

Division or Department: [Counseling and Career Services](#)

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Date: May 6, 2021

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Date: 16 June 2021

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 for education to 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.

Student Affairs Mission:

The Division of Student Affairs prepares students to be productive members of society and to improve the quality of life of students. Student Affairs provides support services in career development and placement, advocacy and accountability, academic support, mental and physical health, disability accommodations, student activities and organizations, student union life, and opportunities in leadership, community service, and programs for new students. Through hands-on involvement in programs and services, Student Affairs promotes personal development in a student-centered environment, which delivers innovative practices in an environment of respect. Student Affairs encourages integrity, diversity, and collaboration with all members of the university community.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO1 Counseling and Career services will ensure that students are provided with quality mental health prevention programming, intervention services, and counseling support to foster their resiliency, academic persistence, and attainment of personal goals.

Counseling and Career Services Mission

The mission of Counseling and Career Services is to foster the values of self-discovery, self-direction, and the attainment of optimal health and wellness. To fulfill this mission, we will foster students' self-efficacy by providing a safe environment where students can explore their inner strengths and challenges and develop skills to successfully create, evaluate, and effectively implement a life plan for living in the ever-changing world.

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.

Measure 1.1 Students will be able to identify positive change in their functioning experienced because of their participation in counseling. The 2020-21 assessment is evaluated using a survey and success is defined as a respondent's identification of at least three learning statements listed in question 10.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In the AC 2019-2020 the target was met. 100% of the students responding to the *Treatment Evaluation Survey* were able to identify at minimum 3 learning outcomes as written in the learning statements. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results the counselors implemented the following changes in 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Counselors participated in continuing education opportunities to remain current with best practices in counseling services and assessment of counseling outcomes. A brief survey designed to assess student learning and satisfaction was developed to administer to the student at the end of each counseling session.

97% of the students responding to the *Treatment Evaluation Survey* during the 2020-2021 academic year were able to identify at minimum 3 learning outcomes as written in the learning statements.

Decision. In the AC 2020-2021 the target was met based on the results of the students completing the survey. Based on the analysis of the 2020-2021 results the counselors will implement the following changes in 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. Counselors will continue to administer the evaluation each semester prior to termination of counseling services or after midterm, whichever comes first. Additionally counselors will request feedback each session regarding salient points the student found helpful during the session.

Measure 1.2 Students participating in counseling will rate their satisfaction with the quality of counseling services received using the locally developed *Treatment Evaluation Survey*. Success is defined as 80% of the respondents responding “yes” or “N/A” on questions 4, 9, 12, 13, and 14.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In the AC 2019-2020 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results the counselors implemented the following changes in 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Counselors sought continuing education opportunities to remain current with best practices in counseling services and assessment of counseling outcomes. A brief survey designed to assess student learning and satisfaction was developed to administer to the student at the end of each counseling session. It includes satisfaction with telemental health counseling services when appropriate. These changes allow the student to provide immediate feedback regarding their learning outcomes and satisfaction with the counseling experience with the goal of improving their counseling experience. As a result of these changes, in the 2020-2021 the target was met. The results follow for the Fall 2020 semester:

(4) In accordance with our strict confidentiality policy, do you believe that the private information shared with your counselor was kept confidential? Yes 99% No 1%

(9) I believe my counselor was genuinely interested in helping me. Yes 100% No 0%

(12) The support I received through counseling enabled me to remain in college. Yes 85%, No 0%, 15% Not applicable.

(13) If you have need for assistance in the future, would you return to Counseling and Career Services? Yes 95.%, No 0%, Not Applicable 5%

(14) Would you recommend the assistance provided by Counseling and Career Services to a friend? Yes 100%, No

Decision. In the AC 2020-2021 the target was met based on the results of the students completing the survey. Based on the analysis of the 2020-2021 results the counselors will

implement the following changes in 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. Counselors will seek continuing education opportunities to remain current with best practices in counseling services and assessment of counseling outcomes. A brief survey designed to assess student learning and satisfaction will be developed to administer to the student at the end of each counseling session. It will include satisfaction with tele health counseling services when appropriate. These changes will allow the student to provide immediate feedback regarding their learning outcomes and satisfaction with the counseling experience with the goal of improving their counseling experience.

Measure 1.3 Students attending outreach programs will understand factors that affect mental health, individual functioning, and community health, including the connection of mind, body, and spirit and its role in optimum functioning. Students will complete a locally developed *Pretest-Posttest* after each program/presentation. Success is defined as a 75% or higher score.

Finding.

Analysis. In the AC 2019-2020 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results staff providing outreach programs implemented the following changes in 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Staff continued to review, and update pretest/posttest questions used to measure student learning to ensure that they measure the student learning objectives. These changes improved our ability to accurately measure student learning and make improvements in the content and delivery of outreach services and will enable students to learn develop self-management skills.

Decision. In the AC 2020-2021 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2020-2021 results staff providing outreach programs will implement the following changes in 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. Staff will review, and update pretest/posttest questions used to measure student learning to ensure that they measure the student learning objectives. These changes will improve our ability to accurately measure student learning and make improvements in the content and delivery of outreach services and will enable students to learn develop self-management skills.

Measure 1.4 Participants (students, faculty, and staff) in QPR training will learn how to effectively question, persuade, and refer individuals, who may be suicidal, for mental health counseling. Success is defined as an increase of knowledge about suicide intervention as self-rated on the QPR pre- and post-test with a score of 75% or higher on the post-test.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In the AC 2019-2020 the target was met. Based on the analysis of 2019-2020 results the QPR trainers implemented the following changes in 2020-2021 to push the cycle of improvement forward. Questions that would facilitate the exploration of participants' concerns regarding intervention and referral were updated and included in

the training to drive the cycle of improvement. The additional comments provided by participants were used to improve the quality of the QPR training and increase participant confidence with intervening with distressed students. Fall 2020 QPR training resulted in 85% of the participants rating their knowledge of suicide and suicide prevention as “high” on the posttest. However 65% rated themselves as likely to ask someone if they are suicidal. This score points to the need to spend more time engaging participants in a discussion concerning their discomfort and confusion about intervention.

Decision. In the AC 2020-2021 the target was met based on the participants responses on the posttest. Based on the analysis of the 2020-2021 results counselors will implement the following changes in 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. Change in the presentation and stress during the training that finding someone else to intervene is an intervention. Additional resources on intervention skills will be emailed to the participants to reinforce the information provided in the training with the goal of an increase in participants confidence in using their skills to intervene on students in distress.

SLO2 Students will engage in individual career exploration and planning empowering them to define and achieve their career/life goals and develop a career/academic plan that is specific, achievable, and realistic.

Measure 2.1 Students enrolled in University Experience 1000 and receiving 3 career exploration lessons will be able to verify their personality type, values, and interests and demonstrate how these factors impact their career interest and choice. Success will be measured by an average grade of 70% or higher on the three career exploration assignments.

Finding. Target was not met.

Analysis. In the AC 2019-2020 the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results the University Studies 1000 the Assistant Director of Counseling and Career Services did not implement the following changes in the summer 2020 prior to the beginning of the 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Conversations were not conducted with instructors of the classes that did not complete all 3 assignments to identify issues related to the 3 career exploration activities and, if necessary, provide additional training and/or support to increase understanding of and comfort with the 3 career exploration lessons. However there was a reduction of the number of instructors who did not assign any of the career lessons to four. Some instructors chose not to assign the second of the 3 career lessons, *Researching Careers*, and reduced the grade from 75 points to 40 points. For the fall 2020 semester 40% of the University Experience classes had a class average of 70% or better on the career lesson plans.

Decision. In the AC 2020-2021 the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the 2020-2021 results the University Studies 1000 the Assistant Director of Counseling and Career Services will implement the following changes in 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. The career lessons will be evaluated and modified to meet student learning goals. Additional training and/or support to increase understanding of and comfort with

the 2 career exploration lessons will be provided if necessary. The goal of this modification is to increase the likelihood that these lessons will be assigned and completed, resulting in an increase in students' awareness of the factors that impact career fit and engage in the career development process.

SLO3 Students will be prepared for the professional job search and present themselves effectively as candidates for employment.

Measure 3.1 Students participating in career development workshops will be assessed for student learning using rubric-based critiques, and/or pretest-posttests and Employer/Recruiter evaluations of student preparation. Success is defined as a rating of 75% or better on pretests-posttests and the Employer/Recruiter evaluations of student preparation.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In the AC 2020-2021 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results the Assistant Director of Counseling and Career Service implemented the following changes in 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Career staff reviewed and updated the resume and mock interview rubrics to ensure valid measurement of student learning and to provide valuable feedback to students. In response to the dictates concerning social distancing and the delivery of instruction all career presentations to classes were provided through WebEx. Instruction for completing the online post-tests were provided at the end of each presentation. A new platform, Big Interview was piloted for mock interviews, which did not include a valid assessment of student learning for resume writing resulting in a lack of assessment of student learning in this area. Employer evaluation ratings of student preparedness for the Fall Virtual Career Fair, Spring Virtual Career Fair, Teacher Job Fair, and student responses on presentation post-tests was 79.85%.

Decision: In the AC 2020-21 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2020-2021 results Career Services will implement the following changes in 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. The combination of staff delivered resume writing, LinkedIn, and interview skills presentations along with Big Interview's leaning and practice modules will continue to be provided to prepare students. The Career Center will continue the Big Interview subscription along with offering career preparation presentations and appointments in a face to face and virtual format.

Service Outcomes

SO1 Ensure that current students' needs are identified, and effective counseling and career services are developed to meet the identified needs.

Measure 1.1 Conduct a population-based assessment (Core Institute's *Survey of Alcohol and Other Drug Use*) of current student alcohol and drug use, consequences, and perceptions using a valid and reliable nationally standardized instrument. The resulting data will inform the design of alcohol and drug prevention programming, social norms campaigns, and interventions. Success is defined as the identification of students' perceptions of alcohol/drug use, prevalence of use of specific drugs and alcohol among student subpopulations, and experienced consequences of alcohol and drug use. This information will be used to inform outreach programming. This survey is conducted every other year at all universities in state.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In the AC 2019-2020 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results the Assistant Director of Counseling and Career Services implemented the following changes in 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. The CORE survey was administered in February 2021, and the data used to identify student attitudes and behaviors on which to focus prevention programming. Data from the 2021 CORE Alcohol and Drug survey was compared to the 2019 CORE data to identify new problem areas and assess the effectiveness of substance abuse prevention programming during the 2020- 2021 academic year. Program planning included collaboration with other programs and prevention efforts across campus and with the Louisiana Board of Regents. Best practices for intervention (training in the administration of NARCAN for opioid overdoses) and opioid abuse prevention programming for further reduction of use and harm were identified. Stakeholders and collaborators were identified for the purpose of a campus-wide outreach effort.

Decision. In the AC 2020-2021 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2021 CORE data new problem areas were identified and the effectiveness of substance abuse outreach effort were assessed. New initiatives were implemented to reduce the use and life-threatening effects of opioids. The following changes will be implemented in 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. Counselors will engage in professional development opportunities in substance abuse prevention best practices to increase their knowledge and skills. Prevention efforts will focus on the education of the community to address the significant increase in marijuana use and personal harm. Narcan administration training will continue targeting key personnel and student organizations.

Measure 1.2. Design, implement, and analyze the results of a series of systematic qualitative, in-depth focus groups with selected NSU student groups identified as at greater risk and stratified by high-stress majors, gender-identity, classification, and on- or off-campus residential status. Success is defined as the identification of students' perceptions of student mental health, individual and community factors that support and/or hinder student mental health and help seeking, and the impact of these factors on academic persistence and success. This input will inform program design, departmental goals, and services to the campus community.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In the AC 2019-2020 the target was met resulting in a 64% increase in the number of freshmen having a Handshake presence. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results the following changes were implemented to drive the 2020-2021 cycle of improvement and increase the number of students engaged in career services. Career Services took advantage of a free trial of *Big Interview*, a platform focused on interview skills that includes learning modules, recorded practice, and the ability to create and rate interview assignments. The platform was used with several classes as a pilot to determine if the level of learning and practice warranted purchasing a subscription to the platform. The platform allows users to chunk learning into smaller sections of information. The learning modules also feature quizzes and practice to reinforce key concepts. The assignment feature allowed students to prepare answers to interview questions and record their answers in several sittings. Feedback was then given to each individual student during a virtual appointment with Career Services Staff. In lieu of a focus group, students who piloted the program completed a survey giving feedback on their experience.

Decision. In the AC 2020-2021 the target was met. The following changes will be implemented to drive the 2021-2022 cycle of improvement. Based on the analysis of the 2020-2021 results Career Services a subscription to *Big Interview* has been purchased and the learning modules and assignments will be implemented with classes who request interview preparation and mock interview appointments. Data on student learning and satisfaction will continue to be collected for assessment purposes.

Measure 1.3 Design, implement and analyze the results of student satisfaction with career services on *Post-Appointment Surveys* and the *First Destination Survey* to measure student satisfaction with career services. Success is defined as a response rate of 25% or better on the surveys and a score of 75% or better on the student satisfaction questions.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. In the AC 2020-21 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2019-20 results career staff implemented the following changes in 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. Student satisfaction data was collected from students who engaged in direct career services (resume writing, career guidance, mock interviews, etc.) and completed the services evaluation immediately after the services provided. Student Satisfaction based on post appointment surveys is 98%. Student satisfaction with career services offerings was also collected on the university wide First Destination Survey. 2020-21 FDS result as of 5/3/21 indicate a satisfaction rate of 85% with a 25% response rate.

Decision. In the AC 2020-2021 the target was met. Student satisfaction with Career Services is 92.6%. The following changes will be implemented in 2021-2022 to drive the

cycle of improvement. Current programs and services offerings will continue in a face to face and virtual format. Career Services staff will continue to work with students and instructors to provide career preparation presentations and services.

SO2 Ensure employers' needs are identified and effective career services are developed to meet their identified needs.

Measure 2.1 Employers participating in on-campus recruiting activities and Job Location and Development services will provide feedback regarding career-recruiting services. The resulting data will inform program design, departmental goals, and services to the campus and community. Success is defined as a score of 80% on the *Employer Evaluation: Career Fair (questions 5-9), Job Location and Development Employer Satisfaction Survey*

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis In 2020-21 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results career staff implemented the following changes in 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement. The career staff continued to provide opportunities for students to network with employers and identify career opportunities as restrictions for meeting were in place. Brief classroom and student organization visits with handouts leading up to career events were made via WebEx. Career staff engaged in contingency planning for recruiting events due to the uncertainty presented by safety requirements for social distancing and employer travel restrictions. After surveying employers, the decision was made to conduct the Fall Career Fair virtually. The Job Location and Development career fair as conducted on site. The Fall Virtual Career Fair Employer satisfaction score was 73.28%. The Employer satisfaction score for the Job Location and Development career fair was 86%. The Employer satisfaction score for the Spring Virtual Career Fair was 90.2%. The Employer satisfaction score for the Virtual Teacher Job Fair was 94% .Handshake was an effective tool during the 2020-21 academic year in that it allowed the capability to host virtual fairs at no additional charge. Virtual fairs in 2020-2021 were an effective way to serve NSU students on all campuses.

Decision. In AC 2020-21 the target was met. The following changes will be implemented in 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. Career Services will return to face-to-face recruiting events in Fall 2021 contingent on university guidelines and recruiter's ability to travel. Career staff will continue to make brief classroom and student organization visits leading up to each fair to announce fair details, give tips for success and answer student questions.

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

Based on the analysis of the 2019-2020 results staff made the following changes in 2020-2021 to drive the cycle of improvement:

Counselors engaged in virtual continuing education to remain current with best practices in counseling services including, but not limited to, telehealth counseling. The number of students receiving telehealth services was greatly reduced from the numbers of students receiving telehealth counseling during the pandemic and quarantine of the spring and summer of 2020 with the return of students to campus. Therefore little data has been collected regarding student satisfaction with telehealth counseling.

Instructions and encouragement were given to University Experience 1000 instructors regarding the importance on engaging students in the 3 career development lessons. There was a reduction in the number of instructors (4) who did not assign any of the career development lessons, which is a significant gain.

The CORE survey was administered in February 2021, and the data used to identify student attitudes and behaviors on which to focus alcohol and other drugs prevention programming. Data from the 2021 CORE Alcohol and Drug survey was compared to the 2019 CORE data to identify new problem areas and assess the effectiveness of substance abuse prevention programming during the 2020- 2021 academic year.

Pretests-Posttests were used to assess student learning during workshops, but due to the low number of responses to online post-tests, post-tests were administered at the completion of each presentation to increase student post-test completion rates. To increase student awareness of and preparation for recruiting events, brief classroom and student organizations visits were conducted. These changes increased students' knowledge of and competence in career development skills.

A Virtual Career Fair option created on Handshake was utilized to conduct career fairs at NSU in a virtual space, following the Covid-19 guidelines from the CDC and NSU administration. This provided a venue for students to network with employers and identify career opportunities.

Career staff continued to provide opportunities for students to network with employers and identify career opportunities. Brief classroom and student organization visits with handouts leading up to career events were made via WebEx.

Student satisfaction data was collected from students who engaged in direct career services (resume writing, career guidance, mock interviews, etc.) and completed the services evaluation immediately after the service to provide immediate feedback and facilitate the improvement of services. The result was a 98% satisfaction rate.

Plan of Action Moving Forward

Based on the analysis of the 2020-2021 results staff made the following changes in 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement:

Updates will be made to the QPR training defining and stressing that finding someone to intervene on a distressed individual is an intervention. Additional resources on intervention skills will be emailed to the participants to reinforce the information provided in the training with the goal of an increase in participants confidence in using their skills to intervene on students in distress.

The University Experience 1000 career lessons will be evaluated and modified to meet student learning goals into 2 lessons. Additional training and/or support to increase understanding of and comfort with the 2 career exploration lessons will be provided if necessary. The goal of this modification is to increase the likelihood that these lessons will be assigned and completed, resulting in an increase in students' awareness of the factors that impact career fit and engage in the career development process.

Staff will continue to review, and update pretest/posttest questions used to measure student learning to ensure that they measure the student learning objectives. These changes will improve our ability to accurately measure student learning and make improvements in the content and delivery of outreach services and will enable students to learn develop self-management skills.

Counselors will engage in professional development opportunities in substance abuse prevention best practices to increase their knowledge and skills. Factors contributing to the increase in marijuana use will be identified and appropriate interventions developed and implemented. Prevention efforts will focus on the education of the community to address the significant increase in marijuana use, health, and personal harm. Narcan administration training will continue targeting key personnel and student organizations.

The Career Center will continue the Big Interview subscription along with offering career preparation presentations and appointments in a face-to-face and virtual format. Data on student learning and satisfaction will continue to be collected for assessment purposes.

Career Services recruiting events will return to the face-to-face or hybrid format in Fall 2021 contingent on university guidelines and recruiter's ability to travel. Career staff will continue to make brief classroom and student organization visits leading up to each fair to announce fair details, give tips for success and answer student questions.