

## Assessment Cycle 2022-2023

### Testing Center

**Department: Academic Support**

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**Northwestern Mission.** Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to the 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 regions, state, and nation.

The **Testing Center** at Northwestern State University (NSU) exists to provide a variety of testing options for students at NSU and the surrounding communities. We strive to assist individuals in achieving their academic and professional goals by offering the most advanced options in a quiet and secure environment. The Testing Center adheres to the National College Testing Associations (NCTA) standards and guidelines to provide quality services to NSU and the surrounding communities.

**Methodology:** The assessment process for the Testing Center is as follows:

- (1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative, and qualitative) is collected and returned to the unit head.
- (2) The unit head will analyze the data to determine whether the staff has met the measurable outcomes.
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed in an open forum with the staff and unit head's supervisor.
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with staff.
- (5) The unit head, with the assistance of staff, will determine if changes are required to meet the measurable outcomes of assessment tools for the next assessment period.

## Service Outcome (SO):

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

**Measure 1.1 (Direct)** Provide information/handouts to each department & students at Freshman Connection regarding the services offered through the Testing Center. The number of students using the lab will be tracked through the Testing Center's calendar and sign in sheets each quarter.

### Findings:

2021-2022: Target was met.

2022-2023: Target was met.

**Analysis.** In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. The testing center offered Accuplacer tests daily for in person and online testers. We participated in each Freshman Connection on the main campus. The results showed continued interest from incoming freshman about services available to them. We also participated in Freshman Connector's Campus Quest and educated students on services offered by the center. In addition, we offered our services to students who attended the Summer Bridge Program.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022, the testing staff made changes in AC 2022-2023 to provide the best service to faculty and students and drive the cycle of improvement. The staff relocated to Russell Hall for each Freshman Connection session on the main campus. Testing did not begin until later in the morning to allow time for potential students to arrive and check in before testing. The later time had a positive impact on the students and their scores. There was a total of 13 testers for Freshman Connection, which is less than the previous year. The testing center received interest from potential students after Freshman Connection was over, asking to schedule an Accuplacer. For students that did not reach the required score, academic success was offered along with study guides to help them prepare if they wanted to take advantage of Accuplacer testing again. In addition, we administered Accuplacer testing for the summer bridge students. We mentored freshman through Demon Success and participated in Freshman Connector's Campus Quest. Students had the opportunity to ask questions and learn more about services offered by the testing center. Lastly, the testing center worked with the Psychology department to allow a fall internship for one of their students. This allowed the center to educate the student about the services we offered. It provided a professional learning experience, which had a positive impact on all parties involved.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2022-2023 the target was met. We educated students through events, informed email, phone, and in person about the services of the testing center. These changes had a direct impact on the student's ability to understand the different services of the testing center such as proctoring, certifications, scheduling, etc. The testing center certified additional proctors for Accuplacer testing. This proves beneficial to the students who are interesting in testing, but do not want or cannot come to

the testing center in person. This is another way to provide exceptional service to the student.

**Decision.** In AC 2022-2023, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2022-2023 results, the testing center will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. The testing center will continue to participate in all Freshman Connection events on the main campus, relocating to Russell Hall to make it convenient for the students. In addition, we will participate in both days of Freshman Connection to assist the needs of students. We will continue to test mid-morning since this seems to have a positive impact on scores. We will strive to offer the Accuplacer later in the afternoon back at the testing center in hopes to attract more testers. Online Accuplacer will continue to be an option for students who want to take it at their convenience. The testing center will meet with the director of University Studies to implement a plan to educate students about the services provided by the testing center. The testing center offers many services not only for students, but for our surrounding communities. We are one of the few Pearson Centers located in central Louisiana. Many of the centers did not reopen after COVID which is an advantage for our center to attract more candidates. The testing center will welcome new instructors and inform them of services offered. We will welcome internships from the Psychology department. The testing center will continue to improve the website making it easy for students to reach us. We will remind all proctors to keep up their certifications to administer the Accuplacer, so more students can be reached with testing.

These changes will improve the student's ability to be aware of our services, different tests and certifications offered, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**Measure 1.2 (Direct)** Extend the Testing Center's hours of operations to accommodate more testers. The unit goal is to increase the proctored exams given each semester by 10%

### **Findings:**

2021-2022: Target was met.

2022-2023: Target was not met.

**Analysis.** In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. The testing center stayed open late during peak seasons and Saturdays for proctored exams. There were 5107 proctored exams for AC 2021-2022, which was an increase of over 10% from previous year.

Based on the analysis of AC 2021-2022, the testing center implemented the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. First, the testing center offered evening hours during midterms and finals. In addition, the testing center opened on Saturday for finals. For Fall 2022, the number of proctored exams was 2554, a slight increase from Fall 2021. For Spring 2023, we proctored 2505 exams compared to 2590 last Spring. Overall, the total number of exams given were 5059, a decrease of less than one percent from the previous year. We attributed this slight decrease to many factors including lower enrollment and real estate market declining. Since real estate market declined, this caused Pearson numbers to decrease. Also, LSAT and MAT

discontinued their tests which impacted our number of testers. The new House Bill 546 regarding Praxis affected the number of candidates signing up for their exams.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2022-2023 the target was not met. The testing center had extended hours, but the overall percent increase did not occur. We were able to open certain Saturdays and participated in the Literary Rally reaching out to over 2600 additional students. Literary Rally is for high school students and the testing center worked hand in hand with the director of the rally to provide proctoring services for the testers. In addition, we participated in N-Side View for Fall 22 and Spring 23. We administered Accuplacer testing and the Advance Standing test for Math and English along with Foreign Language. These events provided an opportunity for the testing center to be directly involved with potential students coming to NSU.

**Decision.** In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 results, the testing center will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. During heavy times, we will utilize the fishbowl for additional testing. We will be directly involved and participate in the Literary Rally, N-Side View, Campus Quest, Summer Bridge, etc. We will continue to encourage and collaborate with the director of recruiting to have an Accuplacer Day to recruit potential students to our university. We will continue to offer occasional Saturday testing opportunities for Praxis candidates, along with increasing the number of seats available for Praxis testing. The director of testing will collaborate with departments to encourage the use of our center for senior exams. We will add additional times for Pearson testing. These changes will improve the student's ability to interact with testing staff, have more flexibility to schedule test, and ask questions about services, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

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

**Measure 2.1 (Direct),** The number of instructors using the lab, will increase by 15% per semester as tracked by the Testing Center's calendar and sign-in sheets for the class.

## Findings

2021-2022: Target was not met.

2022-2023: Target was met.

**Analysis.** In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met. The testing center sent reminders to professors to utilize our testing center, however, COVID restrictions were in place to limit the use of all computers. NSU's enrollment was down; there were 8 whole classes that took advantage of the testing center.

Based on the analysis of AC 2021-2022 results, the staff implemented changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. We sent reminders and links to professors for scheduling their whole class tests with us. We reminded them that the testing center had no restrictions from COVID, and all computers are available for testing. We scheduled 6 whole class exams for Fall 2022, which doubled from the previous Fall. In addition, we scheduled 14 whole class exams for Spring 2023. Overall, there were 20 whole class appointments for AC 2022-2023.

As a results of these changes, in AC 2022-2023 the target was met. More professors took advantage of having their whole class come to the testing center for their exams.

**Decision.** In AC 2022-2023, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022 - 2023 results, the testing center will implement the following changes in AC 2023-2024 to increase whole class proctoring and drive the cycle of improvement. The center will remind professors that the use of the testing center is a valuable resource for students. We will encourage the professors to use the center for all their classes. Communication will be sent to all professors encouraging use of the testing center. We will advise them to utilize the center throughout the semester and just not during midterms and finals. These changes will improve the professor's ability to schedule their whole class tests, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

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

### **Findings:**

2021-2022: Target was met.

2022-2023: Target was not met.

**Analysis.** In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Professors took full advantage of the testing center services and advised students to make an appointment for their test with us. There were 3886 proctored exams making the percentage increase over 10% from the previous year.

Based on analysis of AC 2021-2022 results, the testing center made the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. The center updated forms on the website to make it simple and fast for students and faculty to schedule times with the center. The center continued to schedule Praxis exams on Saturdays during the spring semester to assist students who worked during the weekday. Collaboration between students, faculty and departments proved beneficial in numbers. The testing center proctored 4105 students for AC 2022-2023, which is an increase from the previous year. There were over 200 more exams proctored, however, it did not increase by 10%. Even thou enrollment was down; the testing center did show an increase in numbers from the previous year.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2022-2023 the target was not met. House Bill 546 was signed by the Governor which allowed entry into teacher preparation program without the Praxis Core exam. This affected the number of exams needing to be proctored. Professors encouraged students to use the testing center for the proctored exams. In addition, they gave another option to students who could not come into the center, they allowed them to use third-party proctoring service to take their exams. Given the listed obstacles, the center was able to increase the testing numbers, just not by 10%.

**Decision.** In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 results, the staff will implement the following changes to AC 2023-2024 to

drive the cycle of improvement. Communication between NSU students, faculty, and staff is crucial to delivering exceptional service, and several efforts will be made to increase communication with stakeholders.

1. The testing center will continue to update the proctor form, allowing students to complete the form in less time with less information.
2. We will send reminders to testers about their testing time to help them keep their appointments.
3. We will continue to collaborate with professors who need a proctor for their students.
4. We will remind professors that NSU Testing Center is a free service to NSU students for their proctored exams. Third party proctoring services charge a proctor fee to take exams through their service.
5. The Education department will be reminded of Praxis exams on Saturdays to help the students who cannot test during the weekday.

Additionally, we will continue to allow walk-ins and assist our students for their proctoring needs. By making sure everyone is informed with the latest testing center information and increasing testing capacity, testing numbers will continue to rise, pushing the cycle of improvement forward.

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

**Measure 3.1 (Indirect)** Survey students who utilize the Testing Center to determine their thoughts on the facility, the testing process, and what they consider to be useful in helping them prepare for the exam. The target is for respondents to respond favorably concerning the facility and services and make recommendations for improvement.

#### **Findings:**

2021-2022: Target was met.

2022-2023: Target was met.

**Analysis.** In AC 2021-2022, the survey was met. Surveys were sent out for Fall and Spring and received positive feedback such as ease of scheduling and feeling safe while testing. Recommendations included new headphones, room temperature, and noise control.

Based on the analysis, in AC 2021-2022 results, the testing center made the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. When a tester took an exam at the center, emails were sent out asking them to complete the survey to give feedback on how to improve their testing experience. Two reminders were sent out to complete the survey.

As a results of these changes, in AC 2022-2023 the target was met. Students responded to our surveys which made an impact on the student and the testing center. It gave students a voice about the center recommendations for improvement. The surveys were categorized as below average, average, and above average. Below average scores were given for room temperature and noise level. Average feedback included lightning and above average were timeliness of responding, professionalism, and security. The room temperature is

controlled by the main part of the library, however, overall, the temperature is comfortable. The noise level comes from students passing by the testing center outside which we address as it happens. The testing center has an open floorplan and students enter in and out which can be distracting during peak season. We provided earbuds to help eliminate the noise. We strive to be as professional as possible and want to make sure each tester comfortable when testing. Students have enough anxiety taking test, we do not want to add to their stress level.

**Decision.** In AC 2022-2023, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2023, the testing center will implement the following changes to AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. We will encourage students to complete the survey during fall and spring semesters. These surveys give students the chance to voice their concerns regarding the testing environment in areas of space, timing, availability, noise, security, and comfort to better serve them. There are some areas that we cannot control, however, we will continue to work on student satisfaction. The testing center will post additional signs in the hallways to remind students to enter quietly. Outside signs will be created for students passing by the center to control outside noise. The goal is to have a drawing every semester to help promote the survey. We will continue to offer ear plugs to each tester to eliminate some noise. The goal is to promote satisfaction and help each student reach their educational goals thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**SO 4.** Faculty will identify the Testing Center as compliant with the NCTA's standard testing operations and one that handles exams with academic integrity.

**Measure 4.1** Be certified Testing Center through the National College Testing Association.

### **Findings:**

2021-2022: Target was met.

2022-2023: Target was met.

**Analysis.** In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. NSU Testing Center renewed their membership and NCTA provided feedback to centers to improve in various areas of testing.

Based on the AC 2021-2022 results, NSU Testing Center continued to be a member of the NCTA. We will continue to take advantage of any workshops and conferences offered and drive the cycle of improvement.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2022-2023 the target was met. We renewed our membership and continue to be a certificated test center which impacts students, the university as a whole and our surrounding communities by being able to offer various test and certifications. We did not attend in person conferences due to budget restraints but took advantage of online workshops.

**Decision.** In AC 2022-2023, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-

2023, NSU testing Center has recertified their membership to NCTA and will do so for AC 2023-2024 to drive the cycle of improvement. This certification will allow the NSU Testing Center to be recognized at the national level. It will allow the staff to attend workshops and conferences. These changes will improve the testing center's ability to provide services and continue to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**Measure 4.2** Abide by the instructions provided by the instructors and report any incidences that go against them thereby receiving favorable responses in the satisfactions survey.

### **Findings:**

2021-2022: Target was not met.

2022-2023: Target was met.

**Analysis.** In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met. A survey was sent out for one semester, however, not both semesters.

Based on the analysis for AC 2021-2022 results, the testing center made the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. The testing center worked with instructors on the importance of completing surveys so that improvements can be made. As a results of these changes, AC 2022-2023 were met. Surveys were completed by faculty. Feedback was categorized by below average, average, and above average. Noise level was a concern which at times, outside noise is a distraction. Average included room temperature, technology, and lightning. Above average was ease of scheduling, professionalism of the proctors and security.

**Decision.** In AC 2022-2023, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2022-2022, the testing center will work closely with instructors for AC 2023-2024 across NSU's campuses to implement security measures to ensure the highest level of test integrity. This will drive the cycle of improvement. We will remind faculty to complete surveys once they use the testing center. The testing center will send out several reminders. The center will request outside signs for the noise level. The center will push harder to get surveys completed which has a direct impact on students and faculty thereby pushing the cycle of improvement forward.

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

- The testing center participated in Demons Success, Summer Bridge, N-Side View, and Credit Connection for incoming first-year student.
- The testing center participated in mid-morning Freshman Connection sessions.
- Face to Face and online Accuplacer exams were made available to students



needing placement.

- The testing center accepted walk ins and delivered Praxis exams on designated Saturdays.
- Targets were met with the implementation of extended hours of operation.
- The testing center encouraged whole class proctoring.
- The testing center's website and forms were updated to allow for simpler forms.
- The relationship with all instructors and students improved through surveys.
- The testing center recertified membership of the National College Testing Association which brought NSU recognition at the National level.
- Student learning and service outcome data were collected from information obtained on sign-in sheets and the testing center's calendar.

### **Plan of action moving forward.**

- The testing center will reach out to new and continued faculty, staff, and students to encourage use of the center for their proctoring needs through means of events, email, messenger, social media, and the university website. We will provide the most updated information, links, etc.
- The testing center will participate in Literary Rally, N-Side View, Summer Bridge, Freshman Connection, and Freshmen Connection Quest.
- The testing center will work with UNIV 1000 classes and participate in extra assignments to educate students about the center's services.
- The testing center will host extended hours, including Saturdays, during midterms and finals to accommodate more testers including Praxis testers.
- The testing center will work with Psychology department for Internships.
- The testing center will work with recruiting to establish "Accuplacer Day" during the school year. All proctors will re-certify their certificate to continue to proctor.
- The testing center will provide exceptional service to the students by evaluating the surveys taken by students about their testing experience and implement suggestions when possible.
- The testing center will continue to create a plan to encourage more survey participation from students and faculty.
- Membership to the National College Testing Association will be renewed.