

Assessment Cycle 2023-2024

International Student Resource Center & Study Abroad

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Date: 06/18/2024

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Date: 25 June 2024

Northwestern State University 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.

University Affairs Mission. University Affairs is a diverse group of innovative and talented professionals who provide quality facilities, maintenance and management services in support of education and research at Northwestern State University. University Affairs is committed to being fully responsive to the needs of faculty, students, staff and the public, as provided by the Physical Plant, Capital Outlay Office, Grounds and Custodial Services, Environmental Health and Safety, University Police, ADA Compliance and International Student Services.

International Student Resource Center & Study Abroad Mission: The International Student Resource Center & Study Abroad assists prospective international students residing overseas, currently in the U.S. on a student visa, as well as any applicant with transcripts from a non-U.S. institution, in their application and enrollment process to NSU.

We promote a welcoming atmosphere through intercultural social interactions and support international students in their transition from their home countries to becoming a student at NSU, and throughout their studies. We serve NSU's international student population through orientations, advising, immigration services, and cultural programming.

The International Student Resource Center & Study Abroad provides opportunities for student mobility as well. We promote Study Abroad opportunities through Bilateral agreements with partner universities around the world and through the ISEP program

The International Student Resource Center & Study Abroad also promotes opportunities to Study Away at colleges and universities throughout the U.S., Canada, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands through the National Student Exchange program.

Methodology: The assessment process includes:

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

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- (2) The director will analyze the data to determine whether the applicable outcomes are met.
- (3) Results from the assessment will be discussed with the staff.
- (4) Individual meetings will be held with staff as required (show cause).
- (5) The director, in consultation with the staff, will determine and propose changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, service changes.

Service Outcomes:

SO 1: Increase the scope of international students who are aware of options for employment, on and off campus, before and after graduation, and the application process.

Measure 1.1 Direct

Have an increase from semester to semester in CPT and OPT applications, informed inquiries from students (specific questions about CPT and OPT and on campus employment options), and a general increase in students' inquiries about CPT and OPT. 90-100% of international students will be informed about their on-campus and off-campus employment options, regulations, and procedures.

Findings: Target was met.

Analysis: In the year 2022-2023 the target was met. Based on the analysis of 2022-2023, the following changes were implemented in the 2023-2024. We no longer measured the success of delivering information based on the number of applications for CPT or OPT. Student can be informed, but they do not necessarily need to apply. We measured the success of delivering information by the number of students who attended the orientation sessions, based on the number of students eligible to apply for CPT or OPT each semester. We continued to update the website so that students have the information they needed on the website. We made every effort to meet the students when they were available to deliver the information. We continued to send the RSVP form for orientation meetings to all students who were eligible to apply. For the students who could not attend the scheduled meetings, we asked them to schedule a one-on-one meeting using our Bookings system. We also made sure to share the regulations information prior to each meeting.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the results in 2023-2024, in 2024-2025 the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement. We decided to discontinue the online quiz that was previously required before meetings and replace it with an RSVP form to schedule one-on-one meetings. The original quiz was intended to optimize meeting time and facilitate successful application completion. However, students

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found the quiz content confusing and preferred to spend time reviewing regulations and bringing their questions to the meeting instead. By implementing the RSVP form, we aim to better accommodate student needs and ensure they receive the necessary information and support.

SO 2: Increase awareness of Study Abroad opportunities available for NSU students that wish to participate in an exchange program through a NSU bilateral agreement with an institution of Higher Education abroad.

Measure 2.1 Direct

ISRC will have at least three students studying abroad per academic year through a NSU bilateral agreement.

Findings: Target was met.

Study Abroad through NSU Bilateral Agreements

Fall 2023	4
Spring 2024	2
Summer 2024	0

Analysis: In the AC 2022-2023 the target was not met. Not enough students participated in international semester exchanges. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 in 2023-2024 the following changes were implemented. We continued to count students who participated in the National Student Exchange program and ISEP as student participating in the study abroad program and continued to collaborate with stakeholders on campus to increase the visibility of the office amongst the students. We created more promotional material using “Demon” graphics instead of the generic ones sent by ISEP or NSE. We tried to make the experience look closer to their NSU experience. We continued to train Student workers to communicate Study Abroad opportunities, so that students heard about it from peers. We hosted the first study abroad event aimed at promoting study abroad opportunities, specifically focusing on France and the opportunities available there. The event included presentations from NSU students who studied abroad in France during Fall 2023 and from exchange students visiting from partner universities. This was designed to motivate and inspire students to consider studying abroad in France. As a result, in AC 2023-2024 the target was met.

Decision: Based on the analysis of AC 2023-2024 in 2024-2025 the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement. We will host the study abroad event, focusing on a different country each time, to attract and motivate more students to study abroad. We will host virtual meetings with representatives from our partner universities to answer any questions our students may have regarding their institutions. We will advertise study abroad opportunities on our social media platforms to reach a broader student audience. We will require students studying abroad to record a blog describing a typical day at the university they are attending abroad.

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SO 3. Measure the level of adaptability of new international freshman to NSU and the U.S.

Measure 3.1 Direct

ISRC will measure the level of adaptability of new international freshman to NSU and the U.S. using mid-term and final grade reports.

Findings: The target was not met.

Analysis: In the academic year 2022-2023, the target was not met. Based on the analysis of the 2022-2023 results the following changes were implemented in 2023-2024. We monitored newly arrived international students and hosted a variety of events to embrace and celebrate their cultures. These events were promoted on our social media and through multiple reminder emails. Despite these efforts, we faced challenges in monitoring all students through monthly informal gatherings. Monitoring was primarily conducted through their mid-term and final grades, which did not provide a complete picture of their adaptability and integration.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the 2023-2024 results, in 2024-2025 the following changes will be implemented to drive continuous improvement. We will monitor the level of adaptability of new international freshmen to NSU and the U.S. using the percentage of passing mid-term and final grades. Additionally, we will add five-week grades to the report to provide a comprehensive understanding of student performance at every phase. This approach will help us identify if students' grades improve over the course of the semester and determine the necessary support measures to assist them.

Comprehensive Summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results. *Provided are all the things done in 2022-2023 to seek improvement based on the analysis of AC 2023-2024 assessment results.*

- Continued targeting OPT communications to 100% of graduating seniors, organizing at least 2 workshops and offer on-on-one information meetings, sending communications at different times throughout the semester to students eligible. Implemented a quiz that students had to take prior to any meeting, to maximize the time of each meeting to review OPT applications.
- Continued delivering information about the CPT work permit during arrival, and at key times during the semester, such as before the deadline to register for classes, at the end of the semester for students planning to work during summer or breaks.
- Monitored newly arrived international students to measure their success at NSU and be able to identify early any issues that we could help resolve.
- Counted students participating in the National Student Exchange program and ISEP as part of the study abroad program.

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- Continued to seek partners on campus to promote Study Abroad and Away opportunities.

Plan of Action moving forward.

- We will replace the online quiz required before meetings and replace it with an RSVP form to schedule one-on-one meetings. This change is based on student feedback indicating a preference for reviewing regulations and bringing questions to the meetings.
- We will continue hosting study abroad events, each focusing on a different country to attract and motivate more students.
- We will use social media platforms to reach a broader student audience and advertise study abroad opportunities.
- We will require students studying abroad to record blogs describing a typical day at the university they are attending abroad. These blogs will provide authentic insights for prospective students.
- We will add five-week grades to the report to monitor the progress of new international students. This approach will provide a comprehensive understanding of student performance at every phase of the semester, enabling timely support and intervention as needed.