Assessment Cycle Academic Year 2016 – 2017

University Registrar

Division or Department: N/A

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Northwestern Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution that is committed to the creation, dissemination, and acquisition of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The University maintains as its highest priority excellence in teaching in graduate and undergraduate programs. Northwestern State University prepares its students to become productive members of society and promotes economic development and improvements in the quality of life of the citizens in its region.

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

Methodology: The assessment process includes:

(1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative and qualitative) are collected and submitted to the Unit Assessment Coordinator;
(2) The Unit Assessment Coordinator will analyze the data to determine whether or not the applicable outcomes are met;
(3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the appropriate staff;
(4) Individual meetings will be held with staff, as needed;
(5) The Unit Assessment Coordinator, in consultation with Unit Coordinators, will determine proposed changes to the measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and any appropriate service changes.

Academic Services and Veteran Affairs

Service Outcomes:

SO 1. The Academic Services and Veteran Affairs Unit ensures the timely processing of Veteran Affairs documents and certifications of enrollment each semester for new, transfer, visiting, and continuing VA students; facilitates the class schedule information for access to students and faculty for effective registration and enrollment; and facilitates the commencement ceremonies.

Assessment Cycle Academic Year 2016 – 2017

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. The students' satisfaction rating with the processing of their data forms and certifications will increase to 75% by the end of spring 2017.

Finding: Satisfaction rating not met. Although the responses were good, not enough of those surveyed responded.

Analysis: There were 107 satisfied/very satisfied responses out of the 246 who responded resulting in 43.5%. Out of the 9,269 students surveyed, the result yielded a 1.15% satisfied/very satisfied rating (107 out of 9,269). This data does not give a true picture of the veteran students' satisfaction rating because of the inclusion of all enrolled students.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: Our goal was to increase the satisfaction rate of eligible veteran benefits recipients. We will change the population of students surveyed to only include those with VA benefits. This should result in more accurate data to determine the true satisfaction rating.

Measure 1.2 (Direct – Knowledge)

Academic Services enters all class schedule information for each fall, spring, and summer semesters. Faculty training on schedule of classes preparation at the beginning of each fall semester will enhance their knowledge of the process, aid in accuracy of information, and increase their timely submissions.

Finding: Goal was not met. Faculty adjustment to the revised academic calendar change did not allow for training time before early registration for spring 2017. The technical position for the office was not created in time for effective use to provide training.

Analysis: There were 10 departments out of 16 that submitted their schedule of classes on time giving a 62.5% for spring 2017. There were 6 departments out of the 16 that submitted their schedule of classes late giving a 37.5% for spring 2017. There was a total of 409 internet sections registered with eNSU and approved on time out of the 709 sections for the schedule. This resulted in 58% of sections registered on time. There was a total of 245 internet courses registered with eNSU and approved out of the 403 internet courses in the schedule. There was a total of 51 compressed video courses in the schedule out of 58 that were registered with eNSU and approved on 10/14/16 which was after the deadline date of 10/10/16. This resulted in 87.9% being late. Internet and compressed video courses must be registered and approved by eNSU prior to early registration for each semester.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: Based upon findings, we would benefit from training this coming fall 2017. Once our technical position has been approved, this employee will be trained

on all pertinent components of schedule of classes to effectively begin training the faculty on these various components that should aid in the timely submission of their schedule of classes. There are so many complex procedures to completing the schedule of classes in the Banner system before early registration that there are not any other options at this point other than to provide training to the faculty.

Measure 1.3 (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, will minimize problems on the day of commencement. The satisfaction level of the graduates will increase to 80% by the end of spring 2017.

Finding: Satisfaction rating not met. The survey was sent to all 9,269 students instead of just graduates.

Analysis: There was a 42.7% satisfaction rating of the 103 students out of 241 who responded to the survey. The overall rating was 1.1% for the 103 students satisfied out of the 9.269 students surveyed. This was not a true picture of the graduates since the entire student population was surveyed.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: Based upon these findings, the population of students surveyed for the upcoming year will only include those who actually graduated. A survey of summer 2017 and fall 2017 graduates will be sent out on December 15, 2017, and a survey of spring 2018 graduates will be sent out on May's commencement date. This should result in a better determination of the graduates' satisfaction rating.

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 be provided as well as processing their requests within a timely manner. The satisfaction level of the completion of student, faculty, and staff requests will increase to 75% by the end of spring 2017.

Finding: Satisfaction rating not met. Although the rating was not met, the satisfaction responses from students and faculty were good.

Analysis: There was an average of 158 students who responded as satisfied/very satisfied out of the average 246 who responded to the survey. This resulted in a 64.23% satisfaction rating. Of the 9,269 students surveyed, the satisfaction rating was 1.70%. There was an average of 169 faculty who responded as satisfied/very satisfied out of the average 230 who responded to the survey. This resulted in a 73.4% rating. Of the 1,020 faculty/staff surveyed, there was a 16.57% rating of satisfied/very satisfied.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: Based upon the findings, we will request completion of a brief survey from students, faculty, and staff when service is rendered. This should result in a more accurate assessment of the satisfaction rating of the students, faculty, & staff.

Measure 2.2 (Indirect – Survey)

Transcript Evaluation is critical in determining admission eligibility, pre-requisite requirements for registration, and degree completions determination. Students, faculty advisors, and staff satisfaction level with the speed and accuracy of transfer evaluations will increase to 85% by the end of spring 2017.

Finding: Satisfaction rating not met. The satisfaction rating of the students who responded was good. The population of students surveyed did not provide an accurate picture of the students with transfer credits.

Analysis: There were 147 out of 245 students who responded to the survey as satisfied/very satisfied. This resulted in a 60% satisfaction rating. Of the 9,269 surveyed, the overall rating was 1.59%. There were 110 faculty/staff out of 230 who responded to the survey as satisfied/very satisfied. This resulted in a 47.82% satisfaction rating. Of the 1,020 surveyed, the overall satisfaction rating was 10.78%.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: Based upon these findings, the survey should only be sent to those students who have transfer credits and their advisors. By sending the survey to all students and all faculty, it was hard to determine the true satisfaction rating. The population for this survey will be changed to only students with transfer credits and their advisors.

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:

Assessment Cycle Academic Year 2016 – 2017

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

Measure 3.1 (Indirect - Survey)

Records monitors all students' records on a daily basis. Updates and adjustments are made to records using student requests (major changes, residency redetermination, and catalog changes), Registration Credits and Graduation Council appeal committee decisions, approved grade change requests, approved academic standing reinstatements, and approved out-of-state waivers from the Scholarship Office. Completing all updates and adjustments to student records in a timely manner will aid in the students being eligible to register and/or enroll in the appropriate courses for their degree programs as well as provide accurate accounting of tuition and registration fees.   The satisfaction level with the timeliness and accuracy of processing requests and decisions will increase to 75% by the end of spring 2017.

Finding: Satisfaction level not met. The responses were good but not enough responses for an accurate picture.

Analysis: There were 160 students responding as satisfied/very satisfied out of the 246 who responded to the survey. This resulted in a 65% satisfaction rating. Of the 160 out of the total 9,269 surveyed, the result was a 1.73% satisfaction rating. There were 114 faculty/staff who responded as satisfied/very satisfied out of the 230 who responded to the survey. This resulted in a 49.56% satisfaction rating. Of the 114 faculty/staff of the 1,020 surveyed, the result was a 11.17% satisfaction rating. Since student records contains so many different components, it is not feasible to only limit the survey to a specific group of students. We process changes and updates to all student records regardless of their classification, level, or active/inactive status. Updating of records is a continuous cycle from the time of admission through graduation. Since not all faculty are advisors, the population of faculty should have been condensed to only advisors.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: Based upon these findings, we would benefit from sending out a survey the first week of October during the fall 2017 semester and the first week of March during the spring 2018 semester to all students and advisors.

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 the enrollment data to be accessible for students' self-service of 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, the volume of on-line self-service for students and employers/prospective employers will increase to 70% by the end of spring 2017.

Finding: The volume desired was not met. The volume did increase but not enough to reach the desire outcome. The volume from 2015/16 was 2,000 requests for verifications of enrollment, degrees, and attendance.

Assessment Cycle Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Analysis: The total on-line requests through self-service for verifications of enrollment, attendance, and degrees was 1,731 for fall 2016. All of these were successfully confirmed without any required research from our office. The total on-line requests through self-service for verifications of enrollment, degrees, and attendance was 1,519 for spring 2017. For the academic year, the volume was 3,250 which was an increase of 1,250 above last year's volume of 2,000. This only yields a 62.5% increase.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: Based upon these findings, we have been doing a good job with timely submissions resulting in on-line access through self-service to students and employers/prospective employers. We will increase the awareness to students that this service is available instead of them having to submit a written request for our office to generate the verifications. This should aide in increasing the volume to reach or exceed our goal.

Measure 3.3 (Indirect - Survey)

Transcript Production ensures that all current and former students' official transcripts of their academic work are generated in a timely manner upon request. The validation of each student's record is completed first before generating the transcript whether electronically or a paper copy. Unofficial transcripts are readily available on-line and contain all of the students' academic information. The satisfaction level of the timeliness of generating students' official transcripts will increase to 75% by the end of spring 2017.

Finding: Satisfaction rating not met. Although the responses were good for those who responded to the survey, a change needs to be made for the population to be surveyed so that a more accurate viewpoint can be obtained.

Analysis: Of the 129 students out of 246 who responded to the survey, there was a 52.44% rating of satisfied/very satisfied. Out of the total 9,269 students surveyed, the satisfied/very-satisfied rating was 1.39%. Of the 93 out of 229 faculty/staff who responded to the survey, there was a 40.61% rating of satisfied/very satisfied. Out of the total 1,020 faculty/staff surveyed, the satisfied/very-satisfied rating was 9.12%.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: Since not all students and faculty request transcripts, the population to survey should be changed to include only those who requested a transcript. This should result in a more reliable number of responses to determine the satisfaction level.

Measure 3.4 (Indirect)

Records ensures that all permanent student records documents of current and former students are scanned into Paperflow that is 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 documents scanned into Paperflow will increase to 80% by the end of spring 2017.

Finding: Volume not met. Scanning has always been a top priority in our office since all of permanent student records are digitized for easy retrieval and to save space. With the turnover of employees in that position, the volume of scanning was slightly reduced.

Analysis: The volume of scanning student record documents has been steadily increasing due to filling this position and others assisting. Since the hiring of our current employee, the total number of images scanned for the preceding year of 2015-16 was 13,744. For the 2016-17 year, there was a computer hardware problem with the main scanning system that caused it not to be available for 10 days resulting in 12,054 scanned images. This was a reduction of 1,690 images.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: Based upon the findings, we will train and have more employees scanning on a second scan station that should result in a higher volume of imaged documents.

Measure 3.5 (Indirect - Survey)

Records ensures that it disseminates the current NSU, Board of Supervisors, Board of Regents, and FERPA regulations and policies when communicating with and advising current and former students, faculty, and staff. Continuing to provide the most current policies and regulations will help reduce any violations that could negatively affect the unit and University. At the beginning of each fall semester, faculty and staff will be encouraged to review and complete the FERPA tutorial and students to review the Student-Right-To-Know information on the Registrar's Office web page.   The faculty, staff, and students' understanding of the academic policies, procedures, and regulations will increase to 80% by the end of spring 2017.

Finding: Level not met. Although the responses from faculty/staff was good, not enough responded to reach our goal. The student response was acceptable, but not enough students responded to the survey.

Analysis: There were 118 faculty/staff out of the 225 who responded with an Average Understanding of the FERPA regulations and the Student-Right-To-Know resulting in an average of 51.58%. Of the 118 faculty/staff responses out of the 1,020 surveyed, the result was 11.37% for an Average Understanding. Of the 73 faculty/staff responses out of the 225 who responded with Superior Understanding, the result was 32.44%. Of the 73 faculty/staff responses out of the 1,020 surveyed, the result was 7.16% with Superior Understanding.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: Based upon these findings, it will be beneficial to have all faculty and staff complete the FERPA tutorial in early September after the fall 2017 enrollment reporting and again in late January after the spring 2018 enrollment reporting. We need to increase the Average Understanding and Superior Understanding to reach our target goal while simultaneously reducing the No Understanding continuously closer to zero.

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

Assessment Cycle Academic Year 2016 – 2017

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 are needed to complete technical updates to the Degree Works software and batching of data. Assigning an in-house technical person from IT to the Registrar's Office will reduce the wait time for technical updates and issues with batching data. Advisors, department heads, deans, and administrative assistants training on Degree Works during the fall semester of each academic year will enhance their knowledge of how to accurately use this system and submit substitutions when advising students in their academic programs.

Finding: Goal not met. Although the percentage of those with No Knowledge reduced after the training, there still were not enough surveyed who responded.

Analysis: Prior to Degree Works training, there were 20 out of the 69 who responded that indicated No Knowledge, resulting in 28.99%. A response from 19 indicated Some Knowledge, resulting in 27.54%. A response from 6 indicated Very Knowledgeable, resulting in 8.70%. A response from 24 indicated Did Not Participate, resulting in 34.78%. Out of the total 488 surveyed, the response for No knowledge resulted in 4.10%; Some Knowledge resulted in 3.89%; Very Knowledgeable resulted in 1.23%; and Did Not Participate resulted in 4.92%. After the training, only 1 responded indicating No Knowledge, resulting in 1.45%; 16 responded indicating Some Knowledge, resulting in 23.19%; and 19 responded indicating Very Knowledgeable, resulting in 27.54%. Of the 33 advisors, department heads, and deans out of the 69 who responded, there was 47.83% of them who did not participate in Degree Works training. Of the 488 surveyed, the response from 1 indicated No Knowledge, resulting in 0.20%; from 16 indicated Some Knowledge, resulting in 3.28%; 19 indicating Very Knowledgeable, resulting in 3.89%' and 33 indicating Did Not Participate, resulting in 6.76%. There were 29 out of 56 who responded that the training helped with advisement. This resulted in a 51.79% rating.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: Based upon the findings, not enough participated in the training. We would benefit from developing a tutorial for them to complete at their convenience at the beginning of each fall and spring semester. We will initiate the tutorial this fall 2017. A completion certificate will be generated at the end of the tutorial. All faculty and staff must achieve a score of at least 90 to be considered Very Knowledgeable.

Measure 4.2 (Indirect)

Graduation and Degree Audit ensures that all candidate certifications are received from the deans' offices by the established deadline for each semester. The timely submission of the certifications affects the timely awarding of degrees, the commencement program, and the accuracy of the graduation count. The timeliness of the receipt of the certification of candidates will increase from 70% in fall 2016 to 85% by spring 2017.

Finding: Goal not met. Although the certifications submitted by the deadline improved for spring 2017, there were not enough submissions received on time.

Assessment Cycle Academic Year 2016 – 2017

Analysis: Each semester certifications for each group of candidates must be submitted by the certifying dean. The Academic Calendar and Graduation/End-of-Semester Calendar both contain the deadline dates for these submissions so that candidates can be accurately identified and the commencement program completed as accurately as possible. For the fall 2016 semester, candidate certifications were due by December 14, 2016. Of the 10 certifications due, only five were submitted on time and five after the deadline. This resulted in 50% timely submissions. For the spring 2017 semester, the submission totals improved. The submission deadline for spring 2017 was May 10, 2017. There was eight certifications submitted on time and two certifications submitted after the deadline. The timely submissions resulted in 80%, which is slightly below our target goal.

Action – Decision or Recommendation: We will continually stress the importance of and send reminders to the certifying officials of the candidate certifications deadline date. Once the calendar committee reverts, the semester calendars back to or close to the original period for candidate grades along with our office staff clearing up repeats and grade changes, there should be an increase in the timely submission of the candidate certifications.

Summary of Key Findings and Decisions

The Registrar's Office as a whole has been diligently striving to achieve a high rating in our overall services to students, faculty, and staff. Based upon the findings, three areas need significant improvement.

The Veteran Services Office had some good responses, but there were not enough participants who responded to provide adequate feedback of their satisfaction with the services provided. The data collected did not provide a true picture because of the population surveyed. We have decided to change the population to only include the actual VA students. Doing so should assist us in reaching our desired goal.

Academic Services has continually encouraged departments to submit their schedule of classes before the established deadline. Since they are not aware of all that is involved with setting up all class offerings in the Banner system, we plan to implement training to them at the beginning of the fall 2017 semester. We were not able to provide training this current year because of the academic calendar changes and the delay in obtaining a technical position within the Registrar's Office. This training should increase their knowledge of the various components involved with having all approvals and registrations with eNSU for all classes being offered prior to early registration. We expect to achieve our goal, if not higher, with timely submissions.

The data collected for Degree Works Training for our Graduation and Degree Audit unit did not have enough responses to determine an adequate rating of their knowledge. There were more responses from those not participating. By focusing on our mission of counseling and advising students, faculty, and staff on academic matters, we plan to develop a tutorial this coming fall 2017 for all advisors and staff involved with the academic advising of students. By encouraging all advisors and staff to complete the tutorial when it's convenient for them at the beginning of each fall and spring semester, they will become more familiar with interpreting the contents to better advise their students. A certificate will be generated at the end of each tutorial. We have established a minimum score of 90% to be considered as Very Knowledgeable. We believe this will assist us in achieving our desired goal of enhancing their knowledge to effectively advise and counsel students.

Assessment Cycle Academic Year 2016 – 2017

We will continue to strive to achieve our desired goals. As we determine a better way to achieve these goals, we will make the necessary changes or adjustments.