Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

Institutional Research

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Human Resources

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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 **Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Human Resources** is a responsive administrative service and support unit that provides University leaders with information to be used in strategic planning and evidence-based decision-making and human resource programs and services. The Office assesses, collects, analyzes, reports, and disseminates data on behalf of the University and supports all University units in assessment-based improvement efforts. Reporting of information is in accordance with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and federal and state regulations. The Office develops and delivers innovative human resource programs and services designed to support the mission of the University, including its core services and competencies such as staffing, employee relations, organizational and employee development, risk management, compensation and benefits, human resource information management, and regulatory compliance.

Within the **Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Human Resources**, the **Office of Institutional Research (OIR)** focuses on the analysis and provision of data to both internal and external constituents for the purposes of decision-making, accreditation, academic research, strategic planning, grant proposal and post-award reporting, as well as mandated governmental reporting. Strong ties with NSU's Office of Information Technology ensure that OIR continues to exploit the latest tools, data structures and methods to provide leadership and customer service in NSU's data analysis function. Strong ties with NSU's Internal Auditor allow OIR to:
- process data that is properly processed through University-approved methods
- work with the auditor and functional departments to address deficiencies in those methods to promote data integrity
- assist in designing enhanced methods to allow the most accurate and effective data sources for analysis and decision-making.

Methodology: The assessment process includes:

(1) Data from assessment tools (direct & indirect and quantitative & 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.

Institutional Research (OIR)

Service Outcomes:

SO 1. Provide expertise and support for strategic planning, assessment, program design, and continuous improvement.

Measure 1.1. Complete 100% of data requests for unit and program assessments. The OIR regularly interprets, validates, and manages student and program assessment data at predetermined intervals to facilitate organizational planning and program design.

Finding.   Target Met.

Analysis. In 2023-2024, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the 2023-2024 results, OIR proposed to review program and unit assessments submitted to Institutional Effectiveness in June 2024 to determine whether any patterns suggest a dashboard might be helpful to the responsible organization(s).

As a result, in 2024-2025, OIR began reviews and spoke with the Controller's office regarding dashboard functionality that would benefit their planning processes. OIR developed a new census dashboard for use by Controller's office allowing access to census date hours by student type, registration credit hours, home campus. Another dashboard was developed to provide Enrollment by Race for Registrar's state reporting obligations. A third dashboard was developed for leadership to track enrollment prioritizing Natchitoches as home campus location. These dashboards are used for assessment reporting, ad hoc inquiries, and state reporting.

Decision. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, OIR will work with deans, department heads and other parties to provide a dashboard to assist with analyzing student course outcomes. Data from these dashboards could be used in developing assessment responses in program units.

Measure 1.2. – One hundred percent (100%) completion of federal and state reports. The University consistently utilizes historical enrollment, retention, and completion data to analyze performance trends and develop forecasts to assist leadership with strategic and operational planning decisions. The OIR contributes data for the University Strategic Plan and University Operating Plan on an annual basis utilizing enrollment, retention, and graduation rate data. The University submits enrollment, finance, facilities, human resources, financial aid, library, graduate, and completer data reports each semester and annually to the Louisiana Board of Regents and the Integrated Post-Secondary Education Data System. The information submitted is reviewed at the system level to ensure data accuracy and to monitor compliance with and the attainment of state and system level goals and objectives. Additional reports of significance include the Statewide Student Profile System, the Facilities and Space Utilization Report, Louisiana Performance Accountability reports, and the Board of Regents Strategic and Operational Plans.

Finding.   Target Met.

 Analysis. In 2023-2024, the target was met.
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Based on the analysis of the 2023-2024 results, OIR proposed to work with ECE to publish additional tutorial video(s) to assist University personnel in the use of the dashboards.

OIR identified four subject areas that could merit video tutorials.
- Overview of OIR Dashboards
- Using the OIR Student Enrollment Dashboard – Part 1
- Using the OIR Student Enrollment Dashboard – Part 2
- Using the OIR Student Retention Dashboard

As a result, in 2024-2025, OIR scripted a tutorial about use of the Student Enrollment dashboard, highlighting the functionality of the visual elements, the filters, and the dimensional fields. Recording and editing is underway.

Upon reflection, OIR has determined that this initiative, while potentially helpful in expanding stakeholder engagement with data, does not directly address the spirit of this objective. Building tutorials will continue to be on OIR's project list, but that task will no longer be a target for this objective.

Decision: Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, OIR will research and join a new project with the University of Louisiana System. This project is intended, over time, to streamline the development and submission of IPEDS and Board of Regents

reporting from a centralized repository. ULS has identified and piloted a system called DataX, which may be platform for this functionality.

SO 2. Develop, provide, and maintain timely and accurate institutional data to internal and external audiences.

Measure 2.1. – One hundred percent (100%) of data source files will be documented for federal and state reports to enable responsiveness to all inquiries, requests, and audits. Complete any audits with no substantial findings. The OIR ensures accuracy, consistency, and timeliness among federal, state, and internal reports (IPEDS, Louisiana Board of Regents, Louisiana Performance and Accountability System, and internal assessment reports) through data validation protocols and audit and balancing of state and federal standardized reports. The Louisiana Legislative Auditors, (the independent audit body for the state of Louisiana), has the authority to audit as they deem appropriate to verify data accuracy.

Finding.   Target Met.

Analysis. In 2023-2024, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the 2023-2024 results, OIR reviewed and updated the draft retention policy for various categories of data and reports.

As a result, in 2024-2025, OIR reviewed physical files and shredded those containing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) that are older than 5 years. OIR loaded student data to Snowflake data warehouse and updates that data in parallel to the existing Tableau hyper files. OIR developed a dashboard running from the Snowflake source instead of the Tableau hyper files which are stored on the shared on-premise N drive. These efforts will continue and expand in the coming year.

Decision. Based on the analysis of the 2024-2025 results, OIR will expand documentation of recurring processes by packaging an OIR Notebook in OneNote. This Notebook will house instructions for preparing mandatory federal reporting. In future years, it can be expanded to house instructions for state reporting as well as recurring accreditation, grant, and in-house reporting.

Measure 2.2. – One hundred percent (100%) compliance with Board of Regents' modifications to report specifications. The OIR consistently reviews data collection and reporting processes to identify relationships among reports and across departments to synchronize data reporting and to validate accuracy employing different data extraction and reporting methods in compliance with reporting standards as established by the Louisiana Board of Regents. Report procedures exist for all major state reports that are compiled by the OIR, however, the Board of Regents often issues modifications to specifications for the required reports. The Office of Institutional Research will implement continuous improvement processes to continuously revise reporting methods to comply
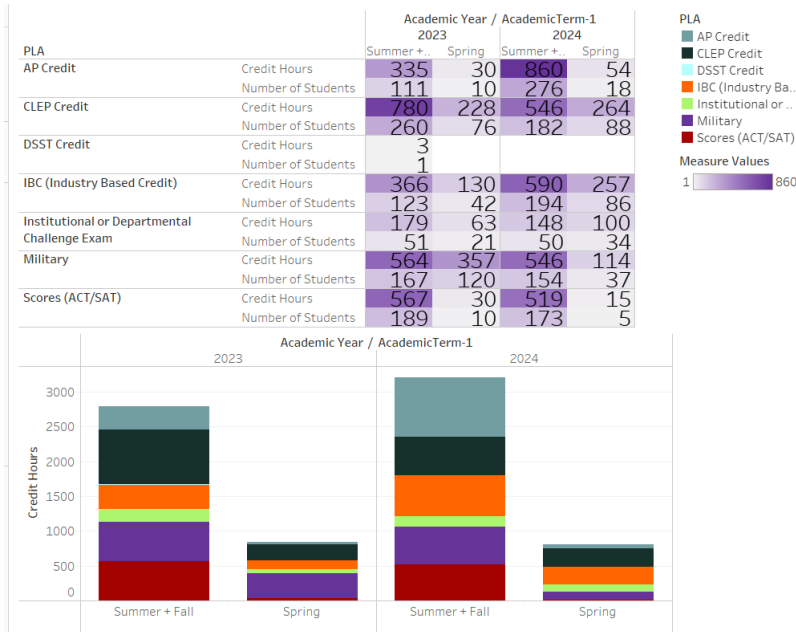
with Board of Regents reporting specification revisions.

Findings. Target Met.

Analysis. In 2023-2024, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the 2023-2024 results, OIR determined that Prior Learning data being submitted to BoR alongside Student Profile data might be useful for NSU analysis.

As a result, in 2024-2025, OIR reviewed the PLA submissions and developed a profile of typical student prior learning. This review resulted in a dashboard displaying types of prior learning and frequencies of credit awarded by academic term. See screenshot below.

| PLA | | Academic Year / AcademicTerm-1 | | | |
| | | 2023 | | 2024 | |
		Summer +..	Spring	Summer +..	Spring
AP Credit	Credit Hours	335	30	860	54
	Number of Students	111	10	276	18
CLEP Credit	Credit Hours	780	228	546	264
	Number of Students	260	76	182	88
DSST Credit	Credit Hours	3			
	Number of Students	1			
IBC (Industry Based Credit)	Credit Hours	366	130	590	257
	Number of Students	123	42	194	86
Institutional or Departmental Challenge Exam	Credit Hours	179	63	148	100
	Number of Students	51	21	50	34
Military	Credit Hours	564	357	546	114
	Number of Students	167	120	154	37
Scores (ACT/SAT)	Credit Hours	567	30	519	15
	Number of Students	189	10	173	5

PLA
- AP Credit
- CLEP Credit
- DSST Credit
- IBC (Industry Ba..
- Institutional or ..
- Military
- Scores (ACT/SAT)

Measure Values
1 — 860

During this year, BoR has published updates to the Student Profile (SSPS), Employee Salary Survey (EMPSAL), and Completers specifications. OIR's programs have been modified to incorporate these updates as applicable.

In the case of EMPSAL, this report is submitted by Business Affairs. OIR and IT assisted Business Affairs in generating the new CIP4 field required for reporting of discipline for faculty.

In the case of SSPS and Completers, some specifications require data that is not currently captured or maintained in the Banner database at NSU.

Decision. Based on the analysis of the 2024-2025 results, OIR will work with BoR via the Data Governance Advisory committee to firm up definitions for certain required SSPS and Completer reporting data elements. OIR will inform affected NSU

functional units of these requirements to facilitate collection and maintenance of this required data.   CFO's office will need to be involved to assist in matching the annual summary provided to them by the Board of Regents. OIR will work with the Board of Regents and University of Louisiana System to identify, align, and reconcile SSPS and Completer reporting with proposed Formula Funding.

SO 3. Conduct project-based research and analyses.

Measure 3.1 – Eighty percent (80%) overall completion of requests for ad hoc data reports and surveys. One hundred percent (100%) completion of all requests for ad hoc and recurring data requests related to **accreditation, planning and compliance**. The OIR compiles, analyzes, and reports student and program data in a timely and accurate manner to assist departments with new program initiatives, grant applications, compliance/accreditation, recruiting, and other strategic and planning initiatives as appropriate.

Finding.   Target Met.

Analysis. In 2023-2024, the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the 2023-2024 results, OIR planned to enhance and deploy the OIR Student Achievement webpage for the Key Student Completion Indicator (KSCI) to incorporate disaggregation functionality, similar to the capabilities available for IPEDS Grad Rate.

As a result, in 2024-2025, OIR has developed, tested and published the filtering functionality for the KSCI grad rate to the OIR Student Achievement webpage.

Decision. Based on the analysis of the 2024-25 results, OIR will work with ElevateU to identify, define, and publish dashboard(s) in support of metrics necessary for grant-reporting.

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Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvement 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 analyzing the AC 2023-2024 results and lessons learned.

SO	Measure	Key Evidence
1	1.1	OIR provided census, homecampus, and enrollment by race dashboards.
1	1.2	Tutorial script completed. Video development in progress.
2	2.1	OIR has loaded data to the Snowflake data warehouse. OIR has developed several test dashboards as proof of concept and models for future development. OIR has continued to load updated term level data into the data warehouse.
2	2.2	PLA dashboard completed.
3	3.1	OIR has published the disaggregated KSCI measure to the OIR Student Achievement website.

Assessment Cycle 2024 – 2025

Plan of Action Moving Forward.

SO	Measure	Plan
1	1.1	IR will work with deans, department heads and other parties to provide a dashboard to assist with analyzing student course outcomes.
1	1.2	IR will research and potentially join a new project with the University of Louisiana System to streamline the development and submission of IPEDS and Board of Regents reporting from a centralized repository.
2	2.1	IR will package an OIR Notebook in OneNote to house instructions for preparing mandatory federal reporting.
2	2.2	OIR will work with the Board of Regents and University of Louisiana System to identify, align, and reconcile SSPS and Completer reporting with proposed Formula Funding.
3	3.1	IR will work with ElevateU to identify, define, and publish dashboard(s) in support of metrics necessary for grant-reporting.