

Assessment Cycle 2021-2022

Testing Center

Department: Academic Support

Prepared by: Star Hamous

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Approved by: Dr. Greg Handel, Provost

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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:

2020-2021: Target was met.

2021-2022: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. The testing center offered Accuplacer tests daily for in person and online testers. The UNIV 1000 curriculum included information regarding the center and the services offered for students. The results showed an increase in freshman inquiries and appointments.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2020-2021, the testing staff made changes in AC 2021-2022 to provide the best service to faculty and students and drive the cycle of improvement. Testing information were made available at each Freshman Connection event. 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. Due to timing issues with the Freshman Connection schedule, we were not able to offer Accuplacer later in the afternoon, however, had a good turnout for the mid-morning sessions. There was a total of 26 testers for Freshman Connection. This was an increase from last year with 17 testers. This allowed the testers to check in at Freshman Connection before coming over to test. Accuplacer scores increased, and students were able to register without having to take remedial classes. 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 offered Accuplacer testing to the Summer Bridge students.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2021-2022 the target was met. We educated students through 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, etc. Reaching out to new instructors provided additional communication between the departments and the center. The new catalog was updated with correct information about the center. This allowed accurate information for students, faculty, and staff.

Decision. In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2021-2022 results, the testing center will implement the following changes in AC 2022-2023 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. 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 during Freshman Connection for the students that cannot come mid-morning, in hopes of attracting more students to take the test. Online Accuplacer has become popular over the last year and will continue to offer this option for students who want to take it at their convenience. We will provide additional information to UNIV 1000 classes curriculum on latest information such as Pearson certification test. The Pearson tests have increased tremendously over the past year at the testing center. The testing center offers numerous services not only for students, but for our surrounding communities. We will meet with the UNIV 1000 director to include the center in their scavenger hunt that helps students learn more about the universities and services they offer on campus. The Testing Center will welcome new instructors and inform them of services offered. The Testing Center will continue to improve the website making it easy for students to reach us. We will monitor Facebook's NSU Student Needs page to provide information to student about the testing center and answer any questions they may about proctoring and the center.

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:

2020-2021: Target not met.

2021-2022: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2020-2021, the target was not met. The testing center stayed open late during peak season, however, due to the severe weather in Fall 2020 and COVID guidelines still in effect, the unit goal to increase proctored exams by 10% was not accomplished, totaling 4526 exams.

Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021, the testing center implemented the following changes in AC 2021-2022 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. Second, COVID restrictions were lifted during the year at certain intervals, which allowed the center to accept more students at one time and have more computers available. For Fall 2021, the number of proctored exams was 2517, an increase from last fall of 56 more testers. For Spring 2022, we proctored 2590 exams compared to 2065 last Spring,

showing an increase of 525. In AC 2021-2022, 5107 exams were given in the Testing Center. There was an overall increase in AY 2021-2022 of 581 exams, a 12.5% increase from AY 2020-2021. We attributed this increase to many factors, including lifting COVID restrictions, offering evening hours during midterms and finals, and Saturday hours during finals.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2021-2022 the target was met. Fall and Spring showed an increased in students coming to the testing center. The numbers continued to improve when COVID restrictions were lifted. By providing more appointments and computers, these changes impacted students by allowing them to utilize our services. We were able to open certain Saturdays and participated in the Literary Rally reaching out to over 2400 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 2021. These events provided an opportunity for the testing center to be directly involved with potential students coming to NSU. Pearson certification exams are in high demand and required by certain businesses. For AC 2021-2022, there were 656 exams proctored. This was an increase from the previous year, adding an additional 244 exams.

Decision. In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the testing center will implement the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. The center will schedule additional students knowing that every computer can be utilize since COVID restrictions have been lifted. During heavy times, we will utilize the fishbowl for additional testing. As we move forward from COVID, the testing center will participate in the Literary Rally, N Side View, Campus Quest, Summer Bridge, etc. We will collaborate with the director of recruiting to have an Accuplacer Day to recruit new potential students to our university. We will continue to offer various Saturday testing opportunities for Praxis candidates. We will add additional times for Pearson testing. These changes will improve the student's ability to interact with testing staff 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

2020-2021: Target was not met.

2021-2022: Target was not met.

Analysis. In AC 2020-2021, the target was not met. The testing center sent reminders to professors to utilize our testing center, but with COVID restrictions in place, we did not use all computers. Fall 2020 brought severe weather and most professors eliminated one or more proctored tests. There were 10 whole classes that took advantage of the testing center.

Based on the analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, the staff implemented changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. We monitored COVID restrictions and notified instructors when all computers were available to have whole class exams. We scheduled 3 whole class exams for Fall 2021, which was a decrease from previous fall semester. There was an increase in the Spring to a total of 5 whole class exams, however, we did not have an overall rise of 15% or more.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2021-2022 the target was not met. COVID restrictions put limitations and made it difficult to schedule whole class exams. This impacted the instructors as well as the students. With the COVID restrictions lifted and put back in place, it was hard to schedule whole classes due to limited seating capacity. Some professors chose not to proctor their own class, thus making it hard for us to reach our goal. There were professors that allowed the students to schedule their own time to come in and test with us and not be proctored by the professor as a whole class.

Decision. In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021 -2022 results, the testing center will implement the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to drive an increase in whole class proctoring and cycle of improvement. The center will remind professors to use the center as a resource for students. Since COVID restrictions have been lifted, we will continue to promote the testing center by updating the website with simple forms to use when requesting the center. We will send reminders through each semester, reminding professors to schedule their whole class with us. We will advise them to utilize the center throughout the semesters in addition to midterm 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:

2020-2021: Target was not met.

2021-2022: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2020-2021, the target was not met. Some professors did not take full advantage of the testing center. We communicated via email and messenger reminding them of our services. The totals were close in range, however, not an 10% increase or more, giving a total of 3478 exams.

Based on analysis of AC 2020-2021 results, the testing center made the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. The center continued to communicate with professors that the testing center utilized all computers since COVID restrictions were lifted. The testing center worked with the education department to schedule Saturday Praxis. This was beneficial to students who had to work during the weekday. It gave them an opportunity to take the test on the

weekend. The testing center updated their website to create a simpler proctor form for students and faculty. Emails were sent to all students and faculty advising them of the new link. For AC 2021-2022, there was 3886 proctored exams compared to previous year of 3478, which showed an increase of over 11.75% reflecting an additional 408 exams.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2021-2022 the target was met. The changes to the website and administering exams on Saturday along with communication between the departments contributed to this increase in proctoring.

Decision. In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022 results, the staff will implement the following changes to AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. Communication with 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. The Education department will be reminded of Praxis exams on Saturdays to help the students who cannot test during the weekday.

Additionally, we will allow walk-ins and increase the capacity for the Praxis exams since COVID restrictions are lifted. 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:

2020-2021: Target was not met.

2021-2022: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2020-2021, the survey was not met. The survey was not sent out to students for Fall 2020, however was sent for Spring 2021.

Based on the analysis, in AC 2020-2021 results, the testing center made the following changes in AC 2021-2022 to drive the cycle of improvement. When a tester visited the center, emails were sent out asking them to complete the survey to give feedback on how to improve on their testing experience. Two reminders were sent out to complete the

survey. As a result, the target for AC 2021-2022 was met.

As a results of these changes, in AC 2021-2022 the target was met. Student responded to our surveys which made an impact on the student and the testing center. It gave students a voice and the center recommendations for improvement. Areas of improvement suggested by the testers were better headphones and outside noise control. Favorable surveys included professionalism of the staff, ease of scheduling, and a safe environment.

Decision. In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022, the testing center will implement the following changes to AC 2022-2023 to drive the cycle of improvement. We will encourage students to complete the survey during fall and spring semesters. These changes will improve the student's ability to voice their concerns regarding the testing environment in areas of space, timing, availability, noise, security, and comfort to better serve the students. 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:

2020-2021: Target met.

2021-2022: Target met.

Analysis. In AC 2020-2021, the target was met. NCTA provided feedback to centers to improve in various areas of testing.

Based on the AC 2020-2021 results, NSU Testing Center became a member of the NCTA. As a result of these changes, AC 2021-2022 target was met and 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 2021-2022 the target was met. We renewed our membership and continued 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.

Decision. In AC 2021-2022, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022, NSU testing Center has recertified their membership to NCTA and will do so for AC

2022-2023 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:

2020-2021: Target was not met.

2021-2022: Target was not met.

Analysis. In AC 2020-2021, the target was not met. A survey was not sent out Fall 2020 but went out Spring 2021.

Based on the analysis for AC 2020-2021 results, the testing center made the following changes in AC 2021-2022 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 result of these changes, AC 2021-2022 were not met. The surveys were not sent out both semesters.

Decision. In AC 2021-2022, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2021-2022, the testing center will work closely with instructors for AC 2022-2023 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 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 Coaching 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 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 faculty, staff, and students to encourage use of the center for their proctoring needs through means of 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 to make students aware of what is offered at the center and participate in Scavenger hunt.
- 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 recruiting to establish "Accuplacer Day" during the school year.
- 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.