

Assessment Cycle 2024-2025

Testing Center

Department: Academic Support

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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 **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 Association (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 and 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:

2023-2024: Target was met.

2024-2025: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. The testing center offered and administered Accuplacer tests daily for both in-person and online students. During Freshman Connection, we relocated to Russell Hall, near the check-in. The results showed a growing interest from incoming first-year students regarding the services available to them in the testing center. We also participated in Freshman Connectors' Campus Quest and educated students on the services offered by the center.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024, the testing staff made changes for AC 2024-2025 to improve services for both faculty and students and drive the cycle of improvement. One of the significant adjustments was relocating to Russell Hall for Freshman Connection events. We initiated testing in the mid-morning and increased our testing sessions to 15 testers for Freshman Connection, which is an improvement from the previous year. This number reflects the total testers who participated during the freshman connection days.

In the calm room, staff took the time to review scores with students and encouraged those who needed to take the Accuplacer to do so during the event. This provided an excellent resource for students unsure about their scores and guided them on the next steps for admission and class scheduling. While many students tested in Russell Hall in the morning, those unable to attend could come to the testing center later in the day.

The event is quite fast paced, with multiple sessions happening simultaneously. Students who did not meet the required scores were given study guides and preparation tips for future attempts. Fortunately, most students who tested during the Freshman Connection achieved the necessary scores for college admission.

We also took part in Demon Quest, which brought incoming first-year students to our testing center. This event served as a fantastic opportunity to distribute handouts and share information about our services. Students had the chance to ask questions and learn more about what we offer at the testing center. Additionally, we maintained a pop-up floor

banner featuring a QR code that directs students to the testing center's website, making it a reliable resource for everyone interested in learning more about our services.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025 the target was met. We engaged students through various channels, including events, emails, phone calls, and in-person interactions, to raise awareness about the services offered by the testing center. The pop-up floor banner served as an effective tool for reaching our tech-savvy student population. These initiatives have significantly enhanced students' understanding of the different offerings at the testing center, such as proctoring, national tests, certifications, and scheduling processes. Additionally, we recertified proctors to ensure they could administer the Accuplacer while traveling. Furthermore, we collaborated with the international department to provide online vouchers for students wishing to take the Accuplacer in other countries. This approach exemplifies our commitment to delivering exceptional service to our students.

Decision. In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2024-2025 results, the testing center will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. We will actively participate in all Freshman Connection events on the main campus and will relocate to Russell Hall for better accessibility for students.

The testing center will continue to provide Accuplacer testing throughout the day during freshman connection for those who need it. To increase participation, we will collaborate with recruiting to streamline and simplify the registration form for the next Freshman Connection, ensuring it is user-friendly and asks for attendees' session preferences.

Accuplacer will be offered daily at both our main campus and off-site locations, with an option for online testing for students seeking more flexibility. Our efforts to engage the international student population are proving successful, as we have received multiple requests for testing from these prospective students. We plan to collaborate closely with the director of the international department to create testing vouchers for interested students at their locations.

Additionally, the testing center will update testing information annually in the university catalog and collaborate with Academic Services and Watson Library to establish a social media presence—an initiative that was delayed last year due to time constraints across departments. The testing center provides a wide array of services that we will continue to promote and enhance. Not only for students but also for our surrounding communities. The testing center will welcome new instructors and inform them of the services offered. The testing center will continuously improve the website, making it easy for students to reach us. We will remind all proctors to renew their certifications to administer the Accuplacer. Several local high school students took the Accuplacer test in hopes of taking dual enrollment classes. We will remind the counselors to encourage high school students to come and test with us. This is an excellent opportunity for students who will save money and time when coming to college after graduation.

These changes will improve the students' 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 operation to accommodate more testers. The unit goal is to increase the proctored exams given each semester by 10%.

Findings:

2023-2024: Target was not met.

2024-2025: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2023-2024, the target was not met. The testing center stayed open late during busy times and proctored some exams on Saturdays. There were 5100 proctored exams for AC 2023-2024, which was a slight decrease from the previous year.

Based on the analysis of AC 2023-2024, the testing center implemented several changes for AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Firstly, the center extended its hours to better accommodate late arrivals and last-minute walk-in testers. Additionally, during peak times of the year, we offered early morning testing on Saturdays for those needing to test.

In Fall 2024, we proctored a total of 3,181 exams, marking an increase from Fall 2023. In Spring 2025, the number of exams proctored rose to 2,765, compared to 2,352 the previous Spring. Overall, the total number of exams administered reached 5,946, reflecting a growth of over 10%. This rise in students scheduling proctored NSU exams may also contribute to increased enrollment at the university.

During our busiest periods, such as midterms and finals, we utilized additional proctors from Academic Services to manage the demand. While the number of Pearson tests declined, our NSU proctored exams, Accuplacer, and Measure certifications saw an uptick in the testing center. We also hosted CLEP exams for local high school students in a group setting, with participation levels similar to the previous year. Although we scheduled an Accuplacer day for a local high school, they ultimately canceled due to various issues. However, several students from that school did come into the testing center to complete the Accuplacer test, increasing our numbers.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025 the target was met. The testing center extended its hours, leading to a participation increase of over 10%. We also opened on select Saturdays and took part in the Literary Rally, which enabled us to reach out to over 2,100 additional students. The Literary Rally is designed for high school students, and our testing center director served on the rally committee, working closely with the rally's director to provide proctoring services for participants. Furthermore, we participated in N-Side View for both semesters, administering Accuplacer testing and the Advanced Standing tests for math and English, along with assessments for foreign languages. These events allowed the testing center to engage directly with potential students who are interested in NSU.

Decision. In AC 2024-2025 the target was met. Based on the analysis of the results, the testing center made the following changes for AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. During peak times, we will continue to engage an additional proctor from Academic Services to provide support. We will actively participate in the Literary Rally, N-Side View, Campus Quest, and other campus events. Additionally, we will collaborate with the director of recruiting to organize an Accuplacer Day aimed at attracting potential students to our university. The director of testing will work closely with various departments to promote the use of our center for senior exams. Furthermore, the center will reach out to neighboring high schools to encourage participation in CLEP testing. These changes are designed to enhance students' interactions with testing staff, provide greater flexibility in scheduling tests, and facilitate inquiries about available services, thereby pushing 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:

2023-2024: Target was not met.

2024-2025: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2023-2024, the target was not met. Despite sending reminders to professors encouraging the use of the center and welcoming new faculty by introducing it as a valuable resource, only 13 entire classes utilized the testing center. This indicates a need for further efforts to promote its benefits and increase engagement among professors and students.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, the staff made several changes for AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. We collaborated with professors on scheduling their entire class tests with us. The director of testing obtained a report that listed new professors for the upcoming semester and reached out to them directly. The director encouraged these professors to utilize the testing center for their large groups of students who required testing on the same day or within a two-day window. Some professors restrict their tests to be available for only one or two days. By having students scheduled to come into the testing center, proctors can administer the tests within the timeframe set by the professors. For Fall 2024, we scheduled 23 class exams, representing a significant increase from the previous semester. Additionally, we arranged 15 whole-class exams for Spring 2025, culminating in a total of 38 whole-class appointments for AC 2024-2025.

As a result of these changes, AC 2024-2025 target was met. Professors utilized the opportunity for their entire class to take exams at the testing center. They implemented extended testing dates, allowing students to spread their tests over multiple days. This strategy positively influenced the overall proctoring results, as we experienced an increase in the number of testers on certain days. Furthermore, some professors with smaller groups also directed their students to the testing center, further boosting our

numbers.

Decision. In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2024-2025, the testing center will implement several changes in AC 2025-2026 aimed at increasing whole-class proctoring to drive the cycle of improvement. The center will continue to engage with all new professors, emphasizing that the testing center is a valuable resource for their students. Communication will be sent to all faculty members to encourage the utilization of the testing center. We will remind professors that we can accommodate group settings for multiple days. Should they wish to extend the testing dates to a group setting, we will be able to assist them, freeing them from the need to come to campus to administer their exams. We will recommend that they take advantage of the center throughout the semester. These changes will improve professors' ability to schedule their whole class tests, thereby pushing the cycle of improvement forward.

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

Findings:

2023-2024: Target was not met.

2024-2025: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2023-2024, the target was not met. Professors utilized the testing center services and recommended that students schedule appointments for their tests. A total of 4,197 exams were proctored, reflecting an increase from the previous year, but this growth did not reach the overall goal of a 10% increase.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, the testing center made the following changes for AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. The center took the opportunity to review and update its website, including all relevant information and forms. Enhanced collaboration among students, faculty, and departments proved to be beneficial, as evidenced by the numbers. The testing center successfully proctored 5,013 students during AC 2024-2025, reflecting an increase from the previous year. This represents over 15% growth in proctoring services, driven in part by higher enrollment figures.

As a result of these changes, the AC 2024-2025 was met. Fall 2024 saw an increase of 437 students, while Spring 2025 experienced an additional rise of 379 students visiting the center for appointments. The University appointed a new President, and recruitment efforts, along with various events, significantly contributed to increased enrollment, which in turn positively impacted the number of appointments. We do not charge a proctoring fee for NSU students requiring exam supervision; this service is provided free of charge. Additionally, we offer off-site proctoring for students residing out of town.

Decision. In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the staff plans to implement specific changes for AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. A key focus will be enhancing communication among NSU students, faculty, and staff, as it is vital for providing exceptional service. Efforts will be

directed towards increasing stakeholder communication to support this goal.

1. The Testing Center is dedicated to supporting students with their testing needs, including scheduling, rescheduling, and accommodating their exam time.
2. We will provide reminders to testers about their appointments to help them stay organized.
3. Additionally, we will collaborate with professors who require proctoring services for their students.
4. It is essential to note that the NSU Testing Center offers complimentary proctoring services for NSU students, in contrast to third-party proctoring services, which typically charge fees for exam administration.
5. The Testing Center will continue to update the website for the most accurate information for everyone.
6. Moreover, the Testing Center will partner with Watson Library to develop a social media presence aimed at providing students with up-to-date information. This initiative seeks to engage as many students as possible and keep them informed about our offers.

We will also welcome walk-ins and assist students with their proctoring needs. By ensuring that everyone is aware of the latest information regarding the Testing Center and expanding our testing capacity, we aim to increase testing numbers and push 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:

2023-2024: Target was met.

2024-2025: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2023-2024, the survey was conducted and met. Surveys were sent out for Fall and Spring and received positive feedback from students.

Based on the analysis of AC 2023-2024 results, the testing center made the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. After each exam, testers received emails inviting them to complete a survey aimed at gathering feedback on their testing experience. To incentivize participation, we promoted the surveys and offered prizes through a random drawing for those who shared their thoughts.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025 the target was met. Student surveys highlighted positive outcomes, such as ease of scheduling, professionalism, and communication, as well as areas needing improvement, like room temperature and

headphone quality. Some students noted the noise from lockers and suggested smaller testing rooms.

To address the noise issue, we took proactive measures by placing sandwich board signs outside the testing center to help minimize distractions from the hallway. Additionally, we received replacement headphones from ETS to ensure all equipment is functioning properly. Given the open floor plan of the testing center, we aimed to reduce disruptions, especially during peak testing times, by installing hallway signage encouraging students to silence their phones and keep noise to a minimum when entering. We also distributed earbuds to help mitigate the noise further.

Our goal is to maintain a professional environment where students feel comfortable, recognizing that testing can be stressful enough without adding to their anxiety. We continue to strive for improvements that enhance the testing experience for everyone.

Decision. In the AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on an analysis of AC 2024-2025, the testing center will make the following changes for AC 2025-2026 to further drive the cycle of improvement. We will encourage students to complete the surveys during both the fall and spring semesters. To facilitate this, we will create a QR code that students can use to access the surveys instead of sending them an email link. These surveys provide an opportunity for students to express their concerns about the testing environment, including aspects such as space, timing, availability, noise, security, and comfort, allowing us to better serve their needs.

To address noise issues, we will place sandwich board signs outside the testing center to remind students to be quiet upon entering. Additionally, we will explore solutions to minimize locker noise. While there are certain factors beyond our control, we remain committed to enhancing student satisfaction. Our hallway signage will serve as a reminder for students to enter quietly. We also plan to conduct a drawing each semester to promote participation in the survey and will offer earplugs to testers to help reduce noise.

Our ultimate goal is to foster student satisfaction and support each individual in achieving their educational objectives, 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 by the Testing Center through the National College Testing Association.

Findings:

2023-2024: Target was met.

2024-2025: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. The NSU Testing Center renewed its membership, and the NCTA provided valuable feedback to help centers enhance their

testing processes.

Based on the AC 2023-2024 results, NSU Testing Center continued to be a member of the NCTA. We took advantage of any workshops offered to drive the cycle of improvement.

As a result of these changes in AC 2024-2025, the target was met. We recertified membership with NCTA, which is essential for fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Being able to offer various tests and certifications impacts students. The university, being recognized at the national level, will provide staff with opportunities to attend workshops and conferences, enhancing their skills and knowledge.

Decision. In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2024-2025, the testing center will make changes for AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Membership and certification to NCTA will be renewed, reinforcing their commitment to best practice in the testing industry. Collectively, these initiatives are expected to significantly enhance the testing center's delivery service and promote further advancements in their operational processes 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 satisfaction survey.

Findings:

2023-2024: Target was met.

2024-2025: Target was met.

Analysis. In AC 2023-2024, the target was met. Surveys were sent to faculty for the fall and spring semesters, asking them to complete the survey.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, the testing center implemented several changes for AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. Collaborating closely with instructors, the center emphasized the significance of completing surveys to facilitate necessary enhancements. As a result, the AC 2024-2025 was met. Faculty members completed the surveys, and the feedback was largely positive, highlighting the ease of scheduling exams and the professionalism demonstrated by the staff towards both them and their students. We also informed the faculty of the installation of surveillance equipment, which enhanced test security in the center.

Decision: In AC 2024-2025, the target was met. Based on the analysis of AC 2024-2025, the testing center plans to collaborate closely with instructors for AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. The surveys help the center to enhance security measures, ensuring the utmost integrity of the testing process. This initiative will contribute to the continuous cycle of improvement. We will refine the survey questions to better address faculty needs and remind faculty members to complete surveys after utilizing the

testing center. To facilitate this, the testing center will issue multiple reminders, working diligently to increase survey completion rates, which directly impacts both students and faculty while pushing the cycle of improvement forward.

A comprehensive summary of key evidence of seeking improvements based on analysis of results. The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2024-2025. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the AC 2023-2024 results analysis.

- The testing center participated in Campus Quest, N-Side View, Literary Rally, and Credit Connection for incoming first-year students.
- The testing center participated in all sessions of Freshman Connection and administered the Accuplacer each day of this event.
- Calm room staff helped recognize students who needed testing and sent them to us during Freshman Connection days.
- Face-to-face and online Accuplacer exams were made available to students needing placement.
- The testing center accepted walk-ins during targeted extended hours of testing.
- Pop-up floor banners were brought to recruiting events.
- Signs (outside and in the hallways) were utilized to eliminate noise.
- Recertification of Accuplacer proctors was completed.
- The testing center collaborated with professors to proctor whole-class testing.
- 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 with 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.
- Surveillance equipment was installed in the testing center to enhance test security.

Plan of action moving forward.

- The testing center will reach out to new and returning faculty, staff, and students to encourage the use of the center for their proctoring needs through channels 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 the Literary Rally, N-Side View, Freshman Connection, and Freshmen Campus Quest.
- The testing center will work with the international department to create vouchers

for students who live outside the United States.

- The testing center will host extended hours, including Saturdays, during midterms and finals to accommodate more testers.
- The testing center will reach out to surrounding high schools to encourage CLEP testing.
- The testing center will offer Accuplacer testing daily during hours of operation.
- The Testing Center will reach out to department heads regarding proctoring senior exams.
- The testing center will promote testing via a new social media platform with departments within the Watson Library.
- The testing center will work with recruiting to establish “Accuplacer Day” during the school year. All proctors will recertify their certificates to administer the test.
- The testing center will provide exceptional service to the students by evaluating the surveys taken by students about their testing experience and implementing suggestions when possible.
- New instructors will be welcomed by the testing center and introduced to the available services.
- Membership to the National College Testing Association will be renewed.
- Proctors will take the NCTA certification test when time to recertify.
- A QR code will be created for student surveys.