

Assessment Cycle 2021 – 2022

University Registrar

Division or Department: N/A

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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 University 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 University Registrar supervises the processes for the articulation of transfer credits, enrollment and degree verification, production of official transcripts, certification of degrees, production and delivery of diplomas, and commencement ceremonies. The University Registrar counsels and advises students, faculty, and staff on academic matters; and interprets and enforces academic policies and regulations of the University, Louisiana Boards of Regents, University of Louisiana Board of 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 expanded our service beyond office visits by using the volume of email communication from VA students. By the end of spring 2022, the volume of emails from VA recipients will reach 1,700.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In 2020-21, the target was met. We made the following changes in 2020-21 to drive the cycle of improvement. We changed our method of service to VA students to volume by email. During the initial COVID period in the spring, this helped us assist more VA students rather than just those who came into the office. We used the volume of emails received through the VA account as a means to provide service to our VA students. Even though we were operating from the office, we noticed that there were not many VA students coming into the office. This could be attributed to the COVID safety measures in place. For the fall 2020 semester, we had a volume of 823 emails from VA students for which we responded to inquiries and processed needed documents for benefits. With the increasing volume of emails, we were able to ascertain that more VA students were choosing assistance and submission of documents electronically. These numbers indicated that we were on target for reaching our goal. For the spring 2021 semester, we had a volume of 859 emails resulting in a total of 1,682 emails by the end of spring 2021. It was apparent that this was a preferable method of assistance for the VA students and an indication of the satisfactory service we were providing to them.

Based upon the analysis of 2020-21 results, we made the following changes in 2021-22 to drive the cycle of continuous improvement. Each VA certifying official as well as the Director attended the required five hours of VA training in August virtually. The training consisted of new policy updates regarding VA reporting information and obtaining a required report (Form 8515 VA Rule) from the University's Institutional Research Office. This training provided pertinent updates and guidance needed for us to provide more efficient and effective service to our VA students, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward. As a result of the changes, in 2021-22 the target was not met. We discovered that only one of the VA certifying officials has access to review and

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respond to VA emails. We did hire the secondary VA certifying official over two years ago which is most likely the reason we did not realize this oversight. The secondary VA certifying official stated that she never thought about it since the primary person would forward emails to her. By not having access, the secondary VA certifying official cannot communicate with VA students when the primary certifying official is out unless the student contacts the VA office by phone, in-person, or the primary certifying official forwards the emails to her. The administration made a change in the previous balance policy. The previous balance minimum was reduced from \$2,000 to \$200. After this change effective summer 2021, our number of VA students declined for the 2021-22 academic year. For the fall 2020 semester, we had a total of 530 VA students. For the fall 2021 semester, we had a total of 470 VA students. We lost a total of 60 VA students. This was a 11.32% difference in VA enrollment. The volume of emails from VA students by the end of spring 2022 was 887 (330 fall 2021 & 557 spring 2022). This was a 795 decrease in email volume between the 2020-21 and 2021-22 years (47.26%). We can attribute the decline in email volume with the decline in enrolled VA students as well as the secondary VA certifying official not having access to the VA emails.

Decision, action, or recommendation. In 2021-22 the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the 2021-22 results we will implement the following changes in 2022-23 to drive the cycle of improvement. We plan to provide access to the secondary VA certifying official so that additional assistance to students can be provided in a timely manner. Both VA certifying officials and the Director will attend at least five hours of VA annual training to obtain updates on new processes and policies. By the end of spring 2023, the volume of emails from VA recipients will reach 580.

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. help to ensure minimal problems on the days of each ceremony. Complaints from graduates will be no more than 5 by the end of spring 2022.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In 2020-21 the target was not met. Instead of having a survey completed right after each commencement ceremony, we decided to have a drop box for complaints and concerns from graduates placed on our table near the exit doors for graduates to drop off any complaints. Based upon the number of complaints, we could ascertain their satisfaction or dissatisfaction of the ceremony. We had to change our

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plan because of the status of the COVID pandemic. The governor placed our state in a modified stage 2 category that limited indoor and outdoor gatherings and events. We had to adjust the fall commencement ceremonies. We created 5 separate ceremonies so that we would comply with the 25% capacity guidelines for social distancing for inside events. We decided not to place the complaint/concern forms in the graduates' chairs to avoid contamination of the slips of paper that would have to be handled by multiple persons including our staff. Although we did not have surveys for fall commencement, we did not receive any complaints by phone, in-person, or electronic communication. We were confident that we had successfully met the satisfaction of the graduates. For the spring semester, adjustments were made to have 6 separate commencement ceremonies to comply with the new 75% capacity guidelines for social distancing for inside events as required by the governor's phase 3 mandate. To avoid contamination of multiple persons handling the complaint forms, we decided not to use the complaint box nor place the complaint forms in the graduates' chairs. Following each ceremony, we did not receive any complaints from any graduates, guests, or administrators. We did receive positive feedback from the President and Provost of how well they thought the ceremonies were conducted. Based upon the fact that we did not receive any complaints in-person or by electronic communication, we are confident that the graduates were satisfied with their ceremonies.

Based on the analysis of the 2020-21 results, we made the following changes in 2021-22 to drive the cycle of improvement. With the status of COVID social restrictions, we did not anticipate a change for the 2021-22 year. We planned to closely monitor the graduates during the commencement ceremonies to ensure a satisfactory experience. As a result of these changes, in 2021-22 the target was met. Our staff was visible and available to assist the graduates before, during, and after the four ceremonies over a two-day period in the fall. At the conclusion of each ceremony, complaint forms were available on the check-in table for graduates. No complaint forms were received from graduates after the fall 2021 ceremonies. This was an indication that we are providing satisfactory service for the ceremonies. For the spring ceremonies, the only change the administration made was to have the graduates lined up in the westside concourse to process into the arena. By doing so, space was very limited. Our staff was visible and readily available to quickly assist graduates before, during, and after the four ceremonies. We did not have the space to make complaint forms available before or after the ceremonies. We did not receive any verbal, telephonic, or electronic complaints from the graduates during or after the ceremonies. There were some encouraging verbal expressions by some of the graduates. As one graduate was exiting the coliseum, she said "I feel like a celebrity!". Some graduates were crying and hugging professors and each other as they exited the coliseum. It is evident that the graduates were satisfied with their ceremonies. After the commencement ceremonies, accolades were sent to our entire staff from the Provost. He wrote "Please accept my sincerest thanks for everything you did to prepare for Commencement, and to make it a memorable ceremony for our students and their families... I am so pleased with our

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ceremonies last week, and it was so wonderful to see so many people there to support the graduates. I know getting the students ready to process and getting them seated and checked out is a big task, and I am thankful for your hard work and dedication.”

Decision, action, or recommendation. In 2021-22 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2021-22 results we will implement the following changes in 2022-23 to drive the cycle of improvement. Our staff will wear easily identifiable attire for the graduates to recognize and approach us if there is a need before, during, or after the ceremonies. Our staff will be positioned inside the entryway and outside the exit doors of the coliseum to be readily available for assistance to the graduates. The complaints from graduates will not exceed 4 by the end of spring 2023.

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. By the end of spring 2022, we will have a 75% satisfaction rating from students, faculty, and staff receiving in-person service.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In 2020-21 the target was met. We changed the service method to volume by email instead of in-person service. During the initial COVID period, we were satisfactorily able to provide effective service to students through email. This worked well and left an easily traceable electronic paper trail. We focused on the volume of incoming emails with questions needing responses and documents needing to be processed. Due to COVID restrictions, most of our interaction with students, faculty, staff, parents, and administrators for fall 2020 were through electronic communications by email or phone. During the fall 2020 semester, we received a total of 7,260 emails regarding documents to be processed such as major changes, address changes, name changes, outgoing transcripts, grade changes, schedule changes, appeals, etc. We sent a total of 21,784 responses to those emails. With this volume of electronic

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communication, it appeared that this service was working more efficiently and effectively for students during this social distancing restrictive period. For the spring semester, a different IT programmer compiled the report used for our email volume. This report was different than the one for fall. We received and answered a total of 11,668 emails from students, parents, faculty, staff, and administrators. These results were an indicator that we are providing efficient and satisfactory services to our students.

Based on the analysis of the 2020-21 results, we made the following changes in 2021-22 to drive the cycle of improvement. With the university's plan to be back to normal occupancy for the fall 2021 semester, we decided to resume the in-house surveys. We wanted to know how our in-person service was perceived by the visitors. Our new survey consisted of what type of visitor, what was the purpose of the visit, and gave the visitor the option to rate their satisfaction with our communication during their visit, knowledge of their questions, and service we provided. As a result of these changes, in 2021-22 the target was met. We had total of 50 in-person visitors (44 current students, 5 alumni students, 1 other) complete our survey. Of the 50 survey visit purposes, 7 were for verification of enrollment requests, 6 for address changes, 4 for official transcript requests, 3 for information on retroactive appeals, and 30 indicating other. The satisfaction of communication questions and comments were: Question #1, "The Registrar's Office staff made an effort to communicate in a way that I could easily understand". 40 visitors answered Strongly Agree resulting in an 80% satisfaction rating. 10 visitors answered Agree resulting in a 20% satisfaction rating. There were no (0) visitor responses answering Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Question #2, "The staff member with whom I interacted demonstrated excellent knowledge about my issue or directed me to someone else with excellent knowledge". 40 visitors answered Strongly Agree resulting in an 80% satisfaction rating. 10 answered Agree resulting in a 20% satisfaction rating. There were no (0) visitors answering Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Question #3, "I am overall satisfied with the service provided to me by the NSU Office of the Registrar". 40 visitors answered Strongly Agree resulting in an 80% satisfaction rating. 10 visitors answered Agree resulting in a 20% satisfaction rating. There were no (0) visitors answering Disagree and Strongly Disagree. We had 12 visitors who commented under "Please provide any comments below that you feel would assist in making improvement in the Register's Office". 1) I had a wonderful experience. 2) The process was quick and any extra information I needed to provide; I was told in a timely manner. 3) Registrar has helped me understand where to find the documents I needed online. 4) The Registrar's Office is always very helpful, and Mrs. Keisha is very professional & always there to talk. 5) Mrs. Keisha is awesome at the Registrar's Office! 6) Everything was easy! 7) Customer service is really good; I am happy with their services. Thank you! 8) Amazing support & customer relations. Thank you so much! 9) Ya'll rock! 10) The staff are so inviting and friendly! Super amazing job. 11) Everything in the office makes me feel welcome and I can easily understand how to do what I need. 12) They did amazing. The survey responses were an indicator that we were on target to reaching our goal. For the spring 2022 semester, we surveyed a total

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of 50 in-person visitors (45 current students, 2 alumni, 2 incoming freshmen, & 1 recruiter). Of those surveyed, 4 were for verification of enrollments, 24 for major change requests, 1 for applying for graduation, 2 for address changes, and 1 for a resignation/cancellation of classes). The satisfaction of communication and comments were; Question #1, “The Registrar’s Office staff made an effort to communication in a way that I could easily understand”. 45 visitors answered Strongly Agree resulting in a 90% satisfaction rating. 5 visitors answered Agree resulting in a 10% satisfaction rating. There were no (0) visitor responses answering Disagree or Strongly Disagree. Question #2, “The staff member with whom I interacted demonstrated excellent knowledge about my issue or directed me to someone else with excellent strongly agree. 45 visitors answered Strongly Agree resulting in a 90% satisfaction rating. 5 visitor answered Agree resulting in a 10% satisfaction rating. There were no (0) visitor responses for Disagree or Strongly Disagree. Question #3, “I am overall satisfied with the service provided to me by the NSU Office of the Registrar. 46 visitors answered Strongly Agree resulting in an 92% satisfaction rating. 4 visitor responses answering Agree resulting in an 8% satisfaction rating. There were no (0) visitor responses answering Disagree or Strongly Disagree. We had 12 visitors who commented under “Please provide any comments below that you feel would assist in making improvement in the Registrar’s Office”. 1) LeKisha-The Best! 2) So Nice! 3) They were very helpful! Have a Great day! 4) Never had a problem & they are always quick with any paperwork. 5) Amazing service & very friendly. 6) love here. 7) Thank you! 8) LeKisha was outstanding! So very nice and helpful. Am returning Senior to finish degree. Great Job! 9) Very helpful! Need Clipboards though. 10) Staff always handles issues in a timely manner. 11) The two women are amazing very helpful, wanting to make your experience easy! 12) Those who work in this office are very kind & helpful! The survey responses are evidence of the satisfactory services we are providing to our students, faculty, and staff.

Decision, action, or recommendation. In 2021-22 the target met. Based on the analysis of the 2021-22 results we will implement the following changes in 2022-23 to drive the cycle of improvement. We will increase our in-person visitor survey number to 75 each semester. By the end of 2022-23, we will have an 85% satisfaction rating from students, faculty, and staff receiving in-person service.

Measure 2.2 (Indirect – Survey)

Transcript Evaluation is critical in determining admission eligibility, pre-requisite requirements for registration, and requirements for degree completion. The students are our main focal point for services rendered. Official transcripts are hand-delivered by Admissions’ staff to our office. The volume of transfer credits entered into the system will increase to 2,000 by the end of spring 2022.

Finding: Target was met.

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Analysis: In 2020-21 the target was not met. We acquired additional laptops for two staff members to help verify the accuracy of the transfer credits entered. This helped eliminate errors; thus, resulting in effective advisement for these students' registration in appropriate classes. We decided to 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. Once the fall semester began, Admissions reverted back to hand-delivering transcripts to our department for the entry of transfer credits. A difference was noticed between the frequency of electronic transcripts and the hand-delivered transcripts received from Admissions. When the transcripts were previously received electronically, we had to determine whether or not each was official, look up the student's ID number, and the admission term. With Admissions now hand-delivering the transcripts, they have taken care of these extra steps again. We made the adjustment on our end to enter the transfer credits as quickly as possible after receipt from Admissions. Due to COVID precautions, we received transcripts less frequently than normal. In spite of the drop in frequency of delivery of transcripts from Admissions, we were able to evaluate 1,387 transfer credits during the fall 2020 semester. This was slightly down (-211) from last fall's number (1,598) of credits evaluated. This can be attributed to colleges/universities operation under COVID restrictions, teleworking, and U.S. Postal Services delivery delays. Even though all the restrictions exist at this point in time, we are certain that we are satisfactorily meeting the needs of our students because of the volume of transfer credits we are evaluating. In the spring 2021 semester, we received and evaluated 498 transcripts for 414 students. This was a decrease in volume by 889 compared to fall's volume. We had a total of 1,885 transcripts that were evaluated by the end of spring 2021. We have a three-day turnaround time for entering transfer credits from the date of receipt from Admissions. When referencing equivalencies, we use TES (Transfer Evaluation System) which is an on-line system sponsored by CollegeSource. This system aids in our ability to enter the transfer credits quickly and accurately. This system contains other institutions' course descriptions in one place instead of having to look at each institution's catalog. The number of institutions submitting their course descriptions to TES has been increasing. The decline in receipt of transcripts from Admissions can possibly be attributed to more students' decisions to attend college closer to their homes, or some students having balance holds that prevent the release of their transcripts. Although our volume of transfer credits received from Admissions and entered decreased, it was evident that we were satisfactorily meeting the needs of our students.

Based on the analysis of the 2020-21 results, we made the following changes in 2021-22 to drive the cycle of improvement. We planned to decrease the turnaround time for entering transfer credits and maintain the accuracy through use of TES. Our two evaluators planned to attend the virtual 2021 CollegeSource Annual Conference. As a result of these changes, in 2021-22 the target was met. Only one of our evaluators

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registered for the annual conference that took place during the summer but was not able to stay continuously logged in to gather all of the information provided by the presenters. The conference play back was made available for those who were not able to participate. We were able to attend the TES virtual 2021 Annual Conference during the fall 2021 semester. We learned some new and inspiring ways to increase our turn-around time, evaluation production, and accuracy of entering transfer credits. During the fall 2021 semester, we evaluated 483 students' transcripts giving a total of 1,794 credits. Recruiting and Admissions implemented a new Banner Recruit module in mid-November which has changed their process for transfer students. With this change we have noticed a fluctuation in the frequency of transcripts received. In the spring 2022, we evaluated 481 transcripts as well as awarding credits from ACT scores, SAT scores, AP scores, CLEP scores, DSST scores, NSU Advancement program, and Articulation/Partnership Agreements. We had a total of 964 transcripts and scores evaluated by the spring 2022 giving a total of 4,000 credits awarded to students. The volume increase was evidence of our providing a satisfactory service to our students.

Decision, action, or recommendation. In 2021-22 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2021-22 results we will implement the following changes in 2022-23 to drive the cycle of improvement. We will ensure that both evaluators attend the TES annual training. We will also ensure that our TES subscription is renewed each November to prevent any interruption of access. The volume of transfer credits and test score credits (ACT, SAT, AP, CLEP, DSST, Advanced Program) entered into the system will increase to 4,200 by the end of spring 2023.

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,

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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 2022, the volume of grade changes and approved resignation appeals will increase to 1,200.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In 2020-21 the target was met. We were able to separate grade changes from approved resignations using the coding included on the revised report. For fall 2020, a total of 1,091 grade updates were made on students' records. Out of the 1,091 grade updates, 93 were appeal approvals to withdraw or resign. The remaining 998 were grade changes processed through submission from the students' instructors/department heads totaling 707 as well as the incomplete grade expiration roll process totaling 291. At the end of fall, our volume of grade changes processed had increased. Part of this higher number could be attributed to the incomplete grade provision granted to students enrolled during spring 2020 and given until September 9 to complete their coursework due to the interruption of their studies during the initial COVID-19 mandates. When comparing the grade changes for this fall and last fall, there was an increase of 190 grade changes for this fall. From this increase, we can determine that more students' records were being updated to their satisfaction. During the spring 2021 semester, a total of 1,411 grade changes were processed. We were able to identify that 1,170 were grade changes and 241 were withdrawals from approved resignations or withdrawals. By the end of spring 2021, we had a total of 2,502 grade changes. We exceeded our goal by 1,302. It was evident that we were satisfactorily meeting the needs of our students.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-21 year, we made the following changes in 2021-22 to drive the cycle of improvement. We planned to assist students with processing of timely grade changes. Whenever a student contacted our office inquiring about the status of a grade change, we sent an email to the instructor and academic department to confirm a grade change had been or would be submitted. From experience with type of contact with instructors and department heads, we seem to help expedite the submission of the grade changes to our office. As a result of these changes, in 2021-22 the target was met. For the fall 2021, we processed 658 grade changes (422 grade changes; 236 resignation appeals). This was an indication that we were mid-way achieving our goal and timely processing grade changes. For the spring 2022 semester, we processed a total of 837 grade changes (674 grade changes, 162 withdrawals from approved resignations or withdrawals, and 3 system automated audit grades). Of the 674 grade changes, 195 were "I" (incomplete) grades that were changed to "F" grades due to students not completing the remainder of their coursework. By the end of spring 2022, we had processed 1,495 grade changes and approved resignation appeals. We exceeded our goal by 295. The increased volume of grade changes and approved

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resignation appeals processed was evidence that we have been updating the students' academic records in satisfactorily and timely manner; therefore, meeting the needs of our students.

Decision, action, or recommendation. In 2021-22 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2021-22 results we will implement the following changes in 2022-23 to drive the cycle of improvement. We will contact the instructors of the courses in which students have "I" (incomplete) grades that are expiring for the preceding semester on the last day to make up "I" grades. By the end of spring 2023, the volume of grade changes and approved resignation appeals will increase to 1,600.

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, our volume of on-line verifications will increase to 8,000 by the end of spring 2022.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In 2020-21 the target was met. We changed our plan to send out email notifications after the census date for fall and spring. We emailed the notification to all currently enrolled students at mid-point during the semester. With the continued effects of COVID-19 and the catastrophic effects of Hurricane Laura, our enrollment reporting date was extended to September 15, 2020, and thus delayed the dissemination of the email to students. An email notification was sent to 10,149 current enrolled students which excluded those with directory restrictions. We had a volume of 4,220 on-line verification transactions during fall 2020. Of that total, 1,079 were degree verifications; 3,055 were current enrollment verifications; and 86 were dates of attendance verifications. At this point, we could ascertain that we were on the right path to reaching our goal. For the spring 2021 semester, we had a volume of 3,739 on-line verification transactions. Of that total 1,147 were degree verifications; 3,481 were current enrollment verifications; and 111 were dates of attendance verifications. In comparison of the two semesters, there was a decrease of 481 during spring 2021. By the end of spring 2021, we had a total of 7,959 on-line verification transactions. We exceeded our last year total of on-line verifications by 1,746. We were able to determine from our increase in on-line verifications that we were satisfactorily providing sufficient service to our students.

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Based on the analysis of the 2020-21 results, we made the following changes in 2021-22 to drive the cycle of improvement. We planned to add the degree program information to our on-line verification certificates which currently does not appear on the enrollment certificates. After making the attempt to update our verification certificates on the self-service portal through the National Student Clearinghouse, we were told that the degree program could not be added at the current time. At that point, we decided to process requests received in-house and refer inquiring students to the on-line service provided the degree program is not needed. As a result of these changes, in AC 2021-22 the target was met. For the fall 2021 semester, we had a total of 4,933 verifications processed on-line. Of the 4,933 verifications, 1,672 were for degree verifications, 3,137 were for current enrollment, and 124 for dates of attendance. Enrollment information for each student enrolled is included in the enrollment reporting each month during the semester. We upload degree award information at the end of each semester. There are times when discrepancies exist between the attendance and/or degree award information we uploaded and what was provided by the student/former student. When this occurs, we receive an email notification from the National Student Clearinghouse to review the information submitted through the employer. Most of the time, we can provide on-line confirmation by including the correct attendance dates and/or degree award information. We had a total of 4,257 that were confirmed either by automation or manually. Out of the total 4,933 transactions, we were able to confirm 86.30% of the information. There was a small number of times that we did not find a record or degree for the person indicated. These are submitted on the on-line site as “unable to confirm”. For fall 2021, we had a total of 673 that we were not able to confirm (13.64% of the requests). There was a total of 3 cancelled transactions (0.06%) by the employer. With the 4,933 verifications at the end of fall 2021, we could see that we were more than half-way of reaching our goal. For the spring 2022 semester, we had a total of 3,825 verifications processed on-line giving us a total of 8,758 for the year. Although we exceeded our goal by 758, we can determine that the on-line verifications are beneficial for our current and former students.

Decision, action, or recommendation. In 2021-22 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2021-22 results we will implement the following changes in 2022-23 to drive the cycle of improvement. We will encourage students to use the on-line verification service after the initial enrollment reporting has been completed. We plan to add a link for the on-line service to our student self-service portal. The on-line verifications will increase to 8,850 by the end of 2023.

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

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contain all of the students' academic information. The volume of on-line transcript requests will increase to 8,100 by the end of spring 2022.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In 2020-21 the target was met. When the University re-imposed the \$5 minimum previous balance transcript hold, it caused quite a bit of confusion between the students and our unit regarding not being able to release transcripts. We decided to post an alert message on the transcript landing page regarding the transcript hold. Due to continued effects of COVID-19 and the recent catastrophic events of Hurricane Laura, our enrollment reporting date was extended to September 15, 2020. We did send out an email notification at mid-point of the fall semester informing 10,149 currently enrolled students (excluding those with directory restrictions) of the availability of the on-line transcript service. Our volume of on-line transcript transactions was 3,799 during fall 2020. That was an increase of 64 on-line transactions compared to last fall. This was a good indicator that our notification emails were helping guide students to the on-line service. For the spring semester, we had a volume of 4,265 on-line transcript transactions. The spring volume of transactions increased by 466. As a result, our on-line transactions increased through the email notification to our currently enrolled students. We received some positive replies from students that actually pertained to the on-line transcript service. Such replies included "Thank you for this information! I am appreciative that you considered to send this to me. I will be sure to use it in the future."; "Thank you for the information. I was unaware that those were available to me!"; "Thank you! I was not aware of this. I appreciate your reaching out."; "Thank you for your personalized message."; "Thanks for the heads up, I appreciate that! You have a blessed day."; "I didn't know that. Thank you for the information."; etc. We had a total of 8,064 transcript transactions by the end of spring which was an increase of 531 compared to last year. The increase in on-line transactions was evident that we are satisfactorily meeting the needs of our students.

Based on the analysis of the 2020-21 results, we made the following changes in 2021-22 to drive the cycle of improvement. We revised our transcript landing page to contain clearer information regarding how to appropriately request an official transcript through the on-line service and removed the expiration of digital transcripts. After speaking to our customer contact with the National Student Clearinghouse, we were told that they had already planned to end the expiration of digital transcripts due to the frequency of complaints from students and recipients of the transcripts disappearing no matter how they saved them. This was a relief to us as well since we receive frequent complaints about the transcripts no longer being visible. This should aid in the satisfaction of our service to the students. As a result of these changes, in AC 2021-22 the target was met. For the fall 2021 semester, we had a volume of 4,163 on-line transcript transactions which was 464 higher than fall 2020. Of the total, 96.3% requested immediate transcript release while 2.74% requested release after grades were posted and 0.96%

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after degrees were awarded. For the spring semester, we had a volume of 4,805 on-line transcript transactions which is 540 higher than spring 2021. Of the total, 94.05% requested immediate release while 1.81% requested after degrees were awarded, and 4.14% requested after grades were posted. By the end of spring 2022, we had a total of 8,968 on-line transcript transactions. This was 904 higher than the total for 2021. With the consistent increase in transcript transactions volume, it is evident that we are satisfactorily meeting the needs of our current and former students.

Decision, action, or recommendation. In 2021-22 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2021-22 results we will implement the following changes in 2022-23 to drive the cycle of improvement. We will advise current and former students needing transcripts of the “Request a Transcript” link placed on the NSU main page. By the end of spring 2023, the volume of transcript transactions will increase to 9,100.

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 images will increase to 45,000 by the end of spring 2022.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In 2020-21 the target was not met. We started off the semester scanning in a steady rhythm for a couple of weeks. As staff continued rotating days in office and teleworking to maintain social distancing for health-related reasons, additional assistance was needed in our front office area to assist students in person and by phone. On August 27, 2020, our parish and surrounding areas were devastated by Hurricane Laura. The University as well as residents were without power for several days. We assigned a second staff member to assist with scanning during a timeframe that was outside of her own peak time of normal duties. Efforts were made to organize documents for scanning, others verified images as quickly as possible, but the daily receipt and processing of students’ documents continued to increase. There was a total of 6,049 documents scanned during the fall 2020 semester. The primary staff member scanned 5,561 documents, and the aiding staff member scanned 488. From this point, we could see that we were very well below our target. During the spring semester, there were some technical issues with the two scanners. In April, we decided to change the assisting staff member to one who had a little more available time to scan. Once the assisting staff member began scanning, there were a lot of images scanned in that short period of time. In a three-week time period, the assisting staff member was able to scan 7,235 images. The previous assisting staff member was able to scan 2,688 images during availability between January and April. The primary staff member was

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able to scan 24,027 images during the months of January through May 4th resulting in a total of 33,950 images scanned during the spring. Two primary issues with the main scanner were the difficulty scanning efficiently because of us having to tape the side of the scanner to hold it together and the rollers needed to be cleaned or replaced. After contacting the contract company who supplied our scanners in 2006 and 2011, we were told that we did not have maintenance on the scanners – only on the software. We contacted the contract company to find out prices for maintenance and purchase of new scanners. Even though we did not meet our target by the end of spring, we were able to scan 39,999 images. This was 40,001 below our target.

Based on the analysis of the 2020-21 results, we made the following changes in 2021-22 to drive the cycle of improvement. We planned to purchase new scanners and change our contract to include maintenance on each scanner instead of just the software. We purchased and installed two new scanners and completed the contract for the maintenance on both of scanners. These new scanners are much faster than the old ones. As a result of these changes, in AC 2021-22 the target was not met. There was a short break in scanning due to the primary employee resigning. The supervisor picked up the scanning for approximately 4 weeks to catch up on documents that needed to be scanned into the students' files. The supervisor scanned 2,227 images during the fall semester. The assisting staff member increased her volume of scanning around her own work responsibilities to aid in keeping these documents from piling up in stacks to be scanned. The assisting staff member scanned 11,410 images during fall 2021. We were able to fill the vacant position with an employee from another unit within our department. This employee quickly caught on to the correct way to scan, index, and export the documents into the students' files on our server. She began scanning imaging at the end of September and successfully scanned 16,010 images. By the end of the fall semester, we had scanned 29,647 images. We had finally scanned the images of all documents into the students' files. With the success of this monumental task, we now have successfully scanned the images of all documents into student's files and have begun scanning processed documents submitted at the end of each day. For the spring 2022 semester, the primary employee scanned a total of 10,863 images into students' files. She has been able to keep up with the daily scanning along with other duties assigned. By the end of spring 2022, we had scanned 40,510 images into the students' files. This was 4,490 below our target goal. Although we didn't meet our target goal, we did successfully scan all of the images needing to be filed. By successfully achieving this responsibility, we are confident that we have met the satisfaction of our students. Our primary employee was diligent in making sure we Records images are now readily available for staff retrieval.

Decision, action, or recommendation. In 2021-22 the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the 2021-22 results we will implement the following changes in 2022-23 to drive the cycle of improvement. We plan to keep a daily scanning container for placement of all retainable record documents that need to be imaged. Imaging, indexing, and exporting of scanned documents will be completed within

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two business days. By the end of spring 2023, the volume of scanned images will reach 8,000.

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 updating the Degree Works manual prior to the fall semester, new faculty/advisors and current faculty/advisors can readily access the manual on the web. Graduation staff will be readily available to assist or train any faculty/advisor. This will decrease the number of faculty/advisors who have no knowledge of the degree audit; thus, increasing the percentage of those who have some knowledge. The rating of faculty/advisors who have knowledge of Degree Works will increase to 90% by the end of spring 2022.

Finding: Target was not met.

Analysis: In 2020-21 the target was met. We updated the Degree Works manual to provide more helpful information for new advisors/faculty. The updated manual was placed on the Registrar's Office web page under Degree Works. Those advisors/department heads/deans currently familiar with Degree Works can also reference the updated manual. We sent out a survey to a total of 795 faculty, staff, advisors, and administrators. The intention was to focus mainly on the feedback from advisors and faculty since the majority of degree requirement assistance to students is handled by advisors and faculty. After review of feedback from the advisors and faculty responding to the survey, it was evident that some type training was needed or an accessible document such as the manual to help meet their needs. Since advisors assist students outside of normal working hours including weekends and some holiday breaks, having an on-line resource is beneficial to them when graduation staff are not available to answer questions. Those remaining groups may not use Degree Works

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on a daily basis, but it is important that all users have a working knowledge of Degree Works. We had a total of 283 participants respond to the survey giving a 35.6% participation rating. Of those participating, a total of 161 were faculty and advisors giving a 56.9% participation rating. There was a total of 20 advisors and 141 identified as faculty out of the 161 responses. The total of 161 Faculty/Advisors responded to Question 1 “Do you have knowledge of Degree Works?”. Of the 161 responses, 139 responded that they had knowledge of Degree Works which resulted in an 86.34% knowledge rating. Only 22 indicated that they had no knowledge which resulted in a 13.66% rating. For Question 2 “Do you use Degree Works?”, a total of 123 responded “Yes” resulting in a 76.40% rating. A total of 38 responded “No” resulting in a 23.60% rating. A total of 50 responded “Yes” to Question 3 “Do you need additional training for Degree Works?” resulting in a 31.45% rating. A total of 109 responded “No” resulting in a 68.55% rating. A total of 48 responded “Yes” to Question 4 “Did the training manual help you?” resulting in a 30.97% rating. A total of 107 responded “No” resulting in a 69.03% rating. Although we had a low percentage indicating the helpfulness of the manual, our higher percentage of faculty/advisor with knowledge of Degree Works was an indicator that we are providing the needed information for faculty/advisors understanding of Degree Works. Our students’ academic success is dependent upon their knowledge to assist them.

QUESTION #1

	RESPONSE	NUMBER	%	RESPONSE	NUMBER	%	SKIPPED	TOTAL	
FACULTY	YES	119	84.40%	NO	22	15.6	0	0	141
ADVISORS	YES	20	100.00%	NO	0	0	0	0	20
TOTAL	YES	139	86.34%		22	13.66%	0	0.00%	161

QUESTION #2

	RESPONSE	NUMBER	%	RESPONSE	%	SKIPPED	TOTAL		
FACULTY	YES	104	73.76%	NO	37	26.24	0	0	141
ADVISORS	YES	19	95.00%	NO	1	5	0	0	20
TOTAL	YES	123	76.40%	NO	38	23.60%	0	0.00%	161

QUESTION #3

	RESPONSE	NUMBER	%	RESPONSE	%	SKIPPED	TOTAL		
FACULTY	YES	45	32.37%	NO	94	67.63	2	1.44%	139
ADVISORS	YES	5	25.00%	NO	15	75	0	0.00%	20
TOTAL	YES	50	31.45%	NO	109	68.55%	2	1.26%	159

QUESTION #4

	RESPONSE	NUMBER	%	RESPONSE	%	SKIPPED	TOTAL		
FACULTY	YES	39	29.10%	NO	97	72.39	7	5.15%	136

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ADVISORS	YES	9	47.37%	NO	10	52.63	1	5.26%	19
TOTAL	YES	48	30.97%	NO	107	69.03%	8	5.16%	155

**QUESTION
#5**

	RESPONSE	NUMBER	%
FACULTY		141	87.58%
ADVISORS		20	12.42%
TOTAL		161	

Based on the analysis of the 2020-21 results, we made the following changes in 2021-22 to drive the cycle of improvement. We changed our focus to only faculty and advisors. We updated the Degree Works manual to reflect the new changes in Degree Works and placed it on the Registrar's Office web page as a resource tool prior to the beginning of the fall semester. Our plan was to send out an email survey to all faculty/advisors for responses on whether they desired training. As a result of these changes, in AC 2021-22 the target was not met. All electronic surveys must be sent out by the Executive Director, Institutional Effectiveness and Human Resources. She was not able to separate faculty and advisors from staff. At the beginning of the fall 2021 semester, the survey was sent to 648 faculty, advisors, support staff, and other employees. There were 3 that bounced back as undeliverable. Of the 645 surveyed, we received total 142 responses (121 were faculty & advisors, 3 support staff, & 18 other) giving a 22% response rate. The total "yes" responses in reference to Degree Works training was 45 giving a 31.69% rating. A total of 97 responded that they did not need Degree Works training giving a 68.31% rating. The "yes" responses from faculty and advisors were 40 of out the 121 giving a 33.06% rating. The "no" responses from faculty and advisors were 81 out of the 121 giving a 66.94% rating. With this rating of the faculty and advisors responding with not needing Degree Works training, we are on target for meeting our goal.

Position	Responses	Yes	No	% Yes	% No	Total %
Academic Advisor	4	2	2	50.00%	50.00%	100.00%
Faculty	117	38	79	32.48%	67.52%	100.00%
Support Staff	3	1	2	33.33%	66.67%	100.00%
Other	18	4	14	22.22%	77.78%	100.00%
Total	142	45	97	31.69%	68.31%	100.00%

For the spring 2022 semester, no further responses were received from those previously surveyed. Although we did not receive additional responses, we are confident that there are not many faculty and advisors who need Degree Works training.

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Decision, action, or recommendation. In 2021-22 the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the 2021-22 results we will implement the following changes in 2022-23 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Degree Works Manual will be updated and placed on the Registrar's Office web page. We will send out a mass email group notification to all Academic Affairs employees (faculty, advisors, department heads, deans, and academic support staff) of Degree Works training at the beginning of the fall semester. By the end of spring 2023, we will have no more than 30 participate in Degree Works training.

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. By the end of spring 2022, we will have an 80% timely submission rate for candidate certifications.

Finding: Target was met.

Analysis: In 2020-21 the target was met. During the governor's directives for COVID-19 social distancing, we adjusted within our unit by rotating graduation staff in the office to assist advisors and faculty during the fall semester. Our graduation staff was reduced in September by one staff member who transferred to another department on campus. The responsibilities of that staff member had to be delegated among three other graduation staff members. This caused a slight delay in regular processes, but we were able to maintain a consistent flow with candidate data. After the census date, the end-of-semester graduation calendar was emailed to all deans. We had 4 out of 5 deans' offices to submit their fall candidate certifications on time resulting in an 80% timely submission rate. That particular dean's office submitted the certification by the due date but after the designated time. From this one untimely submission, it was evident that we need to assist that dean's office to be sure the candidates are cleared in a timely manner so that the certification can be submitted on time. COVID-19 has caused some adjustments to be made in work environments which could possibly be attributed to their late submission since their past submissions have been on time. In January, we had a second graduation staff member transfer to another department on campus. Job responsibilities were temporarily shifted among the remaining staff until the position was filled in April. For spring graduation, we had 3 out of 5 deans' offices to submit their candidate certifications on time resulting in a 60% timely submission rate. Those two deans' offices submitted their certifications by the due date but after the designated time. One key factor which possibly caused the delay in timely submission was the due date for candidate grades compared to candidate certifications. Candidate grades were due by 4 p.m. the day before candidate certifications were due at noon.

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Based on the analysis of the 2020-21 results, we made the following changes in 2021-22 to drive the cycle of improvement. During the fall, emails were sent to the deans' offices reminding them of the calendar due date and time for candidate certifications. As a result of these changes, in AC 2021-22, the target was met. The certifications were due by 12 Noon on December 13, 2021. All 5 deans' offices submitted their candidate certifications by the due date and time giving a 100% timely submission rate. The administration and graduation committee made the decision to have two commencement ceremony days – one on Wednesday, December 15, 2021, and a second on Thursday, December 16, 2021. By doing so, this allowed our graduation staff the opportunity to prepare all diplomas and covers for mailing on Friday which was the actual graduation date. The administration had planned to review the upcoming spring calendar to make changes with the two due dates for candidate grades and certifications. During the spring semester, we sent weekly candidate discrepancy lists to the academic departments and assisted them with clearing candidate discrepancies. Candidate certifications were due by 12 Noon on May 9, 2022. Of the 5 deans' offices, we received 3 certifications by the due date and time and 2 after the set time giving a 60% timely submission rate. By receiving the 3 certifications by the due date and time, our graduation staff had enough time to ensure that the candidates qualified to graduate. We had to quickly review the 2 received after the set time. For AC 2021-22, we had 8 timely submissions out of 10 giving a 80% submission rate.

Decision, action, or recommendation. In 2021-22 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the 2021-22 results we will implement the following changes in 2022-23 to drive the cycle of improvement. We will communicate with the deans' office to identify ways to improve the timeliness of their certification submissions. We will work with and encourage each dean's office to have their candidate discrepancies cleared at least a week prior to graduation. By the end of spring 2023, we will have a 90% timely submission rate of candidate certifications.

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

- Each VA certifying official as well as the Director attended the required five hours of VA training.
- We closely monitored the graduates during the commencement ceremonies to ensure a satisfactory experience.
- The graduates were lined up in the westside concourse to process into the arena; thereby, adding more graduate involvement in satisfaction of their ceremonies.
- We decided to resume the in-house surveys in the front desk area to know how our in-person service was perceived by the visitors.
- We planned to decrease the turnaround time for entering transfer credits and maintain the accuracy through use of TES.

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- Our two evaluators planned to attend the virtual 2021 CollegeSource Annual Conference.
- We learned some new and inspiring ways to increase our turn-around time, evaluation production, and accuracy of entering transfer credits.
- We planned to assist students with processing of timely grade changes.
- With student inquiry, we sent an email to the instructor and academic department to confirm a grade change had been or would be submitted on behalf of the student.
- We decided to process enrollment verification requests received in-house and refer inquiring students to the on-line service provided the degree program is not needed.
- We revised our transcript landing page to contain clearer information regarding how to appropriately request an official transcript through the on-line service and removed the expiration of digital transcripts.
- We purchased and installed two new scanners and completed the contract for the maintenance on both of scanners.
- We were able to fill the vacant position with an employee from another unit within our department.
- We changed our focus to only faculty and advisors.
- We updated the Degree Works manual to reflect the new changes in Degree Works and placed it on the Registrar's Office web page as a resource tool prior to the beginning of the fall semester.
- Emails were sent to the deans' offices reminding them of the calendar due date and time for candidate certifications.
- We sent weekly candidate discrepancy lists to the academic departments and assisted them with clearing candidate discrepancies

Plan of action moving forward.

- We plan to provide access to the secondary VA certifying official so that additional assistance to students can be provided in a timely manner.
- We plan to have our staff wear easily identifiable attire for the graduates to recognize and approach us before, during, or after the ceremonies.
- We plan to have our staff positioned inside the entryway and outside the exit doors of the coliseum to be readily available for assistance to the graduates.
- We plan to increase our in-person front desk area visitor survey number to 75 each semester.
- We plan to ensure that both transcript evaluators attend the TES annual training.

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- We plan to ensure that our TES subscription is renewed each November to prevent any interruption of access.
- We plan to contact the instructors of the courses in which students have “I” (incomplete) grades that are expiring for the preceding semester on the last day to make up “I” grades.
- We plan to encourage students to use the on-line enrollment verification service after the initial enrollment reporting has been completed.
- We plan to add a link for the on-line verification service to our student self-service portal.
- We plan to advise current and former students needing transcripts of the “Request a Transcript” link placed on the NSU main page.
- We plan to keep a daily scanning container for placement of all retainable record documents that need to be imaged.
- Imaging, indexing, and exporting of retainable documents will be completed within two business days.
- The Degree Works Manual will be updated and placed on the Registrar’s Office web page.
- The Degree Works Manual will be updated and placed on the Registrar’s Office web page.
- We will send out a mass email group notification to all Academic Affairs employees (faculty, advisors, department heads, deans, and academic support staff) of Degree Works training at the beginning of the fall semester.
- We will communicate with the deans’ office to identify ways to improve the timeliness of their certification submissions.
- We will work with and encourage each dean’s office to have their candidate discrepancies cleared at least a week prior to graduation.