# Assessment Cycle 2023-2024 – End-Year Report

## Office of Admissions

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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 Student Experience Mission Statement.** The Student Experience provides the University community with programs and services to support the academic mission *of* creating, disseminating and acquiring knowledge through teaching, research and service while empowering a diverse student population to achieve their highest educational potential. The Student Experience creates a stimulating and inclusive educational environment that is conducive to holistic personal growth.  The commitment to students initiates prior to entrance, sustains throughout the college experience and continues beyond graduation. Enrollment Services provide equal access to education for potential students throughout the state and region and promote economic stability and financial access to citizens.  Student Affairs enhances student development and broadens intellectual, social, cultural, ethical, and occupational growth.  The Student Experience works closely with faculty, staff, students, and the community to ensure graduates have the capability to promote economic development and improvements in the region.

**Enrollment Management.** The Office of Enrollment Management is a student-centered division that is future focused providing educational access to students in our region to improve the lives of our citizens. High School Relations, Financial Aid and Scholarships, and Admissions work collaboratively with university faculty and staff to provide services and programming that are innovative and surpasses state and federal guidelines. Enrollment Management fulfills the university's mission and commitment to academic quality, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Office of Admissions Mission.** The Office of Admissions seeks to enroll a full class of career-oriented students by delivering quality service and support to prospective students, faculty, and staff through interpretation of the admission criteria for Northwestern State University. Admissions also provide quality assistance to our stakeholders to assure a diverse student population has access to higher education by demonstrating consistency and fairness in the application review process. The Office of Admissions is committed to providing access to educational opportunities to meet students' academic needs.

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**Methodology:** The assessment process includes:

(1) Data from assessment tools (both direct – indirect, quantitative, and qualitative) are collected and returned to the executive director.

(2) The executive director will analyze the data to determine whether the applicable outcomes are met.

(3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the appropriate staff.

(4) Individual meetings will be held with staff as required (show cause).

(5) The executive director, in consultation with the staff and senior leadership, will determine proposed changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, service changes.


**Office of Admissions Effectiveness**

**Student Learning Outcomes**

**SO 1** The Office of Admissions will ensure applicants, prospective students, faculty, and staff are provided with quality service and support.


**Measure 1.1**

As a result of providing quality service, prospective students, faculty, and staff will be able to easily find and decipher admission criteria to the university. Surveys will be provided to new applicants to assess their thoughts on the admission criteria information and availability as they went through the admission process at NSU. Target is 90% will respond they had no issue in understanding the admission criteria.

**Finding**: Target was met.

**Analysis**:

In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met. For AC 2022-2023, there were policy changes as well as departmental changes with a decrease in staff. Due to yearly changes, the Admissions director is continuously implementing new methods for a quicker admission turnaround, therefore, this learning outcome has not been measured.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, Admissions implemented the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to create stability, an effective workflow and increase the number of applicants. In AC 2023-2024, Admissions alongside Recruiting contracted professional services to assist with making all necessary updates/upgrades to Ellucian CRM Recruit, experienced departmental changes, as well as admission policy and procedure changes, creating an increased workload for all staff

members. However, the survey information gathered by Recruiting and the fairly new application system, Ellucian CRM Recruit, has decreased the application submission time from 15-20 minutes to 5 minutes. It is a lot easier to understand and mobile friendly. The Admissions department is constantly adjusting its application process through Ellucians CRM Recruit to better suit the needs of the students, while resolving technical issues and implementing new methods for a quicker admission turnaround, in return, this learning outcome has been measured.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2023-2024, the target was met.

**Decision or Recommendation**:

In AC 2023-2024, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 data, Admissions will continue to maintain its effective workflow process while making changes as needed in AC 2024-2025 and increase the number of students admitted. In AC 2023-2024, the department encountered some changes and adjustments with the admissions policy and departmental changes due to layoffs. In AC 2024-2025, Admissions will continue to work with Information Technology and Institutional Research to resolve all system issues, develop a simple and easy survey with no more than 3-5 questions for all admission applicants, and regain one position lost to assist with the effectiveness of the department. Based on the information provided, we will explore more ways to better serve and measure the service provided by our faculty and staff.

**Measure 1.2**

Students will report satisfaction with the quality of the admission process. Evaluation of Admissions Survey will be emailed to all new applicants on their thoughts of the effectiveness of the admission process and understanding the admission criteria. Target is 90% will respond they had no issue with the effectiveness of the admission.

**Finding**:  Target was met.

**Analysis**:

In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of those results, in AC 2023-2024, there were policy changes due to updated guidelines as well as departmental changes, therefore, we were able to gather the necessary survey information from Recruiting. Based on the information gathered and the fairly new application system, Ellucian CRM Recruit, the application submission time has decreased from 15-20 minutes to 5 minutes.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2023-2024, the target was met.

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**Decision or Recommendation**:

In AC 2023-2024, the target was met.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 data, Admissions is expecting the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to continue to improve the department workflow process and increase the number of students admitted. In AC 2023-2024, the university returned to its normal state with new admission standards. In AC 2024-2025, we will work with Information Technology and Institutional Research to continue to resolve all issues, operate in our normal state with updated admission standards, and develop an online survey for all applicants.

**Measure 1.3**

Students will report satisfaction with the quality of service provided by the Office of Admissions. Target is 90% will respond they were satisfied with the quality of service provided.

**Finding**:  Target was not met.

**Analysis**:

In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met. For AC 2022-2023, there were policy changes as well as departmental changes, therefore, we did not survey our students regarding quality of service.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2023-2024, the target was not met.

**Decision or Recommendation**:

In AC 2023-2024, the target was not met.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 data, Admissions is expecting the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to continuously improve the department workflow process and increase the number of students admitted. In AC 2023-2024, the university returned to its normal state with new admissions standards. In AC 2024-2025, we will work with Information Technology and Institutional Research to resolve all issues, operate in our normal state with updated admission standards, and develop an online survey for all applicants regarding Admissions quality of service.

**SO 2.1** Decrease the processing time of applications to admit students more efficiently, thereby increasing university enrollment and staff efficiency.

**Measure 2.1**

Increase the number of freshmen students by 5% per semester.

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**Finding**: Fall and Spring target were not met.

**Analysis:**

|  | New Freshmen | % Increase or Decrease |
|---|---|---|
| Spring 2024 | 33 (census) | 43% decrease |
| Spring 2023 | 58 (census) |  |
| Fall 2023 | 1070 (census) | 4% increase |
| Fall 2022 | 1032 (census) |  |

In AC 2022-2023, the fall target was not met, and the spring target was met. In AC 2022-2023, the enrollment for new freshmen decreased for the Fall and increased for the Spring. New freshmen enrollment decreased by 228 students from Fall 2021 to Fall 2022 and increased by 6 students from Spring 2022 to Spring 2023. The target of 5% increase in the number of freshmen students was not met for Fall 2022, however, it was met for Spring 2023.

In AC 2023-2024, the enrollment for new freshmen increased for Fall and decreased for Spring. New freshmen enrollment increased by 38 students from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023. However, the target of 5% increase in the number of freshmen students was not met for Fall 2023. New freshmen enrollment decreased by 25 students from Spring 2023 to Spring 2024. The target of 5% increase in the number of freshmen students was not met for Spring 2024. For AC 2022-2023, Admissions adjusted their workflow process by creating new reports as needed, working with IT to make necessary updates, conducting staff refresher training, setting goals, and working within a set time frame. All paperwork was processed within admissions guidelines. Emails and messages were returned within three to five business days. A back-up schedule with the assistance of student workers was implemented so that the phones would be answered in a timely manner and the front desk covered to ensure that all visitors receive assistance. Freshmen Connection lists were generated earlier in the semester so that the students could be contacted for missing information to turn in sooner. Applications were reviewed, corrections made sooner, and missing documentation requested with the assistance of the Recruiting Department. Acceptance letters were also generated daily.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, Admissions implemented the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to create an effective workflow and increase the number of applicants. In AC 2023-2024, Admissions alongside Recruiting and Information Technology improved our software program, Ellucian CRM Recruit, however, our department was downsized, job descriptions were updated that increased the staff's workload, as well as admission policy and procedure changes, therefore, this learning outcome was not measured. The admissions' director is still making necessary

changes within the department to meet the needs of the students. The Admissions department is still adjusting to constant changes that tend to affect our application process in Ellucians CRM Recruit and Banner while resolving technical issues and implementing new methods for a quicker admission turnaround.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2023-2024, the target for Fall and Spring was not met.

**Decision or Recommendation:**

In AC 2023-2024, the target was not met.

In AC 2023-2024, failure to meet our goal of 5% increase in new freshmen enrollment for Fall 2023 mimics AC 2022-2023, it is the constant need to make adjusts to our admission standards for new freshmen since the pandemic, the uncertainty of whether he/she would succeed due to almost two years of an altered school education, and low ACT/SAT test scores. The impact of the pandemic is expected for at least four to five years.

Analysis of this metric overtime leads us to question the validity of the metric as a standalone metric for improved staff efficiency and the reassurance of students that all necessary precautions are being taken daily.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 data, Admissions will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025. Admissions will continue to process applications within our specified guidelines, update staff on new policies and procedures while providing training as needed, push all applications, work with Information Technology on an effective workflow process in Ellucian CRM Recruit, develop a simple and easy survey for all applicants, and notify students with verified errors on their applications to reapply.

Upon resolution of all major issues, we will work with Information Technology to develop a survey that will be sent to new applicants for the current fiscal year. This new survey will include the timeliness of our responses.

Our goal will remain as is to increase the number of freshmen admitted by 5% each semester and to decrease processing time. The Admissions Satisfaction Survey will give applicants an opportunity to report their experiences with admission. We hope that this will be beneficial in assuring the department that our process and methods taken are successful and increase the number of applicants as well as surveys submitted. Admissions will continue to notify applicants of their acceptance upon receipt of all required documentation within five business days.


**Measure 2.2**

Increase the number of transfer students by 2% per semester.

**Finding:** Fall target was met. Spring target was not met.

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**Analysis:**

|  | **New Transfer** | **% Increase or Decrease** |
|---|---|---|
| Spring 2024 | 237 (census) | 0.42% decrease |
| Spring 2023 | 238 (census) |  |
| Fall 2023 | 441 (census) | 2% increase |
| Fall 2022 | 432 (census) |  |

In AC 2022-2023, the target was not met. In AC 2022-2023, new transfer enrollment decreased by 20 students from Fall 2021 to Fall 2022 and decreased by 19 students from Spring 2022 to Spring 2023. The target of 2% increase in the number of transfer students was not met for both semesters.

In AC 2023-2024, new transfer enrollment increased by 9 students from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023 and decreased by 1 student from Spring 2023 to Spring 2024. The target of 2% increase in the number of transfer students was met for Fall but was not met for Spring. This decrease was significantly small. For AC 2022-2023, Admissions adjusted their workflow process by creating new reports as needed, working with IT to make necessary updates, conducting staff refresher training, setting goals, and working within a set time frame. All paperwork was processed within admissions guidelines. Emails and messages were returned within three to five business days. A back-up schedule with the assistance of student workers was implemented so that the phones would be answered in a timely manner and the front desk covered to ensure that all visitors receive assistance. Freshmen Connection lists were generated earlier in the semester so that the students could be contacted for missing information to turn in sooner. Applications were reviewed, corrections made sooner, and missing documentation requested with the assistance of the Recruiting Department. Acceptance letters were also generated daily.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2022-2023 data, Admissions implemented the following changes in AC 2022-2023 to create an effective workflow and increase the number of applicants. In AC 2023-2024, Admissions alongside Recruiting and Information Technology improved our software program, Ellucian CRM Recruit, however, our department was downsized, job descriptions were updated, as well as admission policy and procedure changes that increased the staff's workload, therefore, this learning outcome was not measured. The admissions' director is still making necessary changes within the department to meet the needs of the students. The Admissions department is still adjusting to constant changes that tend to affect our application process in Ellucians CRM Recruit and Banner while resolving technical issues and implementing new methods for a quicker admission turnaround.

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As a result of these changes, in AC 2023-2024, the target for Fall was met and the target for Spring was not met.

**Decision or Recommendation:**

In AC 2023-2024, the target for Fall was met and the target for Spring was not met.

In AC 2023-2024, failure to meet our goal of 2% increase in new transfer enrollment for Spring mimics AC 2022-2023, possibly contributing to students' academic standing or previous balances while attending other universities and the uncertainty of whether he/she can succeed or will be given another chance.

Analysis of this metric overtime leads us to question the validity of the metric as standalone metric for improved staff efficiency and the reassurance of students that all necessary precautions are being taken daily.

Based on information gathered from the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 data, Admissions will implement the following changes in AC 2024-2025. Admissions will continue to process applications within our specified guidelines, update staff on new policies and procedures while providing training as needed, push all applications, work with Information Technology on an effective workflow process in Ellucian CRM Recruit, develop a simple and easy survey for all applicants, and notify students with verified errors on their applications to reapply.

The Admissions Satisfaction Survey will give applicants an opportunity to report their experiences with admission immediately after their submission. We hope that this will be beneficial in assuring the department that our process and methods taken are successful and continue to meet or exceed the previous year's number of applicants as well as surveys submitted. Admissions will continue to notify applicants of their acceptance upon receipt of all necessary documentation within three to five business days.

We utilized Ellucian CRM Recruit to process applications, worked with Information Technology to resolve majority of our technical issues, and created various reports that allowed us to admit a larger percent of students quicker and focus on fewer applications submitted with errors preventing us from processing. Survey findings will continue to be used to enhance or revise the processes currently in place. The goal is to increase the number of transfers admitted by 2% each cycle.

We will continue our set goal of:

During peak times (April-August), 75% of applications will convert to admits within 5 business days once all required documentation has been received.

During all other months, 75% of applications will convert to admits within 3 business days once all required documentation has been received.

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**Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results.** Admissions made several decisions after examining results of data analysis from AC 2022-2023 which resulted in improved customer service and student support in AC 2023-2024.

- Admissions paperwork was processed within 1-3 business days and 3-5 business days during peak periods**.**

- Emails were returned within 1-3 business days and 3-5 business days during peak periods**.**

- Phone calls were answered in a timely manner.

- The front desk was covered to make sure that all visitors were assisted.

- Admissions criteria were updated on the website.

- Admission forms were updated and created as needed.

- Various reports were created to assist with admitting applicants sooner.

- Created an effective workflow with Ellucian CRM Recruit.

- New processes and automatic communication emails were developed to inform applicants of missing admission requirements.

- Acceptance letters were automated, and new programs (Full Measure and Ellucian CRM Recruit) were implemented so that applicants would be informed quicker of their admission status.

## Plan of action moving forward:

Working with Information Technology and Institutional Research, we will develop a simple easy survey with no more than 3-5 questions that will be sent to new applicants for the current fiscal year.

Admissions will monitor and update the website as needed to ensure applicants have the most up-to-date information.

The Office of Admissions will include additional areas for student input regarding quality of service from new applicants in the 2024-2025 survey. We will use this information to meet or exceed the previous year's enrollment numbers and make all necessary changes based on the input from students/applicants for the betterment of student satisfaction. The Office of Admissions is committed to applicants having a better experience with the admission process and providing access to educational opportunities to meet students' academic needs.