% increase in new freshmen enrollment, there was only a two-student difference in the overall total. This decrease could have possibly contributed to the freshmen fear of attending school during this pandemic and the uncertainty of whether he/she would succeed in online classes. Analysis of this metric overtime leads us to question the validity of the metric as a standalone metric for improved staff efficiency and the reassurance of students that all necessary precautions are being taken daily.

Based on the analysis of the 2020-2021 results, in 2021-2022 Admissions will decrease the processing time of applications, push all applications, and notify students with verified errors on their applications to reapply.

Moving forward, we will work with Information Technology to develop a survey that will be automatically generated when a student applies for admission. This new survey will include the timeliness of our responses.

Our goal will continue to be to increase the number of freshmen admits by 5% each semester and to decrease processing time. The new Admissions Satisfaction Survey will give applicants an opportunity to report their experiences with admission immediately after their submission. We hope that this will be beneficial in assuring the department that our process and methods taken are successful and increase the number of applicants as well as surveys submitted. Admissions will continue to notify applicants of their acceptance upon receipt of all necessary documentation within three business days.

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**Measure 2.2** Increase the number of transfer students by 2% per semester.

**FINDING:** Fall & Spring Target Not Met

**ANALYSIS:**

	<b>New Transfer</b>	<b>% Increase or Decrease</b>
Spring 2021	303	20% decrease
Spring 2020	379	
Fall 2020	549	9% decrease
Fall 2019	601	

New Transfer enrollment decreased by 52 students from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 and decreased by 76 students from Spring 2020 to Spring 2021. The target of 2% increase in the number of transfer students was not met for fall and spring semesters with a significant decrease during Spring 2021. As a result, Admissions reduced the processing time of admission credentials by creating new reports, setting goals, and working within a set time frame. All paperwork was processed within three business days. Emails and messages returned within two business days. A back up schedule was provided so that the phones would be answered in a timely manner and the front desk covered to ensure that all visitors receive assistance. Freshmen Connection lists were generated earlier in the semester so that the students could be contacted for missing information to turn in sooner. Applications were reviewed, corrections made sooner, and missing documentation requested. Acceptance letters were generated daily.

**ACTION – DECISION OR RECOMMENDATION:** Based on the analysis of 2020-2021 results, we will work to decrease the processing time of applications. Analysis of this metric overtime leads us to question the validity of the metric as standalone metric for improved staff efficiency and the reassurance of students that all necessary precautions are being taken daily. The new Admissions Satisfaction Survey will give applicants an opportunity to report their experiences with admission immediately after their submission. We hope that this will be beneficial in assuring the department that our process and methods taken are successful and increase the number of applicants as well as surveys submitted. Admissions will continue to notify applicants of their acceptance upon receipt of all necessary documentation within three business days. We have created various reports that should allow us to admit a larger % of students quicker, so that we can focus on applications submitted with errors that prevent us from processing. Survey findings will be used to enhance or revise the processes currently in place. The goal is to increase the number of transfer admits by 2% each cycle. Admissions will continue to notify applicants of their acceptance upon receipt of all necessary documentation within three business days.

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Therefore, based on the analysis of the 2020-2021 results, in 2021-2022 Admissions will continue to find and implement ways to decrease the processing time of all applications.

We will continue our set goal of:

During peak times (April-August), 75% of applications will convert to admits within 5 business days.

During all other months, 75% of applications will convert to admits within 3 business days.

### **Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results:**

- Admissions paperwork was processed within three business days.
- Emails were returned within two business days.
- Phone calls were answered in a timely manner.
- Front desk was covered to make sure that all visitors were assisted.
- Admissions criteria was updated on the website.
- Admission forms were updated as needed.
- Various reports were created to assist with admitting applicants sooner.
- New processes were developed to inform applicants of missing admission requirements.
- Acceptance letters were automated so that applicants would be informed quicker of their admission status.
- Acceptance packets were revamped and made to look more professional.

### **Plan of action moving forward:**

Working with Information Technology and Institutional Research, we will develop a simple easy survey with no more than 3-5 questions that will automatically go to applicants upon the submission of their application for admission.

Admissions will monitor and update the website as needed to ensure applicants have the most up-to-date information.

The Office of Admissions will include additional areas for student input from new applicants in the 2021-2022 survey. We will use this information to increase our response numbers and input from students, applicants, faculty, and staff for the betterment of

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student satisfaction. The Office of Admissions is committed to applicants having a better experience with the admission process and providing access to educational opportunities to meet students' academic needs.