

## Office of Student Activities and Organizations

**Division or Department:** Student Affairs

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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 for education to potential students throughout the state and region and promotes 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.

**Student Affairs Mission.** The Division of Student Affairs prepares students to be productive members of society and to improve the quality of life of students. Student Affairs provides support services in career development and placement, advocacy and accountability, academic support, mental and physical health, disability accommodations, student activities and organizations, student union life, and opportunities in leadership, community service, and programs for new students. Through hands on involvement in programs and services, Student Affairs promotes personal development in a student-centered environment, which delivers innovative practices in an environment of respect. Student Affairs encourages integrity, diversity, and collaboration with all members of the university community.

**The Office of Student Activities and Organizations** provides the University community with programs and services to support a positive collegiate experience. The mission and subsequent learning outcomes support our desire to transform and engage students through campus involvement. The Office of Student Activities and Organizations at Northwestern State University aims to enhance the college experience

of all students through student organizations, activities, traditions, and athletic events.

**Methodology:** The assessment process includes:

1. The assessment process for Student Activities and Organizations will be evaluated through multiple direct and indirect assessment tools.
2. The Director will analyze the data to determine whether the applicable outcomes are met and report to the Director of Student Affairs.
3. Results from the assessment will be discussed with the appropriate students and constituent groups.
4. Individual meetings will be held with students and constituent groups as required.
5. The Director of Student Affairs, in collaboration with the Student Activities and Organization Director, will determine proposed changes to measurable outcomes, assessment tools for the next assessment period and, where needed, service changes.

### **Student Activities and Leadership Development Effectiveness**

#### **Service Outcomes:**

#### **SO 1. Build campus community by providing opportunities for students to learn and practice leadership and social responsibility.**

##### **Measure 1.1.**

Promote and encourage active participation in campus and community life through student program planning and assessment. Program evaluation forms will be distributed to students and student leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and provide suggestions on future programming options. Evaluation procedures will yield evidence relative to program success by the achievement of the program goals, responsiveness to expressed interest in our constituents, program attendance, and staff performance. Success is defined as 80% of the respondents responding satisfied or higher. *DATA: Post Event Evaluation on Presence.*

**Finding:** Target was met.

##### **Analysis.**

In AC 2023-2024 the target was met. To ensure a more accurate guest count students were required to swipe in before participating in activities or consuming food. The programming committees are open to all students that want to assist in planning and executing events. The University Programming Council posted on their social media platforms and informed PLP classes, Demon Volunteers in Progress, and SGA to encourage volunteering for events and participation during open committee meetings. To ensure students were informed about volunteer opportunities we continued this outreach effort. To increase student volunteering for events and open committees, students used office hours to promote volunteer opportunities to the first-year students in University Studies 1000 courses. This allowed them to ensure new students know they must have campus IDs before

participating in events. This has encouraged new students to carry IDs with them regularly. Hearing upper classmen discuss what the University Programming Council offers has inspired new students to volunteer, contribute to open committees and attend events. We also hired a guest speaker to motivate students to get involved in extracurricular planning to continue keeping event satisfaction results above 80%. The Post Event Evaluation participants were satisfied with the effectiveness of the programs offered. Participants were also satisfied with the programming staff. Program satisfaction ranked 97% very satisfied or satisfied compared to 95.7% in the 2022-2023 academic year. Total submission of post-event evaluation increased from 119 for the 2022-2023 year to 178 for the 2023-2024 year. The Director of Student Activities and Organizations focused on the concerns presented in the post-event evaluations and identified solutions to help increase the satisfaction percentage. Some issues included the distribution of prizes and variety of events. The Director of Student Activities and Organizations worked with the University Programming Council staff to correct these challenges. The Director of Student Activities made the distribution of surveys after events mandatory to ensure students were notified by email. Students' needs are evaluated after each event during post event meetings. When feedback is given, we discuss the options for improvement based on student needs.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, the staff implemented the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. To ensure a more accurate guest count students were required to swipe in before participating in activities or consuming food. The University Programming Council posted on their social media platforms and informed PLP classes, Student Government Association, and Demon Volunteers in Progress to encourage volunteering for events and participation during open committee meetings. To increase student volunteering for events and open committees, students used office hours to promote volunteer opportunities to the first-year students in University Studies 1000 courses. This allowed them to ensure new students know they must have campus IDs before participating in events. This encouraged new students to carry IDs with them regularly. Hearing upper classmen discuss what the University Programming Council offers also inspired new students to volunteer and contribute to open committees and attend events. We also hired a guest speaker to motivate students to get involved in extracurricular planning to continue keeping event satisfaction results above 80%.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025 the target was met. The Assistant Director created a system to ensure an accurate guest count for events, updated the novelty distribution process, created a more diverse activity lineup, and identified ways to increase the number of student volunteers to assist with event planning and execution. The Post Event Evaluation participants were satisfied with the effectiveness of the programs offered. Participants were also satisfied with the programming staff. Program satisfaction ranked 92% very satisfied or satisfied in 2024-2025 compared to 96% in the 2023-2024 academic

year, a drop of 4%. Total submission of post-event evaluation decreased from 179 submissions in 2023-2024 to 160 for the 2024-2025 year, having nineteen fewer responses. The Assistant Director of Student Engagement focused on the concerns presented in the post-event evaluations and identified solutions to help increase the satisfaction percentage. Some issues included the distribution of prizes and variety of events. The Assistant Director of Student Engagement worked with the University Programming Council staff to correct these challenges. The Assistant Director of Student Engagement made the distribution of surveys after events mandatory to ensure students were notified by email. Students' needs are evaluated after each event during post event meetings. When feedback is given, we discuss the options for improvement based on student needs.

**Decision:**

In AC 2024-2025 the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the staff will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Students will be required to utilize the Suitable program to check into the event with their student ID number prior to participating in the events hosted by the University Programming Council. The programming committees are open to all students interested in helping plan and carry out events. The University Programming Council will promote open committee meeting times through social media and the university's student messaging system to encourage student involvement and volunteer participation. Members of the council will also participate in guerrilla marketing to advertise events better to the student body, providing a different medium of advertising will allow for more attention to be garnered towards the events. To contribute towards post-event evaluation submissions, the council will advertise the survey prior to the end of the event and encourage students to complete the survey before leaving the event in addition to the survey email that gets sent out the day after events. The survey data will be reviewed more frequently in post-event debriefs to allow for a faster response to student concerns.

These changes will enhance students' ability to reach diverse audiences, strengthening outreach and encouraging more early-term volunteers and committee participation.

**SO 2. Provide opportunities for student leaders to develop program planning, organizational management, and interpersonal skills.****Measure 2.1.**

Ensure student input is included in the planning and execution of programs and initiatives. Students are appointed to university committees by the Dean of Students, Student Government Association, and the University Programming Council formally known as the Student Activities Board, to allow student feedback regarding events, policies, and procedures at the university. An assessment of their experience will occur at the end of the appointments. Success will be defined as 50% of the 49 student

appointments as well as 80% of the respondents responding agree or higher in terms of their voice and input. *DATA: University Committee Membership Survey on Presence.*

**Finding:** Target was not met.

**Analysis.**

In AC 2023-2024 the target was not met. The staff created a prize incentive for student members to encourage them to complete the survey. Communication was sent twice a month to students and the committee chairs. The staff actively communicated to student committee members at the conclusion of each term to request survey completion, contacted each committee chair to request submissions, and promoted the survey on all social media platforms each month of the term. We requested that students apply to be part of the committees, so they have a choice of how they want to serve the university in this capacity. This process will become a priority for the Director of Student Affairs to ensure the university student committee members are completing their duties as requested. According to data from the University Committee Membership Survey, 15% of students decided to participate in the survey. The Director emailed to encourage students who served on a committee to give feedback, but seven students completed the survey. 57% of the respondents reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with their voice being heard on the committee. This percentage also reported that their input was well received through the decisions and initiatives brought forth by the committee. No student reported being dissatisfied and only 14% of the survey responses selected neutral under the question regarding their voices input being heard. This year the Committee of Organizations and the Parking Appeals Committee were the only committees appointed. These committees had 19 members serving, of which half were students.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, the staff implemented the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. The staff created a messaging channel through a mass communication platform composed of student appointee members to relay the importance of the completion of the survey and remind them that there will be a prize incentive for completion. An end-of-year meeting was planned where the student appointees meet with the Assistant Director of Student Engagement to address their experience in person and to complete the survey at the end of the meeting.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025 the target was not met. The staff actively communicated to student committee members at the conclusion of each term to request survey completion, contacted each committee chair to request submissions, and promoted the survey on all social media platforms each month of the term. We requested that students apply to be part of the committees, so they have a choice of how they want to serve the university in this capacity. This process will become a priority for the Assistant Director of Student Engagement to ensure the university student committee members are completing their duties as requested. According to data from the University Committee Membership Survey, only two of the students appointed decided to participate in the survey.

The Director emailed to encourage students who serve on a committee to give feedback; only two decided to complete the survey. 100% of the respondents reported they were satisfied or very satisfied with their voice being heard on the committee. This percentage also reported that their input was well received through the decisions and initiatives brought forth by the committee. Zero reported being dissatisfied and none of the survey responses selected neutral under the question regarding their voices being heard. This year the Committee of Organizations and the Parking Appeals Committee were the only committees appointed. These committees had 19 members serving, of which half were students.

**Decision:**

In AC 2024-2025 the target was not met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the staff will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Members of staff who serve as committee heads will be encouraged to send consistent reminders through emails to the student committee members to ensure that they are consistently aware of dates and times of committee meetings. Committee heads will also be encouraged to have an incentive for student committee members to keep attendance up, such as a virtual badge to be added to a portfolio. At the final meeting of each semester for each committee, committee heads will be asked to distribute the satisfaction survey to the student participants during the last ten minutes to ensure that enough feedback from the students is received to have a clear understanding of their likes, dislikes, and ideas for improvement. The Assistant Director of Student Engagement will work with the committee chairs to incorporate a window of time at the last meeting of each semester for the student committee members to complete the survey, ensuring a stronger response rate. Additionally, the completion of the survey will become a required aspect of the students' committee service, and it will be embedded in meeting agendas and calendar reminders.

These changes will improve students' ability to develop time management skills by keeping up with meeting schedules, practice critical thinking and problem-solving through participation in committees that impact the campus, and evaluate the effectiveness of committee efforts from a student perspective—serving as a voice for change and growth.

**Measure 2.2.**

Participation in trainings, retreats, workshops, and conferences are offered through a variety of experiences that develop organizational management competency. Students will attend retreats and training sessions as well as regional and national conferences to learn from and share experiences with peers at other institutions. Students will have the opportunity to reflect on their experience after events through an Organizational Management Survey (OMS). The following outcomes will be assessed (14 outcomes): budget management, collaboration, communication skills, diversity and inclusion, event planning, leadership skills, networking skills, parliamentary



procedures, safety and security, service learning, social awareness, social skills, time management, and values. Knowledge obtained at retreats and conferences will be measured by surveys distributed at the end of the experience. Success will be defined as 50% of outcomes represented within the total surveys submitted. *DATA: Organizational Management Survey on Presence*

**Finding:** Target was met.

**Analysis.**

In AC 2023-2024 the target was met. The staff verbally and virtually emphasized the importance of this survey. The staff reminded student leaders at the RSO (Recognized Student Organization) Workshop to send out survey links to members of their organization at the conclusion of retreats, trips, and conferences attended. To help increase survey submissions, we distributed the OMS survey to all individuals who receive grant money from the Student Government Association ORF grants and to individuals that sponsor an event by the Division of Student Affairs. According to the survey, 15 out of 15 outcomes were selected by students. The responses indicate that students developed a range of skills and competencies, including Budget Management, Collaboration, Communication Skills, Diversity and Inclusion, Event Planning, Leadership skills, Networking Skills, Safety and Security, Service Learning, Social Awareness, Social Event and Risk Management, Social Skills, Time Management skills, Values, and Other

Based on the analysis of the AC 2023-2024 results, the staff implemented the following changes in AC 2024-2025 to drive the cycle of improvement. The staff verbally and virtually emphasized the importance of this survey. The staff reminded student leaders at the RSO (Recognized Student Organization) Workshop to send out survey links to members of their organization at the conclusion of retreats, trips, and conferences attended. To help increase survey submissions, we distributed the OMS survey to all individuals who receive grant money from the Student Government Association ORF grants and to individuals that sponsor an event by the Division of Student Affairs.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2024-2025 the target was met. The staff reached out to the groups that attended yearly retreats, workshops, conferences, and so forth, requesting that they have their participants fill out the OMS upon return of their trip or conclusion of the event and not at the end of the semester. To help increase the submissions of the survey the staff distributed the OMS survey to all individuals who received grant money from the Student Government Association ORF grants and to individuals that sponsored an event by the Division of Student Affairs. This survey aids with program planning and evaluation, so it is imperative that these students reflect on their experiences at Northwestern State University, regionally, and/or nationally. According to the survey, 15 out of 15 outcomes were selected by students. Students are learning budget management, collaboration, communication skills, diversity and inclusion, event planning, leadership skills, networking skills, parliamentary procedures, safety and security, service learning, social awareness, social skills, time

management, and values. Data shows that knowledge is being obtained at retreats and conferences.

**Decision:**

In AC 2024-2025 the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the staff will implement the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Members of the department and partners will incorporate discussion of the importance of this survey during trainings, workshops, and retreats held for students and will streamline the survey access by incorporating QR code links into event materials and presentations hosted by the office of Student Activities and Organizations. The staff will remind student leaders at the RSO (Recognized Student Organization) Workshop to send out survey links to members of their organization at the conclusion of retreats, trips, and conferences attended. To help increase the submissions of the survey, we will distribute the OMS survey to all individuals who receive grant money from the Student Government Association ORF grants and to individuals that sponsor an event by the Division of Student Affairs. Additionally, new guidelines will require that student organizations that receive ORF funds or co-sponsor events with the Division of Student Affairs confirm survey participation as part of their post-event reporting.

These changes will improve the students' ability to intentionally reflect on their leadership development, organizational competencies, and event experiences, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**Comprehensive Summary of Key evidence of improvement based on the 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.

**SO. 1:**

1.1 To ensure a more accurate guest count students will be required to swipe in before participating in activities or consuming food. The University Programming Council will post on their social media platforms and inform PLP classes, Student Government Association, and Demon Volunteers in Progress to encourage volunteering for events and participation during open committee meetings. To ensure students are informed about volunteer opportunities we will continue this outreach effort. To increase student volunteering for events and open committees, students will use office hours to promote volunteer opportunities to the first-year students in University Studies 1000 courses. This will allow them to ensure new students know they must have campus IDs before participating in events. This will encourage new students to carry IDs with them regularly. Hearing upper classmen discuss what the University Programming Council offers will also inspire new students to volunteer and contribute to open committees and attend events. We will also hire a guest speaker to motivate students to get involved in extracurricular planning to continue keeping event satisfaction results above 80%.



**SO. 2:**

2.1 The staff created a messaging channel through a mass communication platform composed of student appointee members to relay the importance of the completion of the survey and remind them that there will be a prize incentive for completion. An end-of-year meeting was planned where the student appointees meet with the Assistant Director of Student Engagement to address their experience in person and to complete the survey at the end of the meeting.

2.2 The staff verbally and virtually emphasized the importance of this survey. The staff reminded student leaders at the RSO (Recognized Student Organization) Workshop to send out survey links to members of their organization at the conclusion of retreats, trips, and conferences attended. To help increase survey submissions, we distributed the OMS survey to all individuals who receive grant money from the Student Government Association ORF grants and to individuals that sponsor an event by the Division of Student Affairs.

**Plan of action moving forward.**

**SO. 1:**

1.1 Students will be required to utilize the Sutable program to check into the event with their student ID number prior to participating in the events hosted by the University Programming Council. The programming committees are open to all students interested in helping plan and carry out events. The University Programming Council will promote open committee meeting times through social media and the university's student messaging system to encourage student involvement and volunteer participation. Members of the council will also participate in guerrilla marketing to advertise events better to the student body, providing a different medium of advertising will allow for more attention to be garnered towards the events. To contribute towards post-event evaluation submissions, the council will advertise the survey prior to the end of the event and encourage students to complete the survey before leaving the event in addition to the survey email that gets sent out the day after events. The survey data will be reviewed more frequently in post-event debriefs to allow for a faster response to student concerns.

**SO. 2:**

2.1 Members of staff who serve as committee heads will be encouraged to send consistent reminders through emails to the student committee members to ensure that they are consistently aware of dates and times of committee meetings. Committee heads will also be encouraged to have an incentive for student committee members to keep attendance up, such as a virtual badge to be added to a portfolio. At the final meeting of each semester for each committee, committee heads will be asked to distribute the satisfaction survey to the student participants during the last ten minutes to ensure that enough feedback from the students is received to have a clear understanding of their likes, dislikes, and ideas for improvement. The Assistant Director of Student Engagement will work with the committee chairs to incorporate a window of time at the last meeting of each semester for the student committee members to

complete the survey, ensuring a stronger response rate. Additionally, the completion of the survey will become a required aspect of the students' committee service, and it will be embedded in meeting agendas and calendar reminders.

2.2 Members of the department and partners will incorporate discussion of the importance of this survey during trainings, workshops, and retreats held for students and will streamline the survey access by incorporating QR code links into event materials and presentations hosted by the office of Student Activities and Organizations. The staff will remind student leaders at the RSO (Recognized Student Organization) Workshop to send out survey links to members of their organization at the conclusion of retreats, trips, and conferences attended. To help increase the submissions of the survey, we will distribute the OMS survey to all individuals who receive grant money from the Student Government Association ORF grants and to individuals that sponsor an event by the Division of Student Affairs. Additionally, new guidelines will require that student organizations that receive ORF funds or co-sponsor events with the Division of Student Affairs confirm survey participation as part of their post-event reporting.