Strategic Plan 2016-2023

Assessment Cycle 2019–2020
Sustaining Success

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PREFACE

On February 28, 2020, the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System approved Northwestern State University's revised *Mission, Vision, and Values* statement. The new mission statement becomes effective July 1, 2020. For over six months, Northwestern conducted a deliberate, holistic, and thoughtful analysis of its mission, roles, and functions in concert with the Louisiana Constitution, Article VIII, 5D (4); Acts 241 of 1987 and 1360 of 1997; the specified tasks per the Board of Regents Master Plan 2011, revised 2012; Northwestern State University Strategic Plan *Assessment 2018-2019–Building Momentum*; and the 2019 Board of Regents Master Plan, *Louisiana Prospers: Driving Our Talent Imperative.* The result is a forward-looking mission statement that is inclusive, embraces diversity, anticipates change, and facilitates education access and attainment to better prepare our students to positively impact the socio-economic conditions of our region, state, and nation. The new mission statement reads,

> 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.

During the mission analysis process, the University determined it would be better served by extending its current strategic plan timeframe from 2016-2021 to 2016-2023. This extension facilitates the nesting of the University Strategic Plan with the Board of Regents Strategic goals for Northwestern while improving the alignment with their recently published master plan.

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SFA The Student Experience: Vice President for The Student Experience, Mrs. Frances Conine

SFA Academic Excellence: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Greg Handel

       Research within Its Mission: Chair, Research Council, Dr. Margaret Cochran
       Quality Enhancement Program: QEP Assessment Coordinator, Mr. Bob Jordan

SFA Market Responsiveness: Vice President for Technology, Innovation, and Economic Development, Dr. Darlene Williams

SFA Community Enrichment: Vice President for External Affairs, Mr. Jerry Pierce and Assistant Vice President of External Affairs for University Advancement, Mr. Drake Owens

       Community/Public Service: Service-Learning Coordinator, Mr. Steven Gruesbeck
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Executive Summary
September 16, 2020

Northwestern State University of Louisiana's (NSU) *Strategic Plan 2016-2023* provides the framework and context for our actions in 2016-2023. The plan is flexible and responsive to the challenges of the landscape of higher education and remains a steadfast guide for innovative change and positive transformation. It embraces and builds upon the history, traditions, and core values of a University that has been the educational, cultural, economic, and social bedrock of this region for 135 years. *Assessment Cycle (AC) 2019-2020, Sustaining Success* is the tangible evidence Northwestern is a learning institution committed to holistic organizational improvement. Northwestern is on a path of growth, adaptation, and innovation in providing the highest caliber educational experience in the region through the innovative delivery of transformative student learning experiences. The ability to rapidly innovate allowed Northwestern to quickly respond to the COVID-19 Coronavirus as it took hold in America. The caliber and character of the students, faculty, staff, administrators, and community facilitated the seamless transition from face-to-face learning to online learning. This commitment to excellence by the entire University community continues to drive Northwestern towards securing its vision of becoming the nation's premier regional university.

AC 2019-2020 is the fourth iteration of exercising the University's Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Model as part of the *Strategic Plan 2016-2023 Dedicated to One Goal–Yours.* The focus during the past year has been sustaining success and refining procedures and processes to further ingrain a culture of continuous improvement. The Institutional Effectiveness Model encompasses strategic and operational planning, the allocation of budget and resources, and the evaluation of programs and services, including administrative and experiential learning activities. It includes the identification and measurement of outcomes across all objectives, such as strategic focus areas, student learning, service, and core competency outcomes, and the analysis of data and assessment results to inform decision making. These coordinated activities support and enhance the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of Northwestern State University by improving programs and services.

Completing the fourth iteration of its institution-wide assessment process for all strategic focus areas, academic programs, administrative support services, and academic and student support services allows analytical comparisons of the results between the previous year and the established target. These comparisons provide the University with meaningful evidence to drive institutional improvement in student learning and program growth and design. The study of these results is the bedrock for the development of executable action plans focused on driving the cycle of continuous improvement. The process provides the University the opportunity to analyze program results across all colleges and schools to inform its strategic planning effort and to implement improvements based on this analysis.

With clear objectives and mature comparison data, Northwestern can quantifiably measure progress and gauge success. An informed assessment allows for enhanced environmental visualization, which drives the ability to make better decisions and navigate the future. This cyclic analytical decision-making process continues to require honest, and at times, sophisticated analysis of our current courses of action.

Through this process, we find we must be flexible in modifying (including adding or deleting) objectives, metrics, and methods. The results point to better-informed objectives, metrics, and associated strategies, thereby allowing holistic findings, comprehensive analyses, and informed strategic decisions. This document represents the fourth of six annual assessments, all underpinning our Strategic Plan and overarching planning process. The foundation of the process is organizational self-actualization and continuous reassessment, adjustment, and refinement, all focused on meeting our 2023 objectives.

Strategic Decision Making, 2019-2020. This process continues to allow for better strategic decisions resulting in transformative change and the establishment of a community of trust and inclusion. The actions below resulting from the analysis of assessment outcomes serve as evidence Northwestern is engaged in the process of continuous improvement. Highlights from 2019-2020 include:

Going Above and Beyond.

The faculty and alumni of the College of Nursing and School of Allied Health continue to deliver outstanding healthcare to the citizens of the region during the national pandemic crisis. The **selfless and brave actions of these healthcare professionals have been inspirational and reflect the true nature of the profession**. None gave more than registered nurse **Mike Marceaux**, a 2018 Northwestern Alumnus who died after contracting the coronavirus while working as an emergency room nurse at Christus Highland Hospital in Shreveport, LA.

Financial Decisions.

University of Louisiana System Board approved the **University pay plan** providing a 2% salary increase with a minimum increase of $1,000 annually for all full-time, unclassified faculty and staff. The raise is the second overall pay increase for unclassified faculty and staff since 2017, and we continue to implement annual market adjustments for classified personnel. The modest increases that we have proposed would be a step in the right direction.

To increase graduation and retention rates for NSU students, leadership worked with the **Northwestern State University Foundation to develop a new scholarship specifically for students who need extra funding to remain in school** and for those who need funding to graduate. Deans and Department Chairs identify students who need this money to stay in school or graduate. In 2019-20, **nearly 25 students received in excess of $61,000.**

Northwestern offers a **flat-rate tuition for students** who attend NSU exclusively online. Undergraduates pay $375 per credit hour up to 12 hours and $100 per credit after that, while Graduate students pay $475 per credit hour up to nine hours and $100 per credit hour thereafter. Internet-only students do not pay any out-of-state fees. As one of the **Nation's Top Military Friendly Universities** we offer the military financial options that includes a competitive tuition rate of $192 per credit hour for active duty, reservist, retirees, and their dependents. NSU's College of Nursing offers a flat rate of tuition and fees for **Registered Nurses who would like to earn a Bachelor of Science in Nursing** degree. Students pay a flat rate of $6,750, which includes tuition and fees for 30 credit hours of nursing courses in NSU's RN to BSN program. The flat-rate tuition of $225 per credit hour also applies to the general education courses that some students may need. Northwestern State's School of Education charges a flat rate for **students in the PREP program,** an accelerated alternate certification program for professionals who would like to become certified to teach at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. Students

are charged a flat rate of $5,040 ($280 per credit hour) in tuition and fees for 18 graduate hours of education courses in three alternate certification programs. Upon completion, students are eligible to transfer 12 hours into the Master of Education program in Curriculum and Instruction.

The Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts was excited to witness the **completion of the renovations to A.A. Fredricks Auditorium**. During the renovation project, the Christmas Gala was moved to the Natchitoches Events Center, marking the **first time in Gala history** that the production was not on the Northwestern State University campus. The success of the event demonstrated the adaptability and collaboration that continues to drive this School toward enhanced prominence.

Academic Programs.

In response to the ongoing threat of the COVID-19 global pandemic, Northwestern State University suspended all in-person classes on Friday, March 13, 2020. Although the University offers 40 of its 95-degree programs online for individual programs, certificates, and specialized credentials, moving the remaining degree programs to an online format involved transitioning over 2,000 sections of face-to-face courses to online delivery in less than a week. The seamless process in which this occurred required a herculean effort from faculty and staff and is a testament to their teamwork and steadfast dedication to the education of students.

The **Louisiana Board of Regents approved** the College of Business and Technology's request to offer a **Master of Science degree in Computer Information Systems** and the College of Nursing's request to offer a **Post Master's Certificate in Adult-Gerontological Acute Care Nurse Practitioner.**

Louisiana Board of Regents conditionally **approved the online undergraduate certificate program in Business Analytics.** The 100% online certificate program aims to prepare students for business analytics positions such as market research analysts, management analysts, and financial analysts and to bridge the gap between employer needs and student skills in the areas of business data analysis. The Regents also conditionally approved the **undergraduate certificate in Leadership Studies.** The proposed program will utilize a combination of classroom instruction and experiential learning. The program is designed to build soft skills such as problem-solving and the ability to work on a team while also developing students' confidence and ability to work autonomously.

Due to the pandemic, in Spring 2020 the **School of Business' AACSB on-site accreditation visit was postponed**. Initially, AACSB requested a virtual on-site visit; however, collaboratively AACSB and the School of Business decided to postpone the visit until fall 2020 or spring 2021.

University of Louisiana System Board approved Northwestern's **partnering with the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts** to award college credits to NOCCA students. The agreement between NOCCA and NSU provides an opportunity for some of Louisiana's most talented high school students to earn college credit for the tireless work they commit to honing their crafts. The agreement is the first of its kind in Louisiana, easing the pathway for students to continue their arts education at Northwestern.

Northwestern and South Louisiana Community College in Lafayette formalized an agreement in which students who earn **an Associate of Applied Science degree in civil survey and mapping** from SLCC can transfer into NSU's bachelor's degree program in Unified Public Safety Administration with a concentration in GEO Computation. The agreement will help students fulfill requirements to become civil surveyors without having to go out of state for credentials.

The **Department of New Media, Journalism, and Communication Arts earned approval for a new undergraduate certificate in Strategic Communication**. This exciting new offering, which begins in Fall 2020, combines organizational communications and public relations and educates learners on how to use communication and media to deliver information effectively to targeted individuals.

In Spring 2017, the School of Biological and Physical Sciences began enrolling students in its new **Applied Microbiology degree program**. Enrollment in the program has exceeded UL System expectations, with **over 20 undergraduate students currently majoring in one of its two concentrations**. In December 2019, the program awarded degrees to its first two graduates. The addition of this degree program to the School has increased its course offerings and research capacities, which helped to provide the needed support and justification for the awarding of a **LA Board of Regents Program Enhancement Grant** to the School of Biological and Physical Sciences for the second year in a row.

Northwestern's math co-requisite program, in its second year, incorporates changes in the delivery of instruction in Math 1020/1021, 1035/1036, for students with lower ACT scores. The co-requisite program includes a lecture plus laboratory experience. In Fall 2019, 250 students enrolled. The classes paired students with the same instructor for both lecture and lab and offered additional academic support through activities that strengthened understanding of the concepts. Also, the courses were part of the includeEd bookstore program ensuring students had access to all course materials on the first day of classes. For the second year in a row, our program produced **extremely successful results**. In Math 1020/1021, 86.69% of the students passed with a C or better, and in Math 1035/1036, 91.66% passed with a C or better. Thanks to our mathematics faculty for working tirelessly in the development and continued successful implementation of this program**.**

The College of Nursing and School of Allied Health **initiated a Bachelor of Science in Nursing to a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) DNP-NA (nurse anesthesia) program** and has received approvals from the University of Louisiana System (ULS) and Board of Regents (BOR). It is expected the College will receive the Louisiana State Board of Nursing (LSBN) approval as well as Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia (COA) approval after the September on-site national accreditation visit. The College expects to begin admitting the first cohort of 20 students (10 in Alexandria and 10 in Shreveport) in the B-term of the Spring 2021 semester. Northwestern is **the only ULS school to offer the BSN-DNP-NA program.**

The **College of Nursing and School of Allied Health nursing programs** (BSN, RN to BSN, MSN, Post Masters Certificate, and DNP) **completed a successful self-study report** in June 2020 and will host its national accreditation agency, Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) in September 2020 for reaffirmation of their accreditation.

The University signed a **historic agreement** in September 2019 with one of our partner institutions, Centenary College. The Memorandum of Understanding allows **preferred admission to Centenary College students into our BS to BSN Accelerated Curriculum.** This agreement will accommodate students seeking the BSN degree upon completion of a BS degree in Biology, Chemistry, or related science curricula from Centenary College. This agreement strengthens our role in enhancing health care in our region.

Diversity and Initiatives.

Northwestern State University was **ranked ninth among regional universities in the south for campus ethnic diversity** in a study by **U.S. News and World Report**. NSU was the only school in Louisiana in the top 10. The study aimed to identify colleges where students are most likely to encounter undergraduates from racial or ethnic groups different from their own. U.S. News factored in the total proportion of minority students, leaving out international students, and the overall mix of groups. The data was drawn from each institution's fall 2018 total undergraduate student body.

This year, the **ULS Board of Supervisors endorsed** task force policy recommendations that contribute to combining greater awareness, increased knowledge, and enhanced technical skills to practices of incorporating attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, values, and mission-driven policies across the UL System and institutions that are consistent with ethical ideals of respect and inclusion. Such practice provides opportunities for increased creativity in problem-solving and innovation, increased civility, and more effective and impactful System and institutional outcomes. Northwestern's **Campus-Wide Diversity Committee** continues to discuss and monitor diversity and inclusion efforts at the University. At the same time, a team of faculty, staff, and students is working to develop a new diversity and inclusion plan for NSU. The Campus-Wide Diversity Committee is helping to guide the actions of the Diversity and Inclusion Planning Team in developing the new University five-year plan. The new [Center for Inclusion and Diversity website](#) is designed to highlight University goals, activities, and resources related to diversity and inclusion.

In September 2019, the University made changes to the organizational structure of some units on campus. To foster greater collaborative efforts in the Sciences, the **Department of Engineering Technology** was moved under the **College of Arts and Sciences**. The change will bring together our STEM and STEAM initiatives and provide greater outreach in those areas. Also, to realign resources to address the strategic needs of the university, **Information Technology Services** now reports to the Vice President of Technology, Innovation, and Economic Development. This strategic realignment allows us to use existing resources to target strategic goals related to enrollment and support services.

Enrollment Services and Student Affairs initiated a texting campaign called Cadence. The team can communicate on an app on their phones as well as laptops and IPads. All team members can check and reply to those messages. **The ability to connect with students through texting was non-existent until 2019**. Today, we have sent over 95,000 messages.

The Student Experience increased the focus on Health and Wellness to include additional educational components (campus-wide health fair, hazing prevention, stress and anxiety reduction, health screenings, etc.) in Counseling, Health Services, Access & Disability Support, First Generation Programs, Student Activities, First-Year Experience, and Fraternal

Leadership & Civic Engagement. During the Fall 2019 Wellness Festival, **over 500 students, faculty, and staff participated** in a variety of health and fitness screening, assessments, and education activities. The overwhelmingly positive reaction to the event supports future investment and support in making it an annual event.

In December 2019, it was announced that three of Northwestern's online degree programs had been ranked as best in the country based on an evaluation of curriculum quality, graduation rate, reputation, and post-graduate employment. Included in the rankings are our **Doctor of Education in Adult Learning and Development**, the **Master of Science in Nurse Practitioner**, and the **Master of Science in Homeland Security**. Northwestern's position in this most recent ranking and the consistent presence in leading third-party evaluations continue to affirm the tremendous work that Northwestern is doing to deliver a world-class education.

International.

Northwestern and the **Universidad Veracruzana, a public university in Veracruz, Mexico**, formalized a dual degree program that will allow students to transfer from one university to the other and meet graduation requirements for bachelor's, masters and doctoral degrees from the host university. The initial degree available will be in business administration, but the hope is to expand the degree options to include nursing, engineering technology, hospitality management and tourism, and creative and performing arts. Northwestern State has developed agreements with several international universities in recent years and is host to a growing number of international students. The International Student Resource Center at NSU was created to help international students in the transition from their home countries to NSU and promote opportunities for NSU students to participate in long- and short-term study-abroad programs.

Community Support and External Affairs.

The Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development hosted the **Educators Rising State Conference.** Approximately 350 high school students interested in teaching careers attended the event and participated in educational sessions throughout the day.

The Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts hosted the **College Band Directors National Association Southern Division Conference.** The conference included professional presentations, conducting sessions, and presentations of juried marching band videos. As part of the conference, several top middle schools, high school, and collegiate wind ensembles performed on campus.

The College of Business and Technology continues to **engage industry stakeholders and the community**. Initiatives such as the School of Business Advisory Council, Computer Information Systems Advisory Council, and the Hospitality, Management and Tourism Advisory Council provide feedback about the knowledge and skillset needs of the business and industry. Initiatives such as the J. Walter Porter Forum, the Start the Sparks Series, and the Annual College of Business and Technology Showcase provide that link between the university and the World of Business. Other linking initiatives included guest classroom speakers using either the face-to-face venue or the virtual venue.

Our **continued focus on government relations has resulted in priority funding** for the planning phase of a **new academic building to replace Kyser Hall**.

Northwestern's Foundation special initiative fundraising strategies have proven successful as over $200,000 was secured for the NSU Child and Family Network, $32,500 was secured to underwrite Christmas Gala at the Strand, $65,000 for Flavor of Louisiana, a popular spring food festival that raises funds for student scholarships and $33,700 for the Coronavirus Assistance Fund, which has helped 71 students so far

Northwestern athletics continued to demonstrate excellence despite the impact of COVID-19. **Volleyball coach Sean Kiracofe and women's soccer co-head coaches Anna and Jess Jobe were named Louisiana Coaches of the Year**. NSU Athletics earned a **program high 82%** for the most recent NCAA Graduate Success Rate. The NSU Demons Unlimited Foundation scholarship endowment fund **exceeded the $2 million mark for the first time**.

Introduction

All components of our strategic plan support and enhance the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of 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.

Vision. Northwestern State University will become the nation's premier regional university through the innovative delivery of transformative student learning experiences that prepare graduates for life and career success.

Our Core Values. Our core values capture the guiding principles for how we make decisions and work together. They are the foundation for the type of University community and regional partner we strive to become. Our guiding values are:

- **Our students are our priority**. We provide each student with transformational and experiential learning experiences to assist in the development of an ever-growing individual, scholar, and professional.
- **Diversity helps define who we are**. We welcome and respect all traveling on a journey for knowledge. Differences make us stronger.
- **We are future focused**. We are in constant search of individual and organizational improvement by seeking new, inclusive, and innovative opportunities to develop our students and improve our University.
- **Innovation is leading the forward edge of change**. We strive to be at the forefront of all we do.
- **We honor and respect the ideals of freedom**. We protect the freedom of all members of our community to seek truth and express their views.
- **We are careful stewards**. We responsibly and sustainably manage the economic and natural resources entrusted to us.
- **Integrity is our cornerstone**. We hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards as educators, scholars, students, and professionals.
- **We are a team**. We are a collaborative community that focuses on ensuring the success of every member.

Section I.
Assessment Cycle 2019–2020

Purpose. To document the results of the Assessment Cycle (AC) 2019-2020.

On June 19, 2020, the University completed its fourth assessment of the strategic plan, *Assessment Cycle 2019–2020, Sustaining Success.* This report is the fourth in a series of six annual evaluations incorporated into our Strategic Plan 2016–2023. It refines the University's roadmap to securing its vision and provides the strategic azimuth to navigate the uncertain fiscal environment of higher education. The University assessment process is both quantitative and qualitative. This approach allows for better-informed and more realistic 2023 objectives.

Uninterrupted, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation continue to allow Northwestern to maximize its strategic decisions leading to institutional improvement. The assessment of five strategic focus areas with 23 objectives and 87 metrics, 155 academic programs, administrative units, and core competencies underpin this report. These strategic focus areas, programs, administrative units, and competencies have continued to capitalize on their independent findings, analyses, and decisions/actions. This structured, cyclic review of our mission, goals, and outcomes will continue to enable the University's drive towards its vision.

Our institutional assessment process is improving the quality of our academic programs, academic support services, administrative support services, and strategic decision-making. More importantly, it demonstrates to the region's stakeholders that Northwestern is quantifiably accomplishing its mission and striving to improve the socioeconomic conditions of the region.

Strategic Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Model. The Louisiana Board of Regents and the Board of Supervisors of the University of Louisiana System hold institutions accountable for achieving positive outcome measures in academics as well as support services. Our ability to offer students federally-based financial aid depends on our accreditation by SACSCOC. Accreditation requires institutions of higher education to demonstrate an active assessment process that examines all programs and services and leads to improvement and mission accomplishment (Figure 1). SACSCOC adds, "Institutional effectiveness is the systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against the mission in all aspects of an institution."

Figure 1: The Institutional Effectiveness Process

As reflected in figure 2, to fully leverage its strategic planning and institutional effectiveness model, a literary backbone of policy and procedures was established and structured to ensure participation, standardization, predictability, flexibility, and accountability.

Figure 2: Literary Backbone
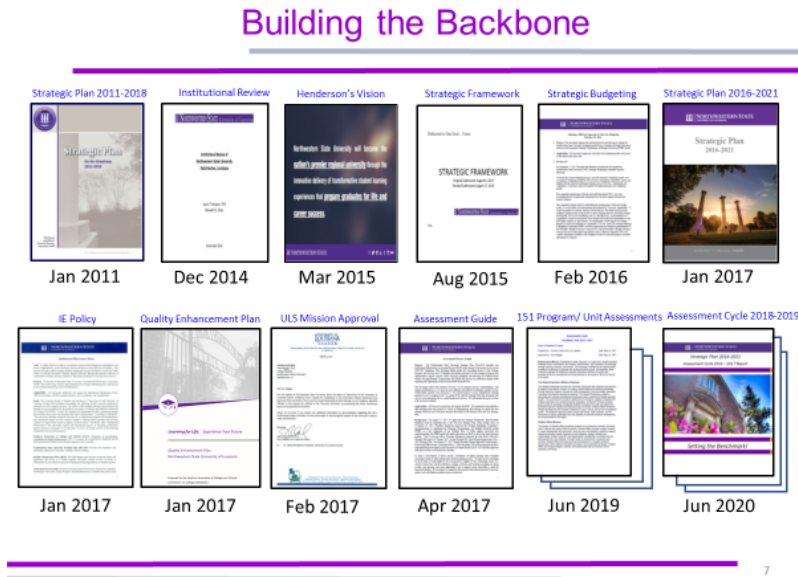
The supporting organizational structure (figure 3) is provided through the President's Leadership Team, which provides the strategic vision and serves as the forcing function to drive the process ensuring various components of the model stay aligned and mutually supportive. The University Strategic Planning Team looks over the horizon and steers the process around hazards and toward the vision. The University Assessment Committee provides for the standardization, predictability, and quality in the process. The program and unit coordinators, faculty, staff, and students are the instruments in maintaining the integrity of the process. The University General Education Committee

Figure 3: Organizational structure
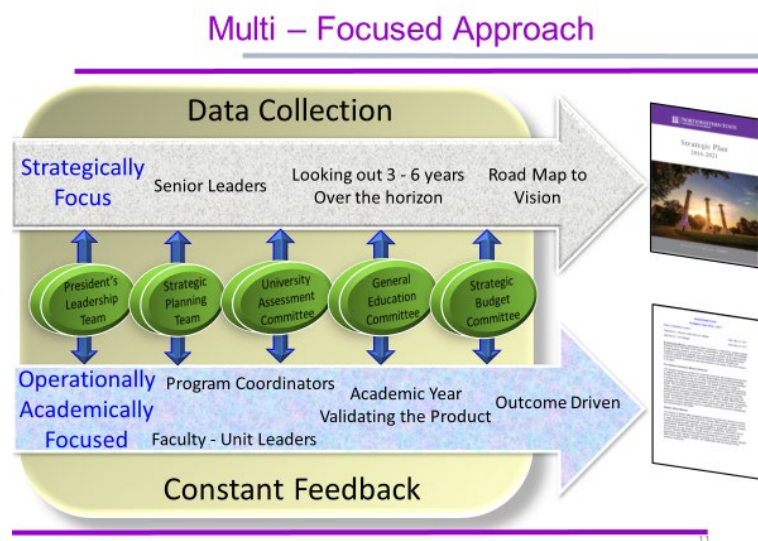
ensures Northwestern has a broadly based core curriculum that is central to the University's mission and consistent with the Louisiana Board of Regents' requirements for general education survey courses applicable to all students regardless of their major. Lastly, the Strategic Budgeting Committee helps align resources to university priorities, improve transparency, reward entrepreneurial efforts, reconcile program costs and revenue and promote improved fiscal stewardship and accountability.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) *Principles of Accreditation: Foundation for Quality Enhancement,* 2018*. The University has apportioned each applicable standard to the appropriate authority for ownership, evaluation, and integration into the daily operations of the University.

Northwestern Assessment of its Strategic Plan 2016-2023. The University strategic plan provides the framework and context for our actions for 2016-2023 while allowing for adaptation and adjustment based on the higher education and socioeconomic environments.

Each September and March, the Strategic Planning Team, University Assessment Committee, General Education Core Competency Coordinators, faculty, staff, students, and guests participate in a semiannual review of progress through an update to the President from each Strategic Focus Area (SFA) team leader and special topic area. In turn, as appropriate, the President or designated senior leader will provide an update to all faculty, staff, and community partners at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters as part of the Faculty and Staff Institute, strategic communications, or similar activity. In mid-March, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, in coordination with each SFA, will initiate that year's assessment report. This report captures strategic decisions made during the year and addresses adjustments to the strategic plan moving forward. Each SFA team leader presents an update to the President and the leadership team in September as a status check of each area's progress. During these forums, the President reviews all proposed adjustments to the objectives, strategies, or metrics. The University publishes the Assessment Cycle Report within 30 days of this meeting. The report in purple below is ongoing.

Beginning with Assessment Cycle (AC) 2019-2020, each SFA determines which objectives/metrics it will assess that year based on their data collection plan. Those objectives and metrics not assessed during AC 2019-2020 will be assessed in 2020-2021, thereby completing a complete assessment every two years. The University will not conduct an assessment in AC 2021-2022 to allow the senior leadership to solely focus on the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges fifth year interim review to ensure the University is in compliance with all Federal Law and Department of Education policies.

1*. Assessment Cycle 2016–2017 to Strategic Plan 2016-2021–Setting the Benchmark*.
2. *Assessment Cycle 2017–2018 to Strategic Plan 2016-2021–Validating Our Approach*.
3. *Assessment Cycle 2018–2019 to Strategic Plan 2016-2021–Building Momentum*.
4*. Assessment Cycle 2019–2020 to Strategic Plan 2016-2023–Sustaining Success.*
5. *Assessment Cycle 2020–2021 to Strategic Plan 2016-2023–The Way Forward.*
6. *Assessment Cycle 2021–2022 to Strategic Plan 2016-2023– Reflection Year–No Report*
7. *Assessment Cycle 2022–2023 to Strategic Plan 2016-2023– A New Day.*

Strategic Plan 2016-2023 objectives: Our objectives by strategic focus area are:

The Student Experience:
Objective 1. Provide responsive student services.
Objective 2. Create a community that fosters diversity and inclusion.
Objective 3. Develop a unique campus life experience.
Objective 4. Provide a transformational learning and career preparation experience.
Objective 5. Increase efforts to provide for the wellness of our students.

Academic Excellence:

Objective 1. Provide effective, innovative instruction in the classroom and online.
Objective 2. Demonstrate a comprehensive commitment to core competencies.
Objective 3. Offer exemplary graduate and professional school preparation.
Objective 4. Foster quality student-faculty interactions.
Objective 5. Support faculty in teaching, research, and service.

Market Responsiveness:

Objective 1. Prepare graduates to work, learn, and lead.
Objective 2. Align curricula with tomorrow's workforce demands.
Objective 3. Deliver class-leading employer service and industry-recognized competencies.
Objective 4. Modify programs through continuous reflection and thoughtful advancement.

Community Enrichment:

Objective 1. Expand world-class performing arts program.
Objective 2. Increase robust alumni engagement.
Objective 3. Promote mutually beneficial donor relationships.
Objective 4: Expand institutional culture of collaboration and mutual accountability.
Objective 5. Nurture thriving town-gown relationships.

Athletic Prominence:

Objective 1. Enhance marketing opportunities, game day experience, and resource acquisition.
Objective 2. Promote community service, appreciation, and engagement.
Objective 3. Enhance University and community collaboration and support.
Objective 4. Enhance recognizing and promoting success.

University Program and Unit Assessment Process. All academic programs, in coordination with the University Provost and College Deans, review, amend, or revalidate their respective missions. They identify the degree-awarding programs (diplomas, certificates, undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral) that will participate in the assessment process. Each develops program-specific Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Simultaneously, University Vice Presidents determine which of their administrative units must review, amend, or revalidate their respective missions. Administrative and Student Support Units developed their Service Outcome Measures (SOMs) and their assessment methodology.

Assessments take place during the Assessment Cycle (AC: June to May). Each academic program and administrative unit submits their assessment cycle plans for the coming year to their respective

Academic or Administrative Review Committee Chair. The Dean or Vice President reviews and approves assessment plans. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness (DIE) will account for each plan as part of the assessment process. Data is collected throughout the academic year with spring commencement ending the assessment cycle. Each year, faculty and staff collect data, compare results of the previous year's assessment, the target, and the effectiveness of their action plans to the current year's results providing evidence of improvement or needed improvement based on the analysis of the results.

All assessments are due to the DIE no later than mid-June, exact date determine by the DIE in concert with senior leaders. The University uses the Institutional Effectiveness website as the primary repository for all assessments. The DIE develops the Assessment Year presentation in line with the July Strategic Plan update.

Quality Enhancement Plan. The development and implementation of the *Learning for Life: Experience Your Future* QEP is a seven-year process. Included are two years of data gathering and proposal development (2014-2016) and five years (2016-2021) of implementation. The timeline consists of information relative to all stages of QEP development and implementation: committee and personnel assignments, faculty and student forums, community engagement and marketing, QEP editing and submission, curricular redesign and approval, and academic program assessment. In spring 2020 the QEP will be fully implemented.

Strategic Budgeting Process. The *Planning, Programming, and Budget Execution (PPBE) Process.* The Planning, Programming, and Budget Execution (PPBE) model best fits the University's Budget Development. This model provides the appropriate incentives; it is inclusive, emphasizes a high level of transparency in concert with the principles of our strategic intent while providing the information necessary for sound decision-making, support innovation, and entrepreneurship, and helps the University maximize support from campus stakeholders and private donors.

Student Learning Outcomes Statements. The University takes a deliberate approach to the structure of its assessment process, particularly regarding the identification of outcome measures. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness provides faculty and staff with a guide to assist in standardizing the development of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Service Outcomes (SOs). The University Common Core SLOs support individual degree program SLOs, which underpin the Academic Excellence Strategic Focus area of the strategic plan.

According to the University's *Guide to Outcome–Measure Development*, SLOs should be specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and tied to a specific timeframe. Each outcome addresses knowledge, skills, attitudes, or dispositions. The policy requires that outcome statements specify what students will know or be able to perform or demonstrate when they have completed or participated in the program, course, project, or activity.

As described in the University's *Guide to Outcome–Measure Development*, measures combine the assessment methodology and the target for the outcome. A direct measure, which is preferred, requires a student to demonstrate the skill or knowledge. An indirect assessment measure addresses the perception of knowledge, skills, attitudes, or dispositions. The University encourages setting targets that are difficult to attain so that there is a constant pursuit of improvement. As such, Northwestern does not rely solely on course grades as an acceptable measure for the assessment of an outcome.

Per the *University Assessment Process Guide,* and in coordination with the University Provost and College Deans, each academic entity reviews, amends, or revalidates their respective missions. The foundation of this assessment process emanates from the hierarchy of University, College, Department, Program and/or Unit mission. Each measure is course mapped to a specific course from which data is collected. In most cases, multiple courses contribute to the data collection and analysis of a single measure. In 2017-2018, sixty-six (66) and in 2018-2019 ninety-three (93) degree awarding academic programs participated in the assessment process. Each developed program-specific Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and an associated assessment methodology from which they derived their findings. Each then analyzed their results, leading to decisions or actions to promote continuous improvement. In 2019-2020, ninety-five (95) degree/certificate awarding academic programs are participating in the assessment process.

Evidence of Institution-level Student Learning. Assessment data collection occurred throughout the 2019-2020 academic year with spring commencement ending the assessment cycle. Each program identified its findings, completed its analysis, and collectively determined decisions/actions necessary to drive the improvement cycle. Program faculty compared current results to those of the previous year to better develop plans for the upcoming year (2020-2021). Program coordinators then submitted completed assessments, once approved by the respective Dean, to the Director of Institutional Effectiveness (DIE) on 19 June 2020. Please view the 2019-2020 Assessment Cycle Reports at https://www.nsula.edu/institutionaleffectiveness/. An Academic Review Committee, composed of program assessment coordinators, oversees the assessment process within each of the University's four Colleges. Following the completion of all program assessments, each of the four Academic Review Committee Chairs provides input to the annual assessment report. The report captures the most significant findings and decisions of the past academic year, including proposed and actual changes, an analytical assessment of the potential effects of the changes, and the status of new assessment plans. This information is integrated into the findings for the Strategic Focus Area Academic Excellence where recommendations for pedagogy, curriculum development, review or adoption are made. The DIE consolidates these reports into one executive presentation for the University President's review/decision in the June-July timeframe.

Institution-level Assessment Resources. Assessment resources are centralized on the IE website under the tab *Assessment Process and Resources*. In addition to the items listed, the DIE pushes best practices to program and unit coordinators as part of the monthly UAC meetings. The DIE also holds needs-based workshops and professional development sessions for organizations requiring or requesting assistance or those in coordinator transition. On average, the DIE conducts 15-20 assessment related visits per semester.

Institution-level Assessment Activities. As NSU closes in on completing its third iteration of the institution-wide assessment process (for all strategic focus areas, academic programs, administrative support services, and academic and student support services), assessments allow for the analytical comparison of the results between the previous year to this year and to the established target. The study of these results is the bedrock for the development of executable action plans focused on improvement in student learning, as well as institutional and program growth. The process provides the University the opportunity to analyze program results across all colleges and schools to inform its strategic planning effort better and make informed improvements based on the analysis of these results. As such, the University can provide its stakeholders with the required evidence of growth based on the review of findings.

Use of Institutional-level Student Learning. An informed assessment allows for enhanced environmental visualization, which drives our ability to make better decisions and navigate the future. This cyclic analytical decision-making process will continue to require honest, and at times, sophisticated analysis of our current plan. Through this process, we continue to find we must be flexible in modifying (including adding or deleting) objectives, metrics, and methods. The results point to better-informed objectives, metrics, and associated strategies, thereby allowing for holistic findings, comprehensive analyses, and informed strategic decisions. The foundation of the process is organizational self-actualization and continuous assessment, adjustment, and refinement, all focused on meeting our 2021 objectives.

At the tactical level, common core outcomes and classroom course objectives provide the data to inform the measure supporting the operational level degree program assessment measures supporting student learning outcomes, which in turn provides data to inform the metrics and objectives at the strategic level assessment of the strategic plan (Figure 4). This nesting of assessment data allows for a better appreciation of student learning while providing a more holistic view of progress in student learning on our strategic focus areas, specifically the Academic Excellence and Student Experience strategic focus areas. This process and the analysis of the associated results and lessons learned drive decisions at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels. The use and evidence of institution-level learning are evident in the AC 2019-2020 Assessment Cycle *Executive Summary,* which reflects the strategic decisions made across the university impacting a myriad of efforts from financial health, Board of Regents initiatives; academic programs; student, alumni, and community relations; and external affairs.

Figure 4: Assessment Process
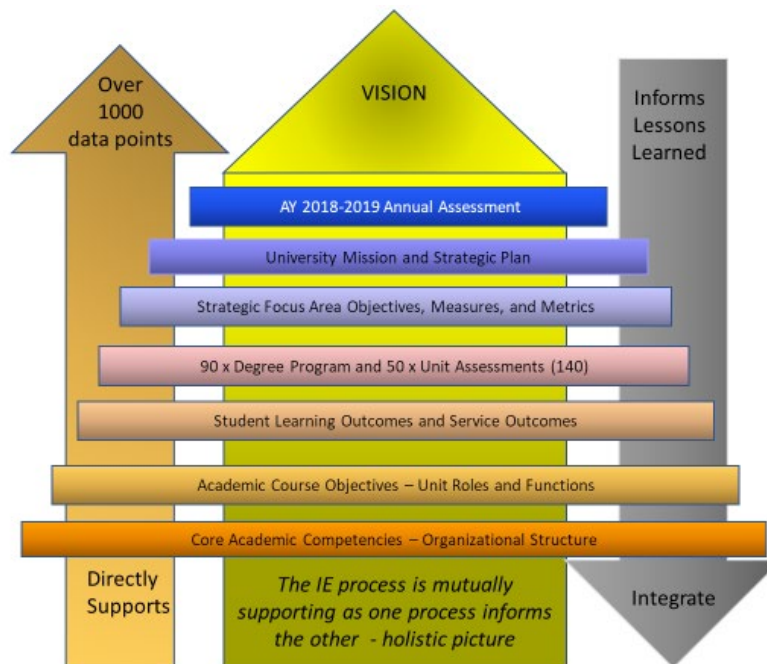
Reflection, Growth, and Improvement Plan. Our model calls for a continuous cycle of annual assessments across multiple echelons with overlapping and mutually supporting outcomes and associated data. The annual assessment process is not complete until the recommendations and

proposed decisions reflected in the strategic assessment are mediated and agreed upon by the strategic planning committee, a final after-action review is conducted, the final report is written, and the brief presented. During the 2019-2020 Assessment Cycle, the decision matrix review reflected over 50 separate decisions. Each decision was discussed and closed with a consensus on the appropriate disposition. The results of the after-action review, incorporating input from across the university, is integrated into the final presentation to the president. Once delivered, recommended improvement to the process is made and all artifacts are uploaded on the Institutional Effectiveness website.

The after-action report requires everyone in the assessment process to take an introspective review of their actions, roles, functions, and responsibilities. It also requires them to identify what is working as designed and what can be done to improve the process. While we have a transparent, standardized, and integrated process in which the entire University is involved, we do not have 100% faculty and student buy-in. We still have work to do in convincing faculty and students of the power of assessment. We have several administrators that fear innovative change and are more comfortable nibbling at the edges.

We are addressing these challenges in a multifaceted approach. We now routinely hold professional development sessions with targeted groups where the comfort level for participants is such that the exchange of ideas is much improved. We are consistent in our battle rhythm of meetings and activities maintaining assessment activities on the radar of our participants and interested parties. We have added more precise language to our University Catalog regarding the purpose of assessment, student learning outcomes, and specifically, students' required responsibilities in participation. The University now requires specific SLO language in each academic degree course syllabus, whereby it is stated how the course either directly or indirectly supports the degree program assessment. We have developed tools for the faculty, such as the anatomy of assessment, assessment of a measure by the numbers, fundamentals of assessment, and the transition checklist, designed to facilitate learning. Instituting a culture of assessment and continuous improvement is a work in progress, and the approach must be balanced to ensure support, compliance, ownership, and promotion. We are not there yet, but we are making significant progress.

Section II.
Performance Indicators and Assessment Results
(Objectives–Strategies–Metrics–Findings-Analysis-Decisions-Responsibility)

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Strategic Focus Area 1–The Student Experience

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The Student Experience at Northwestern State University of Louisiana (NSU) is committed to improving student lives through the following objectives:

- Provide responsive student services
- Create a community that fosters diversity and inclusion
- Enhance co-curricular experiences to aid engagement and retention
- Provide transformational learning and career experiences
- Provide student health and wellness services

Accomplishments related to The Student Experience:

1. Northwestern State University continued high levels of retention for first time students from first to second year
2. For the second year, Northwestern State University exceeded goals for students using the Career Services platform, Handshake
3. Nick Hopkins, NSU Student Government President, earned a prestigious internship in the Louisiana Governor's Internship Program
4. The Northwestern State University Eta Mu Chapter of Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars received the 2020 Phi Beta Delta Eileen Evans Outstanding Chapter Award. This award is based on the chapter's dedication to the promotion of international education.
5. Supporting newer strategic goals, Northwestern increased focus on Health and Wellness in 2019-20 to include a campus wide health fair, stress and anxiety reduction programs, and health screenings in Counseling and in Health Services
6. Access & Disability Support was reorganized and renamed. The office was refurbished and policies and procedures updated.
7. Student Affairs developed a campus wide hazing prevention program and created an online program for all students and advisors.
8. Northwestern increased focus on programs for "First Generation College" students, hosting a reception for these students and parents in Freshman Orientation at the start of each semester.
9. Enrollment services initiated a texting campaign called Cadence in January and today have sent out over 95,000 text messages. The team can communicate on an app on their phones as well as laptops and IPads. All team members can check and reply to those messages. NSU is currently experiencing an increase in applications and admits.
10. To increase graduation and retention rates for NSU students, leadership worked with the Northwestern Foundation to develop a new scholarship specifically for students who need extra funding to remain in school and for those who need funding in order to graduate. Deans and Department Chairs identify students who need this money to stay in school or graduate. This program is new and has limited resources. However, as of June 17, 2020, 24 students have received over $75,000 in scholarships.

11. Reatha Cox, Director of Student Affairs was recognized as the University of Louisiana Outstanding Staff Member of the Year for 2019.
12. Dr. Yonna Pasch won the Regional Advisor of the Year from the National Association for the Promotion of Campus Activities.
13. Abby Vallery/Mary Scott Pourciau received 2nd place Printed Material award at the National APCA Conference for the Winter Wonderland Event poster
14. ΑΟΠ received the Standards of Excellence Gold Accreditation Award, Excellence in Finance Award, and the Alumnae Rose Award at their International Convention
15. Chase Slater, BCM president 2018-2019, spent the entire summer 2019 on an undisclosed island in Indonesia involved in service learning assisting needy residence of the island.
16. Lauren Jackson, Director of Financial Aid, served on the National Association of Student Financial Administrators (NASFAA) in 2019-20 as a regional representative. She currently serves as past president of the Southwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
17. Members of Alpha Lambda Delta, Alpha Phi Alpha, Kappa Sigma, Pi Kappa Phi, Sigma Sigma Sigma, and Order of Omega were recognized with numerous national and regional awards.

Table 1
Metrics for The Student Experience–those in blue were assessed in 2019-2020. Those in black were assessed in 2018-2019.

AY 2018-2019	AY 2019-2020	The Student Experience Metrics	AY 2022-2023 Targets
8.21		Academic excellence and value	10
8.53		Satisfaction with support programs	10
8.04		Satisfaction with University policies and processes	10
7.95		Responsive and helpful faculty and staff	10
70.7%	70%	*Retention rate (full-time) 1st to 2nd year*	76%
47.0%	44%	*Graduation rates*	40%
1,560	1,515	*Enrollment per freshman class, per year*	1,700
4,573	4,446	*Enrollment on Natchitoches campus*	4,500
11,081	10,900	*Overall Northwestern State enrollment*	11,360*
10	10	*Diversity represents regional demographics*	10
8.23		Campus climate of advocacy and inclusion	10
7.47		Safety and security satisfaction survey	10
8.28		On-campus facilities satisfaction survey	10
6.83		Campus housing and dining satisfaction	10
7,354		Students involved in Cocurricular Activities	8,000
351,809	306,304	*Student community service hours*	400,000
29	42	*Programs with capstone experiential learning activities*	66
7,674	11,273	*Number of students and employers using Handshake*	11,000
75.3%	69.4%	*Percent graduates working w/in 6 months of graduation*	80%
36	77	*Number of health-related programs and services*	45

*Note: Benchmarks for AC 2018-2019 are reflected on the far left with AC 2019-2020 results to the immediate right. Green reflects progress, orange reflects a decline, and grey demonstrates no progress or not measured. *Adjusted upward from 11,000 in 2019. Yellow text indicates a change in target since 2018-2019 and serve as student achievement criteria (SACS criteria 8.1).*

Except for enrollment data, in 2018-2019 most metrics were assessed using the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (RNLSSI), administered every other year (2017, 2019) by the University of Louisiana System. The RNLSSI collects data on a 7-point Likert scale which is converted to a 10-point scale for the NSU metrics. The RNLSSI also allows participating universities to add unique questions, discussed in this report. Finally, RNLSSI allows students to rate the importance of questions in addition to rating items. The result is a scale called the Performance Gap which allows institutions to better measure student satisfaction. The next data collection for these items will be 2020-2021.

Objective 1:

Provide responsive student services that aid in recruitment, retention, and student success.

Strategies:

- Provide programs and services for achieving academic excellence.
- Better-integrate admissions processes, financial aid, registrar services, and academic advising throughout the campus.
- Streamline policies and procedures to enhance responsiveness to students' needs.
- Establish and implement programs that assist students in transition from one academic level to the next, beginning with a comprehensive first-year experience and progressing through high-impact experiences and career preparation opportunities.
- Campaign to increase male enrollment in traditionally female areas
- Manage Natchitoches Campus class availability
- Increase Dual Enrollment and DE conversions to regular enrollment
- Increase certificate programs
- Increase overall number of recruiting contacts

Metrics:

1. Academic Excellence and Value
2. Satisfaction with Support Programs
3. Satisfaction with University Policies and Processes
4. Responsive and Helpful Faculty and Staff
5. *Retention Rates from First to Second Year*
6. *Graduation Rates*
7. *Enrollment per Freshman Class*
8. *Enrollment on the Natchitoches Campus*
9. *Overall Enrollment*

Metric:
1. **Academic Excellence and Value (AEV)**

Findings:

In AC 2018-2019, responses of 993 NSU students to the RNLSSI Academic Advising Effectiveness scale averaged 5.75/7 (*SD* = 1.48), while those to the Instructional Effectiveness scale averaged 5.86/7 (*SD* = 1.11), both lower than, but statistically similar to the results from 2016-2017.

Analysis:

Note: To compare these results (scored from 1 to 7) to local surveys given in alternate years (scored from 1 to 4), both scales were transformed linearly to run from 1 to 10. This transformation was done incorrectly in the 2017-2018 report, simply stretching the values, rather than resetting the lower endpoint to zero, stretching the values and adding one to keep the lower endpoint fixed. As a result, the 7-point scales were transformed to run from 1.43 to 10 while the 4-point scales were transformed to run from 2.5 to 10. The transformed scales reported in AC 2017-2018 were not comparable to each other. The previous results have been corrected and are reported below.

Rescaling to a 10-point scale, the average of these scales was 8.21, compared to 7.87 for the local measure in 2017-2018 and 8.29 for the RNLSSI in 2016-2017.

The Academic Excellence and Value metric showed moderate growth from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019. In this category individual items for 2019 dropped slightly compared to 2017. The large difference between the local survey results and the RNLSSI indicate that the two scales are not comparable, most likely due to the difference in resolution between a 4-point and a 7-point Likert scale.

Two items on the Academic Advising Effectiveness scale with the largest declines from 2017-2019 relate to academic advisors helping set goals (5.71/7 down to 5.57, ns) and the availability of academic advisors to students (5.90/7 down to 5.74, ns). Students rate these items as highly important, resulting in a higher performance gap for this question.

A single item on the Instructional Effectiveness scale was significantly lower than in 2016-2017. The average score for *Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students,* dropped from 5.85/7 (*SD* = 1.51) in 2016-2017 to 5.64 (*SD* = 1.65) in 2018-2019. In terms of importance, this item was ranked 19th out of 63 items.

Decision:
- Deans and Department Chairs will be apprised of findings.
- Advisor availability for students will be reviewed with Provost.

Metric:
2. **Satisfaction with Support Programs (SSP)**

Findings:

Responses to the RNLSSI Campus Services scale include library, computer labs, tutoring services, online access, career services, counseling services, and mentoring. The scale average (*M* = 6.02/7, *SD* = 1.12) was slightly above, but statistically similar to the average from 2016-2017 (*M* = 6.00/7, *SD* = 1.11).

Rescaling to a 10-point scale, the average for SSP was 8.53, compared to 8.08 for the local measure in 2017-2018 and 8.50 for the RNLSSI in 2016-2017.

Analysis:

Northwestern shows a slight increase in overall student satisfaction compared to AC 2016-2017. Of the eight items reviewed, NSU improved on five, although none of the changes were significant. As in Metric 1, on this metric the local survey results are well outside the results on the RNLSSI.

The two items with the largest positive change on the Campus Services scale were:
- *Mentors are available to guide my life and career goals.*
- *Computer labs are adequate and accessible.*

Three items had a slight decline compared to 2016-2017:
- *Counseling services are available if I need them.*
- *Tutoring services are readily available.*
- *Library resources and services are adequate.*

Decision:

The declines are minimal; however, these items should be reviewed with retention in mind. Counseling should consider ways to better accommodate students at peak times.

Metric:
  3. **Satisfaction with University Policies and Processes (UPP)**

Findings:

In 2018-2019, University Policies and Procedures were evaluated using two scales on the RNLSSI, plus one item each from two additional scales.

Responses to the Registration Effectiveness scale (processes and procedures, billing policies, class registration, and convenient times) averaged 5.83/7 (*SD* = 1.14) in 2018-2019, compared to 5.85/7 (*SD* = 1.15) in 2016-2017.

Responses to the Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness scale (five items addressing admissions and financial aid) indicate a satisfaction of 5.59/7 (*SD* = 1.44) in 2018-2019, compared to 5.52/7 (*SD* = 1.43) in 2016-2017.

Responses to the statement, "Student disciplinary procedures are fair," on the Campus Life scale averaged 5.82 (SD = 1.58) in 2018-2019, compared to 6.02/7 (*SD* = 1.48) in 2016-2017.

The item, "I seldom get the run-around when seeking information on this campus," averaged 5.45 (*SD* = 1.81) compared to 5.40/7 (*SD* = 1.84) in 2016-2017.

Averaging the 11 items in this metric and rescaling to 10 points results in a score of 8.04 for 2018-2019, compared to 7.60 on the local measure in 2017-2018, and 8.01 on the same metric in 2016-2017.

Analysis:

Policies and Procedures that are easy to understand and student friendly are obviously important in student satisfaction, success, and retention. Streamlining policy has been a goal in the Student Experience since the inception of the overall student strategic plan developed in 2016.

Comparing 2017 to 2019, all but one item in the Recruitment and Financial Aid Effectiveness scale improved by at least 0.06; the item, *Admissions staff provide personalized attention prior to enrollment* dropped by only 0.01 point. In the Registration Effectiveness scale, all items but one dropped by 0.04 to 0.05 points; the item, *I am able to take care of college-related business at times that are convenient to me,* improved by 0.07. Despite dropping 0.04, the item, *I am able to register for classes I need with*

few problems, remains a strength for the University, with both high satisfaction and high importance. Due to its importance and small decline, this area warrants further attention.

Considering all 11 items collectively, NSU experienced a slight overall increase. None of the changes were statistically significant. The local measure was outside the range of the RNLSSI.

Items with the largest declines include:
- *Student disciplinary procedures are fair.*
- *Billing policies are reasonable.*

Items with the largest increases include:
- *This institution helps me identify resources to finance my education.*
- *Admissions counselor accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices.*

Decision:

- Review class offerings to avoid time conflicts.
- Review billing processes.
- Review registration processes.

Metric:
 4. Responsive and Helpful Faculty and Staff

Findings:

Responses to the RNLSSI Student Centeredness scale averaged 5.77/7 (*SD* = 1.28) in 2018-2019, compared to 5.80/7 (*SD* = 1.27) for 2016-2017.

In 2018-2019, NSU respondents rated the RNLSSI item, *Residence Hall Staff are concerned about me as an individual*, an average of 5.10/7 (*SD* = 1.94) compared to 4.84 (*SD* = 1.98) in 2016-2017.

Averaging the 5 items and rescaling to 10 points, results in a score of 7.95 for 2018-2019, compared to 7.97 on the local measure in 2017-2018, and 7.91 on the same metric in 2016-2017.

Analysis:

The 2017-2018 measures for this metric were local surveys, while the RNLSSI was used in 2018-2019 and 2016-2017. This metric declined slightly from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019 (7.97 to 7.95) but increased from 7.91 in 2016-2017 to 7.95 in 2018-2019, likely due to the relatively large improvement on the residence hall staff item and the small declines in 3 items on the Student Centeredness scale.

Comparing the data from last year to 2018-2019 is difficult since the surveys used different Likert scales. However, the items and results are similar and the small decline is likely insignificant.

Decision:

- All areas should consider customer satisfaction training.

Metric:

5. Retention Rate of Full-time First to Second Year

Findings:

The first year to second year persistence rate for first-time, full-time baccalaureate-seeking entering freshmen dropped slightly from 70.7% (fall 2018) to 70.0% (fall 2019)

Analysis:

Target Not Met
In 2017-2018, NSU surpassed the target for retention of students from first to second year. However, NSU has experienced several years with slight decreases in retention of full-time freshmen first to second year. Decline is likely a result of increased enrollments of at-risk students and rising costs of attendance. NSU's retention rate remains good compared to other state schools with similar size and demographics.

Decision:

- The Director of Enrollment Management continues to develop new retention plans to address first time students.
- Academic Affairs hired a new fulltime person as Director of Academic Success. New initiatives in that area include expansion of online tutoring programs.
- The VPSE/DOS and the Director of Enrollment are working with Financial Aid and Scholarships to develop better ways to offer scholarships so that funds are available to more students.

Metric:

6. Graduation Rates

Findings:

The 6-year graduation rate for full time degree-seeking freshmen showed decline of 3 points from 47% in AC 2018-2019 to 44 % in AC 2019-20. This measure includes those earning Associate degrees in the fourth to sixth years.

Analysis:

Target Met
Six-year graduation rates have risen in the past years at NSU. In 2016-2017 the rate was 33.8%, in 2017-2018 it was 39.4%, and it was 47.01% in 2018-2019. While the target was met, the decline of 3 points is reason for NSU leadership to research determine reasons for the decline

Decision:

Request IR reports to determine areas with decline. Work with Deans and Department Chairs and Student Affairs to determine reasons for stop outs.

Metric:

7. Enrollment Per Freshman Class Per Year

Findings:

The number of entering freshmen decreased from 1,560 in fall 2018 from 1,515 in fall 2019. This number included new students who first enrolled in the summer term and continued in the fall.

Analysis:

Target Not Met.

NSU experienced a decrease of 75 student in enrollment per freshman class from fall 2018 to fall 2019. To reach the target of 1,700 by 2020-21, NSU must experience a larger increase in fall 2020.

The decline may be attributed to changes in admissions requirements at the flagship institution. Additional factors include a decrease in birth rates in the recruiting area, rising cost of education, and problems associated with securing on-campus housing for new students.

Decision:

- Maintain low costs of enrollment
- Explore scholarships for underserved
- Explore new housing
- Convert more dual enrollment students to campus

Metric:
8. Enrollment on Natchitoches Campus

Findings:

The enrollment of students taking at least one FTF class on the Natchitoches campus for fall 2019 was 4,446.

Analysis:

Target Not Met.

The target for this metric is 4,500 which was exceeded last fall. However, the number of students for fall 2019 declined 127 compared to fall of 2018. This metric is recently established, developed to respond to declines in the Natchitoches camps enrollments.

Decision:

- Work with IR to determine areas with significant student declines
- Continue to review FTF offerings and closely monitor student requests for face to face classes.
- Explore building new on-campus housing.
- Increase clinical offering and retention of clinical student for College of Nursing and Allied Health (CONAH) in Natchitoches.

Metric:
9. Overall Northwestern State University Enrollment

Findings:

Enrollment over all instructional sites decreased from fall 2018 to fall 2019 from 11,081 students to 10,900.

Analysis:

Target Not Met.

Overall Northwestern enrollment declined by 181. The target was adjusted up by 360 students last fall. Declines in overall enrollment are attributed to decreases in freshman overall retention decreases and declines in online enrollment.

Decision:

- Explore additional housing and housing scholarships
- Increase online enrollment
- Purchase additional test scores and widen the funnel for applications.
- Improve leveraging of scholarship dollars.
- Improve leveraging of discounting in competitive markets.
- Increase number of certificate programs.

Objective 2:

Create a community that fosters diversity and inclusion (through developing ethical and effective leadership, service, and civic engagement).

Strategies:

- Develop a diversity plan articulated in all university policies and procedures
- Continue to broaden programs and services for students, faculty, and staff geared to making the campus climate equally welcoming for all members of the community
- Develop our students to be future leaders with a strong sense of civic responsibility, ethical reasoning, and social justice
- Educate campus community on Disability Services
- Highlight programs to focus on male and international students

Metrics:

1. Diversity represents regional demographics
2. Campus climate of advocacy and inclusion
3. Safety and security satisfaction

Metric:

1. Diversity Represents Regional Demographics

Findings:

Northwestern State University student demographics mirror those of the region the University serves (Tables 1 and 2). In particular, omitting international students, the proportion of majority students (58.3%) and minority students (41.7%) are the same as those in Louisiana ($\chi^2(1) = 0.691$, $p = .406$). However, women are much more highly represented in the student body than in the state (72.0% compared to 51.0%). This is comparable to national trends.

Analysis:

NSU's student body remains very diverse. Within the minority population, Native Americans, Hispanics, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders, two or more races, and Unknown or Other race are slightly more highly represented than expected for Louisiana. In part this may be due to the small numbers of students in these groups, or to the fact that individuals are becoming more reluctant to reveal their race or more likely to identify with two or more races. Also, the comparison data covers the entire state of Louisiana rather than being weighted according to our students' parishes of origin.

Table 2

NSU Fall and Spring Enrollment by Gender and Ethnicity AC 2019-2020

Gender	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black or African American	Foreign	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Two or more races	Unknown	White, nonhispanic	Total	%
F	109	96	2,573	87	512	11	357	129	5,168	9,023	71.4%
% of F	1.2%	1.1%	28.5%	1.0%	5.7%	0.1%	4.0%	1.4%	57.3%		
M	46	40	856	77	260	5	178	65	2,043	3,559	28.6%
% of M	1.3%	1.1%	24.1%	2.2%	7.3%	0.1%	5.0%	1.8%	57.4%		
NSU	155	136	3,426	164	772	16	535	193	7,211	12,578	
	1.2%	1.1%	27.2%	1.3%	6.1%	0.1%	4.3%	1.5%	57.3%		

Derived from Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 Census files, unduplicated

Table 3
State of Louisiana Demographics for AC 2019-2020

Gender	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black or African American	Foreign*	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Two or more races	Unknown (Some Other Race)	White, nonhispanic	Total	%
F	15,330	35,408	761,756		86,166	917	36,971	28,480	1,349,052	2,314,080	51.0%
% of F	0.7%	1.5%	32.9%		3.7%	0.04%	1.6%	1.2%	58.3%		
M	15,249	34,724	690,640		106,394	1,046	35,912	40,747	1,294,580	2,219,292	49.0%
% of M	0.7%	1.6%	31.1%		4.8%	0.05%	1.6%	1.8%	58.3%		
LA	30,579	70,132	1,452,396		192,560	1,963	72,883	69,227	2,643,632	4,533,372	
	0.7%	1.5%	32.0%		4.2%	0.04%	1.6%	1.5%	58.3%		

Derived from https://suburbanstats.org/population/how-many-people-live-in-louisiana.

The disparity between NSU's distribution of students by gender mirrors the nationwide trend for more women to attend college than men, as well as the popularity of traditionally female dominated majors, such as nursing and education, at the University.

Decision:

- Support new initiatives to increase the enrollment of males in traditionally female-dominated majors.

Metric:

2. Campus Climate of Advocacy and Inclusion

Findings:

Responses to the RNLSSI Campus Climate scale averaged 5.82/7 (*SD* = 1.23) in 2018-2019, compared to 5.85 (*SD* = 1.19) for 2016-2017. Rescaling results in a score of 8.23/10 for 2018-2019, compared to 8.05 on the local measure in 2017-2018, and 8.28 on the same metric in 2016-2017.

Analysis:

Comparing only RNLSSI scales for Climate of Advocacy and Inclusion for 2019 (8.23) to 2017 (8.28) the scores are slightly higher in 2017 but are not statistically significant. However, the slight downturn on all RNLSSI items in this metric is concerning.

Decision:

- Consult with staff in the Center for Inclusion and Diversity regarding assessment data.
- Consider focus groups on "this campus has a strong commitment to diversity".
- Redevelop NSU Diversity Plan.
- Expand and Develop CID website, posting recommendations of the Diversity Committee.

Metric:

3. Safety and Security Satisfaction

Findings:

Responses to the RNLSSI Safety and Security scale averaged 5.31/7 (*SD* = 1.41) in 2018-2019, compared to 5.32 (*SD* = 1.36) for 2016-2017.

Rescaling to 10 points results in a score of 7.47 for 2018-2019, compared to 8.20 on the local measure in 2017-2018, and 7.48 on the same metric in 2016-2017.

Analysis:

Data for 2017-2018 came from local surveys. The 2018-2019 data was obtained solely from the RNSSS. The decline in this metric is likely due to difference in assessment tools; the local survey included only the item, *Generally, the Northwestern campus is safe,* while the SSI also included two questions about parking and a third about security staff. Comparing 2016-2017 RNLSSI data to the same data for 2018-2019, the scores were almost identical.

A closer look at the individual items shows a slight increase in the perception of the response time for police calls. However, the overall perception of campus safety and the perception of safety in parking lots as it relates to lighting decreased slightly. The item, *The campus is safe and secure for all students,* has declined slightly from 2016-2017 to 2018-2019.

Decision:

- A review of parking lots lighting will be suggested to University Affairs.
- The VP of the Student Experience will meet with VP of University Affairs to review the RNLSSI to determine action related to overall perceptions of campus safety.

Objective 3:

Enhance the co-curricular experiences to aid in retention, engagement, persistence, and completion of all NSU students.

Strategies:

- Transform campus spaces to create a unique and engaging campus environment, which adapts to the changing trends of a diverse student body

- Expand the number of living-learning programs and activities
- Rebrand programming as Campus Alma Mater programs to build allegiance to NSU.
- Develop award program for civic engagement
- Develop women's living and learning community

Metrics:

1. On Campus Facilities Satisfaction
2. Campus Housing and Dining Satisfaction
3. Students Engaged in Co-Curricular Activities
4. Hours Students Engage in Community Service

Metric:
1. On-Campus Facilities Satisfaction

Findings:

The RNLSSI item, *On the whole, the campus is well maintained*, was used to measure satisfaction with on-campus facilities in 2016-2017 and in 2018-2019. The mean score dropped from 5.88/7 (*SD* = 1.52) to 5.85 (*SD* = 1.49) in 2016-2017. Rescaling results in a score of 8.32/10 in 2016-2017 and 8.28 in 2018-2019.

An additional local survey assessing facilities in the Student Union (Table 4) was conducted. Most respondents (26/42) represented Recognized Student Organizations reserving and using rooms in the Union; 79% had reserved the Ballroom. Overall satisfaction for the survey was 3.82/4, equating to 9.46 on a 10-point scale, a very high score.

Analysis:

The decrease in the RNLSSI item is not statistically significant, however, it does indicate a minimal decline. RNLSSI addresses satisfaction with campus wide facilities.

The Event Management System survey shows almost total satisfaction for the process of reserving facilities in the Student Union. Additional data for Student Union utilization indicates high traffic in most of the building throughout the fall and spring semesters. This is especially true for the Ballroom, a large multi-purpose room used by NSU and members of the Natchitoches community. Satisfaction with the Union in general is likely due to good management. Current renovations in the Student Union (bathrooms) and updated décor (banners, furniture, NSU branding) likely contribute to the increases in satisfaction.

Decision:

- High traffic in the Union led NSU to investigate development of another large multi-purpose space there. When the bookstore moved to another facility, this space became available. NSU is currently working with architects to create an E-Sports venue and another large multi-purpose space.
- Student Experience Staff will continue to identify improvements in the Student Union.

Table 4

Friedman Student Union survey

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Total	Average
It was convenient to book the facility through the Event Management System.	0.0%	0.0%	11.9%	71.4%	16.7%		
	0	0	5	30	7	42	3.86
The contract, rules, and booking details were clear and easy to understand	0.0%	0.0%	9.5%	81.0%	9.5%		
	0	0	4	34	4	42	3.89
Pricing for the venue was reasonable.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	57.1%	42.9%		
	0	0	0	24	18	42	4.00
Confirmation for my event was received in a reasonable time.	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	85.7%	7.1%		
	0	0	3	36	3	42	3.92
My experience with the booking staff was satisfactory.	0.0%	2.4%	4.8%	85.7%	7.1%		
	0	1	2	36	3	42	3.90
The facility was easy to locate and was able to accommodate our needs.	2.38%	0.00%	11.90%	85.71%	0.00%		
	1	0	5	36	0	42	3.81
The room was clean and well-maintained	0.00%	2.38%	16.67%	80.95%	0.00%		
	0	1	7	34	0	42	3.79
The restrooms were cleaned and well-maintained	4.75%	9.52%	26.19%	59.52%	0.00%		
	2	4	11	25	0	42	3.40
My experience with the staff was satisfactory	0.00%	4.76%	7.14%	85.71%	2.38%		
	0	2	3	36	1	42	3.83
Our special requests were fulfilled to our satisfaction (i.e., equipment rentals, setup, etc.)	2.38%	2.38%	9.52%	80.95%	4.76%		
	1	1	4	34	2	42	3.77

Metric:

2. On-Campus Housing and Dining Satisfaction

Findings:

The RNLSSI Campus Life scale contains three items that directly address housing and dining experiences: *Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable*, *There is an adequate selection of food available on campus*, and *Residence Hall Staff are concerned about me as an individual*. The average of these items was used to measure satisfaction with on-campus facilities in 2016-2017 and in 2018-2019. The mean score increased from 4.72/7 in 2016-2017 to 4.88 in 2018-2019. Rescaling results in a score of 6.58 in 2016-2017 and 6.83 in 2018-2019. In 2017-2018, a 5 item local survey was used to assess campus housing and dining satisfaction. The overall average was 3.03/4, which scales to 7.10.

Analysis:

The three items from the RNLSSI included one which increased significantly over the first administration of this measure and a second which improved almost as much. Student responses to the item, *There is an adequate selection of food available on campus*, increased from 4.31/7 (SD = 2.27) in 2016-2017 to 4.61 (*SD* = 2.10) in 2018-2019 ($p < .05$). Student ratings of the living conditions in the residence halls declined slightly, but their ratings of resident hall staff improved, although not significantly. This improvement is likely due to increased training and supervision in response to unsatisfactory survey results in 2016-2017.

Other local surveys conducted by Sodexo, the Northwestern State food service provider, indicate high satisfaction with food service. When asked how satisfied students were with food and the service, 84% of students responding were satisfied (53%) or very satisfied (31%). When asked if students would recommend food service to a friend, 86% said they would. Both questions showed improvement in satisfaction from prior survey administrations.

Decision:

- Standardize survey instruments.
- Collaborate with Housing to get better data.
- Discuss rates with Housing.
- Discuss additional LLCs with Housing.

Metric:

3. Students Involved in Co-Curricular Activities

Findings:

Data for this metric was obtained from the NSU OrgSync (OS) platform, an online computer program for student and faculty/staff use for Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs). OS is used to record membership, leadership, activity, and vital information required of student organizations to be recognized on the NSU campus. All numbers are a duplicated student headcount as students are in multiple organizations and participate in multiple activities in most RSOs.

The number of students registered in co-curricular activities on OrgSync increased from 4,082 in 2017-2018 to 7,354 in 2018-2019.

Analysis:

The large increase in numbers from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019 is due to a change in the data collection. In 2017-2018, students registered themselves in each of their activities; beginning in 2018-2919, Information Technology Services automatically enrolled students in OrgSync. NSU cannot draw conclusions from the data at this time nor can the Student Experience set meaningful targets.

Another data source for student activity and engagement at NSU is the Event Management System (EMS) program. EMS captures bookings and the expected number of participants (Table 5). The EMS also captures duplicated headcount and it does not include the activity of students in organizations that have houses and lodges that host regular meetings or organizations that utilize space outside of EMS facilities.

Table 5 indicates a 11.6% decline in RSO bookings campus wide.

Table 5
Event Management System Reservations for Recognized Student Organizations

EMS Data	2017-2018	2018-2019	Decline
Total Bookings (all EMS facilities)	2,301	2,033	11.6%
Estimated Attendance at Booking	101,053	95,630	5.4%

Decision:

- Determine data sources and targets with Student Experience staff.

Metric:
*4. **Hours Students Involved in Community Service***

Findings:

NSU students, athletes, freshmen, Greeks, First Year Experience participants, volunteered for a total of 306,304 community service hours in 2019-2020. The number of community service hours in in 2018-19 was 351,809 for a decrease of about 45,000 hours.

Analysis:

As noted previously, reporting for this metric is less than precise so conclusions about the decrease in hours are difficult to make. Overall, NSU students volunteer for community service at a very high rate.. Students continue to volunteer for clean-up and repair following natural disasters (hurricanes and tornadoes) in communities outside Natchitoches, and they do a large amount of clean up on campus and around town. Highlights for 2019-20 included NSU student volunteers participating in a large student led health fair which is also a strategic effort for the Student Experience. In addition, NSU students played a major role in manning the campus food pantry of the 2019-20 year. Students in Presidents Leadership Program and other groups made the NSU food pantry Volunteerism and community service continue to be a focus at Northwestern. NSU students have participated in the One of Seven Program through the Presidents Leadership Program since 2014.

The data, while less than reliable, indicates a decline over the years in student community hours. This decline might be related to fluctuations in enrollment on the Natchitoches campus. Perhaps the biggest factor impacting this metric in 2020 was campus closure due to COVID-19. Northwestern converted to online education and student activities losing about 6 weeks that would have been devoted to community service projects. Our students would likely have met the 400,000 goal for this metric had we been on campus.

Decision:
- Identify ways to better track and count service.
- Continue to emphasize volunteerism in Student Experience and in Academic Affairs
- Consider ways for students to volunteer online

Objective 4:

Provide a transformational learning and career preparation experience (through advising, mentorships, experiential learning, and co-curricular involvement).

Strategies:

- Develop a series of high-impact experiential learning activities designed to engage students beginning their first year.
- Incorporate a required capstone experiential learning activity, such as internships, research, or performance-based events, in each baccalaureate degree program.

Metrics:

1. Number of baccalaureate degree programs with capstone experiential learning activities
2. Number of students and employers using Handshake
3. Percent of graduates working within 6 months of graduation

Metric:
1. *Baccalaureate Degree Programs with Capstone Experiential Learning Activities*

Findings:

In AC 2019-2020, Northwestern added 13 new baccalaureate programs to the list of degrees with capstone experiences:

Addiction Studies	CIS	Psychology
Allied Health (BASAH)	Electronics Engineering Tech	Theatre
Applied Microbiology	English	Unified Public Safety
Biology (Except for VTEC)	Music Ed.	Administration
Business Administration	Physical Science	

Analysis:

This metric reports progress with the Northwestern State University Quality Enhancement Program (QEP). The QEP is managed in Academic Affairs and appears to be on track to meet the target of 66 programs for the final year of the program.

Decision:

- Meet with program coordinator to determine issues or concerns moving forward to final goal.

Metric:
2. *Number of Students and Employers Using Handshake*

Findings:

As of June 2020, 11,273 Northwestern s students, alumni and employers are using the Handshake platform. This number last year was 7,674

Analysis:

Handshake is a relatively new platform for NSU designed to assist students in career decision making and in matching employers with students. Undergraduate and graduate students are automatically loaded into the system when they register at the University, however, students must activate their accounts to use the features.

Activity for 2019-20 is as follows:

Freshman	566	Graduate	142
Sophomore	1,111	Alumni	1,788
Junior	899	Employers	5,632
Senior	1,135		

Decision:

- Career Services meeting with Deans
- Provost promoting with students
- Career Services submitted a proposal to the Provost to create a University 4000, a 0 credit, 0 fee course required for all graduates. Students would be required register for the class and register for Handshake.

Metric:
3. Percent of Graduates Working Within 6 Months of Graduation

Findings:

The First Destination Survey was distributed through Handshake to all undergraduate and graduate students graduating Summer 2019, Fall 2019, and Spring 2020, beginning one month before graduation for each group. By June 2020, 30% had completed the First Destination Survey. Of these, 69.4% reported they were working; this response includes students who are working, continuing their education, in military service or volunteering. An additional 29.9% reported they were still looking for a job, and 0.7% reported they were not seeking employment.

Analysis:

Handshake is the NSU platform for recording and disseminating career and employment information to NSU students and alumni. Data reported is preliminary, since the survey will not close for this cohort until October, 2020. Email reminders are sent periodically to nonresponders. For students answering *Working* as their primary occupation, follow-up questions ask for details of the specific job, including start date, to distinguish between the intention to seek employment and employment itself.

Efforts to increase in responses effected an increase from 22.9 in 2018-19 to 30% in AC 2019-20.

Decision:

- The Student Experience will continue to work with Career Services and Alumni Affairs to achieve greater participation on the First Destination survey.
- The Student Experience will review parameters for this metric with Institutional Research.
- Career Services submitted a proposal to the Provost to create a University 4000, a 0 credit, 0 fee course required for all graduates. Students would be required register for the class and register for Handshake.

Objective 5:

Provide for student health and wellness (through physical, emotional, spiritual, and environmental health initiatives).

Strategies:

- Expand and maintain campus and community partnerships which enhance student health and wellness
- Create and implement appropriate outreach efforts which address the changing developmental needs of students
- Add health services at other off-campus instructional sites

Metrics:

1. *Number of Health-Related Programs and Services*
2. Satisfaction with Support Programs (item 2)

Metric:
1. ***Number of Health-Related Programs and Services and Community Partnerships***

Findings:

In 2018-2019 Northwestern sponsored 36 health related programs compared to 77 for 2019-2020 for an increase of 41.

Analysis:

In AC 2018-2019 Northwestern set a target of 45 events for health-related programs and events and fell short of that goal by 9 events. In 2019-2020 however, with increased focus on health as a strategic goal, Northwestern sponsored 77 events and increased the number of health-related events by 41 surpassing our goal by 32 events.

Northwestern is committed to providing health opportunities to students and recognizes the connection between health and student success. Events are the metric used for this goal. Below is a more comprehensive list of health-related activities on the NSU campus for 2019-2020

Social Media Posts/Messenger: 153
Workshops/Presentations: 77
Trainings: 14
Screenings: 7
Group Sessions/Counseling: 10
Campaigns/Programs: 41
Wellness Fest: 18 Screenings
Campus and Community Partners:41
New resources
    Cognitio–1,271 Students
    Campus Well–2,033 Unique Visitors
University Studies 1000 Presentations: Campus Safety, Title IX, Health and Wellness

Decision:

- Expand the campus-wide health fair, fall 2020
- Work with food service for healthy options.
- Work with Natchitoches community to develop additional partnerships.
- Consider ways to use existing committees and data to develop additional programs.
- Update University Studies Health and Wellness lessons with new focus on mental health

Metric:
1. **Satisfaction with Support Programs (Counseling)**

Findings:

The RNLSSI item, *Counseling services are available if I need them,* from the Campus Services scale was used to measure satisfaction with the counseling component of support programs in AC 2016-2017 and

AC 2018-2019. The mean score decreased from 6.06/7 in 2016-2017 to 6.04 in 2018-2019, which was not significant. Rescaling these means results in a score of 8.59/10 in 2016-2017 and 8.56 in 2018-2019. In 2017-2018, the item, *Northwestern provides the appropriate health, counseling, and social support for me to be successful,* from the local Satisfaction with Support Programs survey was used to assess this program. The average response was 3.31/4, which can be scaled to 7.93/10 for comparison.

Analysis:

The difference between the local survey results and those from the RNLSSI likely resulted from differences in the wording and the resolution of the scales. Thus, they should be compared at two year intervals. The RNLSSI considers this item a campus strength, with both high importance and high satisfaction. Although the decline between 2016-2017 and 2018-2019 is small, satisfaction with this area should be monitored to help us maintain high quality service to our students. The addition of another mental health professional to the Counseling and Career Services staff in fall 2019 should allow this office to serve more students.

Decision:

- Counseling should consider ways to better accommodate students at peak times.

Comprehensive Summary of findings and changes/decisions

Staff in the Student Experience continue to work toward the targets established. In AC 2019-20 Northwestern did not administer the Ruffalo Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey. The Strategic planning team members decided in 2015-2016 that the Student Satisfaction Survey would be administered every other year. Therefore, AC 2019-2020 data focuses on enrollment statistics, graduation rates, student activities, and career services.

Retention rates for full-time students from first to second year dropped slightly from 70.7% in 2018-2019 to 70% in 2019-2020. Further analysis to determine reasons for this decrease is needed. A more significant decrease was the 3% decline in graduation rates and a decline in overall enrollment. Again, further analysis to determine possible reasons for this decline is needed. Enrollment Management staff speculate that rising cost of education and changes to admissions standards for the state's flag ship university account for some of the decline in these numbers.

Enrollment Management continues to work with department heads and deans to develop better methods of enrolling and retaining students. An updated method of reaching new and continuing students is Cadence, a new texting platform which allows the entire Enrollment Management team to personally reach students with specific messages. All team members can check and reply to messages. Over 95,000 messages were sent in 2019-2020.

To increase graduation and retention rates for NSU students, Student Experience leadership worked with the Northwestern Foundation to develop a new scholarship specifically for students who need extra funding to remain in school and for those who need funding to graduate. Deans and Department Chairs identify students who need this money to stay in school or graduate. Names are submitted to a committee who awarded over $70,000.00 fall 2019 and spring 2020.

The Student Experience continues to develop new spaces on the NSU campus that are inviting and build a shared affinity for the institution. Since students left campus in the spring for COVID-19, the Northwestern State University Student Union interior has been repainted. In addition, Northwestern is completing a new E-Sports area for students which will be ready for fall 2020. The E-Sports area is the

result of a refurbishment of the former bookstore. It is a large area with state-of-the-art games, gaming technology and furnishing. Adjacent to this space is a new multi-purpose room for 250 students or guests which may be used for presentations and large events.

In 2018-2019, to remain competitive with other institutions, The Student Experience worked with housing partners to develop an improved application process. In 2019-2020, NSU continued to improve on this process by securing leases earlier. The goal is to improve tracking of occupancy and allow earlier notification of students regarding their housing requests. Other campaigns to help clarify processes and procedures continue.

NSU's student population continues to represent the ethnic diversity of our region and state. Efforts to improve diversity and inclusion include additional funding for the Center for Inclusion and Diversity and the addition of an African American Advisory Council. An updated Diversity and Inclusion Plan is being developed by a campus wide planning team. It includes five-year goals for: staff and faculty positions, student enrollment, budgets, policy, campus environment, and academic curricula. Northwestern's commitment to diversity and equity is reflected in the recent hiring of a Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion who will continue to develop and implement Five Year Diversity Plan.

NSU recognizes the need to grow our Asian and Native American populations. To address Asian populations, NSU will reach out to communities in New Orleans and when available, Enrollment Management will purchase ACT scores for designated populations. NSU began working with a selected Native American tribal leaders and developed plans to train recruiters on ways better ways to assist Native American students to enter college.

The Student Experience made strides toward development of a healthier student population. Research shows that students who focus on their physical and mental health are more likely to be retained and graduate. To meet the demand for mental health services, an additional mental health counselor was hired in 2019 and in 2020 a committee of faculty and staff met to discuss the growing demand for mental health services. A campus wide committee to reinstate a campus wide health fair was established and began meeting in spring 2019. A successful campus wide health fair was held in fall 2019. In addition, in 2019-2020 Northwestern hosted 77 health related activities for the NSU community, more than doubling the number of health-related programs and activities conducted in 2018-2019. NSU surpassed its goal by 32 events and should consider adjusting our measures.

The Student Experience staff will continue to find new and innovative ways to meet targets for 2020-2021. Adjustment of targets and strategies will be the focus of leadership for the remainder of the 2020 summer planning period.

Strategic Focus Area 2–Academic Excellence

The Academic Excellence (AE) focus area made substantive progress or maintained performance levels in meeting objectives for AC 2019-2020 in 4 of the 7 metrics measured in this cycle. Declines were largely attributable to the cancelation of conferences and financial constraints due to the COVID-19 pandemic in spring semester. Overall, results supporting academic excellence at Northwestern were positive. If recommendations for improvement are implemented during AC 2019-2020, the achievement of targets set for 2020-2021 will likely be obtained.

Table 7

Metrics for Assessing Academic Excellence–those in blue were assessed in 2019-2020. Those in black were assessed in 2018-2019.

AC 2018-2019	AC 2019-2020	Academic Excellence Metrics	AC 2022-2023 Targets
84/93	84/95	*Number of assessed academic degree and certificate programs with student learning outcomes to help drive effective and innovative instruction*	100% Degree and Certificate Programs
50 (Sample)		Courses focusing on implementing current technologies or best practice principles in teaching	35-50 (Sample)
4.3/5 (C) 4.4/5 (I) (43% response rate)	4.33/5 (C) 4.41/5 (I) (36% response rate)	*Mean student evaluation of instruction for each course (overall course quality) and course instructor (instructor's effectiveness)*	4.5/5.0 (90%) (45% response rate)
26		Average class size in University core courses	28
4.25/5(C) 4.3/5 (I) (41% response rate)	4.65/5 (C) 4.56/5 (I) (30% response rate)	*Mean student evaluation of instruction in University core courses*	4.5/5.0 (90%) (42% response rate)
10/11 (New criterion)		Number of University core classes with a designated course steward	100% of multi-section courses
342 93 Prof. Conf. Presentations	278 42 Prof. Conf. Presentations	*Number of graduate students engaging in research/scholarly activities and mentored by faculty*	400 80 Prof. Conf. Presenters
90 13-G; 77 UG Prof. Conf. Presentations 170 NSU Research Day	70 42 G; 24 UG Prof. Conf. Presentations 68 NSU Research Day	*Number of undergraduate and graduate students mentored by faculty who publish, present, or perform scholarly endeavors in a professional setting*	154 (20% increase)
GRE Verbal: *M* = 148 (42%) GRE Quan: *M* = 145 (24%); LSAT: *M* = 142 (18%); MCAT: *M* = 494 (28%)		Undergraduate student performance on graduate/professional school admission exams (e.g., GRE, LSAT, MCAT)	90% to score 280 GRE; Increase the # of students scoring above nat'l median for LSAT & MCAT by one/year

AC 2018-2019	AC 2019-2020	Academic Excellence Metrics	AC 2022-2023 Targets
4.6/5 4.6/5 4.7/5	4.60/5 4.57/5 4.67/5	*Mean scores from student evaluation of instruction that represent quality student-faculty interactions (e.g., encouraged interactions between faculty and students; gave prompt feedback; and displayed an appropriate demeanor)*	Improve scores in courses below 4.5/5.0
159 (Sample)		Number of department or college events, such as social functions or academic ceremonies, that bring faculty, students, and families together	180
23 Faculty Grants 67 (EPs/Chairs) 14 (QEP Grants) 86 (ULS Conf) 13 SP&B Grants	25 Faculty Grants 74 (EPs/Chairs) 18 (QEP Grants) 42 (ULS PD Conf)	*Number of faculty participating and receiving internal funding opportunities, including grants, EPs, operating, and strategic planning and budgeting.*	45 Faculty Grants 70 EPs/Chairs
8% (*N*=30)		*Percent of faculty/staff receiving external grants*	10% (45 PI/Co-PI)
893		Number of faculty attending department or college-sponsored workshops focusing on innovative instruction in content or pedagogy	900
990		Number of faculty/staff attending University, department and/or college-sponsored professional development workshops including lunch and learn	1,600
38	27	*Number of departments or sites acquiring new classroom or laboratory technologies*	42
199		Number of events or activities to recognize faculty for their contributions in teaching, research, or service	200

Note: Benchmarks for AC 2018-2019 are reflected on the far left with AC 2019-2020 results to the immediate right. Green reflects progress, orange reflects a decline, and grey demonstrates no progress or not measured. Blue italicized text indicates metrics evaluated in 2019-2020.

Five objectives support Academic Excellence.

Objective 1:

Provide effective, innovative instruction in the classroom and online.

Strategies:

- Foster the assessment of expected outcomes for the improvement of instruction
- Provide online and face-to-face instruction on technology/techniques that will improve the educational experience of our students and professional development of our faculty
- Create a program of faculty-led workshops for tutors in key areas (English, Mathematics, Sciences) to better equip peer tutors to meet the needs and expectations of our students
- Develop a plan for online and off-campus students so these students have the same level of academic support and access to tutoring as our main campus students
- Ensure that faculty and staff are well-informed about the services offered by the Academic Success Center so that they may direct students who would benefit from these opportunities for academic support
- Use student fee accounts for upgrading consumable classroom and laboratory equipment and supplies

- Provide stipends for faculty to design new or to re-design established courses that focus on integrating technology with content to improve student learning

Metrics:
1. *Number of assessed academic degree programs with student learning outcomes that help drive improvements in quality and innovative instruction.*
2. Courses focusing on implementing current technologies or best practice principles in teaching.
3. *Mean student evaluation of instruction for each course (overall course quality) and course instructor (instructor's effectiveness).*

Metric:
1. ***Number of assessed academic degree programs with student learning outcomes that help drive improvements in quality and innovative instruction.***

Findings:

During Assessment Cycle 2019-2020 100% (84/84) of academic degree and certificate programs completed the annual assessment. The remaining 11 programs created or updated their assessment plan due to low student enrollment or the program was recently approved by the Board of Regents. AC 2019-2020 assessment results reflect a maturing of the assessment process seeking to improve student learning.

Analysis:

Northwestern identifies student learning outcomes for all degree and certificate educational programs. It assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and it provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results moving forward. This validation of mission accomplishment is a testament to the tremendous work of the entire University community and reflects a sincere commitment to excellence.

AC 2019-2020 is the fourth iteration of exercising the University's Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Model as part of the *Strategic Plan 2016-2021 Dedicated to One Goal–Yours.* The focus during the past year has been on validating the approach, refining procedures, and processes, and sustaining success to further ingrain a culture of continuous improvement.

The 84 academic degree programs assessed in 2019-2020 generated 321 SLOs, and 492 measures, averaging almost two (1.53) measures per SLO. Of the 336 SLO's, 86% were met. Of the 492 measures, 73% were met. The change rate was 13%, 06% positive and 7% negative. Four programs failed to meet the majority of their SLOs, 3 programs met.

Decision:

Program faculty will compare current results to those of the previous year to better develop plans for the upcoming year (2020-2021). The most significant findings and decisions, including evidence of improvement (actual changes), assessment of the potential effects of the changes, and the initiation of new assessment plans will be integrated into pedagogy, experiential learning experiences, curriculum development, and course review or adoption–all designed to improve our programs and student learning.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Department Heads, and degree program coordinators.

Metric

2. Courses focusing on implementing current technologies or best practice principles in teaching.

Findings:

Each college reported multiple courses using technologies or best practices (Table 8).

Table 8

Courses Implementing Current Technologies or Best Practices, by College

College of Arts and Sciences	
ART 2160, 3560, 3960, 4560, & 4960	Adobe Creative Suite, Manual and software application of design principles in project-based curriculum aimed at **print-based** media.
ART 3410, 3810, 4610-New Media I, II, III, & IV	Adobe Creative Suite, Manual and software application of design principles in project-based curriculum aimed at **kinetic-based** media.
ART 4980-Prof. Practice	Assembling resume, artist statement, personal identity system, exhibition proposal in preparation for senior exhibition and professional practice
CHEM 3011, 3021- Org. Chemistry Lab 1 & 2	Organic chemistry laboratories incorporating new techniques for chemical analysis
COMM 2530-Visual Communication	Uses Adobe software to help students develop applicable industry-relevant skills
COMM 2440 & 3460-Basic Video Prod. & Digital Video Prod.	Uses video equipment, Adobe software to help students develop applicable, industry-relevant skills
COMM 2610-Photojournalism	Uses camera equipment to help students develop applicable industry-relevant skills
CJ, History, & Social Sciences	New laboratory equipment provides hands-on experiences in forensic science courses; new courses in history and social sciences, such as American Indians & the Law and Adv. Legal Research & Writing, provides relevant knowledge to students; and updated rubrics for writing assignments to give students the tools they need to succeed.
ENGL 1010, 1020, & 3230-Comp & Rhetoric I & II; Technical Comp.	New technologies installed in two classrooms for student and faculty use. Laptops and iPads are stored on mobile recharging carts, allowing use in other English classrooms.
ENGL 3500, 3510, 3520, 3530, 3540, 3610, 3620, 4710, 4870, 4970, 4980, 5340 & 5870 ENGL Film Studies	New technologies added to the Content Creation Lab including a digital audio recorder, a mini-beam projector, and other technology upgrades to support student learning in the Film Study program.
MATH 1020, 1021; 1035, 1036-College Algebra & Contemp. Math	Co-requisite program for students with math ACT score of 16-18. Students enrolled in 3-hrs lecture, 2-hrs lab with the same instructor and had Inclusive Ed access to software and text materials on the first day of class. High student success (pass) rate as a result.
MATH 2030, 2040, 4050-Elem/Middle Math; Informal Geometry/Mmt; & Math Cont & Conc.	Best practices to pre-service teachers: using various manipulatives to explore, develop, and dissect mathematical concepts and skills for place value numbers, fractions and percentages, and the four basic operations; expanding concepts learned in Math 2030 to measurement and geometry in 2040, building substantial starting questions and using available tools to obtain appropriate theoretical and practical answers; using different algorithms in Math 4050 where students investigate and invent numerical topics presented in class and prepare to meet the needs and aptitudes of their future students.
MUS 4150/5150-Pedagogy	Projects implementing best practice principles in applied teaching to small groups or individual instruments.
MUS 4110 & 4130- Elem Music Meth; Music Ed for Stud. w/Special Needs	Music education techniques and technologies focusing on elementary aged students; group discussions and projects focusing on assisting students with special needs.
MUS 5870, 5880, 5890-McClosky Technique Intro, I&II	Seminars and projects focusing on using the McClosky Vocal Technique.
SENG 3880-Studies of a Major Writer	e-Portfolios for the final project involving the works of J.R.R. Tolkien.

College of Arts and Sciences (continued)	
THEA 3390, 4270- Sound Reinforcement & Recording; Special Prob. In Design	Projects in sound design, reinforcement, and recording using dance theatre technologies.
THEA 3340, 3350, 3360, 4420, 4430, 4310, 4450	Costuming construction; make-up for stage; advanced costumes; costume, lighting, and scene designs for stage; and visual techniques. Use of Auto-Cad Smart-Room Software.
College of Business and Technology	
ACCT 4080-Auditing	Practice cases focusing on developing students' critical thinking skills and core technological competencies in order to tackle a real-world audit scenario.
BUAD 3250-Business Law I	In online classes, Internet videos are used. Instructor has video-taped all lectures and placed class notes online for student use.
BUAD 3270-International Bus.	Use of McGraw-Hill Connect, WebEx, Microsoft Sway, Google Forms, VIC, and Google Maps
BUAD 4900-Senior Seminar	Presentation software allowing high-resolution photographs, diagrams, video, and sound files to augment text and verbal lecture content; use of course management and lecture-capture tools.
CIS 1030, 3300, 4060-Intro to Software Dev.; Intermediate Obj-Oriented Prog; Mobile App. Development	Java software development; Object-oriented programming principles and development cycles; Mobile development trends and practices; Application deployment
CIS 4000, 4030, 4100-Adv. Database Sys; Web App Clients; Web App Server	Use of Microsoft Visio, Project, and SQL Server; creation of web applications using JavaScript; creation of web applications using PHP, Apache Web Server, and the MySQL database environment.
CUL & HMT courses	Service learning incorporated with Columns Café and local opportunities; use of guest speakers and field trips; volunteer experiences at Academy of Country Music Annual Awards and local/statewide events and festivals.
FIN 3090–Business Finance	Uses Excel, Connect, and Moodle. Through assignments and projects, students apply knowledge and skills gained through classroom lectures to demonstrate an understanding of the material. Instructor uses the scaffolding method of instruction.
MGT 3220, 3580-Org.& Mgt; Operations Mgt.	Uses casework and other class activities to teach professional behavior and principles of management; ties to other management courses to show how to manage products through a business. Technology use includes McGraw-Hill Connect, WebEx, Microsoft Sway, Google Forms, and VIC.
MKTG 3230–Principles of Marketing	Uses online videos from outside sources and instructor videos. Students present a marketing plan for a new product (active learning–learning through engagement) and the instructor makes heavy use of Moodle for online quizzes, testing, and turning in assignments.
IET 1700-Intro to Engineering Tech.	Introducing MATLAB software, an effective tool that allows programming, plotting, and analyzing data. Using MATLAB or Simulink and related products, allows control and acquire data from data acquisition hardware, imaging hardware, or instruments.
All Addiction Studies courses	All Addiction Studies courses are linked into the HHS (SAMSHA) Addiction Technology Transfer Center resources that include (as of January 1, 2019) Mental Health and Prevention.
All SPED courses in the M.A.T.	Developing an awareness of emerging trends as well as the potential pitfalls of technology. Students investigate and implement technology of their choosing in their classrooms and analyze results to share with classmates. The MAT uses online delivery of course materials, lending itself to the use or investigation of emerging technologies such as podcasts, Google Docs, and various social media platforms. This approach models differentiated instruction and allows students to examine technology that will serve in their prospective practices. All courses employ video case studies through the Council of Exceptional Children (CEC) website or ATLAS.
College of Education and Human Development	
PSYC 3010-Physiological Psychology	Neuroscience videos are included to enhance the understanding of students; use of NSUs library online database to research four required assignments; use of Stanford University Medical School's website for better understanding of stress and how stress influences the body.

College of Education and Human Development (cont.)	
PSYC 4420, 4490- Senior Research Seminar	New courses developed to support the QEP. The courses were designed to support academic scholarship of UG students who will initiate a research project and publicly present their findings.
PSYC 4500-Psy. of Business & Industry	Assignments are designed to mimic many activities that Industrial/Organizational Psychologists encounter at work, including Career/Interest Assessments, using Public Relations for Crisis Management, Critical Analysis of Products and Training Programs, etc. Students also complete a personal reflection assignment on 'models of change' within the context of personal and professional change theories.
PSYC 5300-Intellectual Assessment	APA ethical guidelines for psychology assessment; professional conduct competency expectations for working with adults and children in the assessment process; industry standards and best practices in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of standardized intelligence measures. The learning experience includes intensive instruction regarding standardized intelligence measures with skills demonstration, student skill building, peer reviews, mock professional settings for student hands on assessment administration with volunteer examinees to simulate the experience of professional psychological assessment in the world of work. Practice assessment activities include skills development with clinical interviews, mental status examinations, and professional report creation. Additional learning experiences provide connection to current industry sources for assessment materials, professional development training, and continuing education.
SOWK 2000-Exploring Soc. Work	Use of pod casts, power points, online articles, interviews, and You Tube videos
SOWK 3030- Human Behavior & the Social Environment	Using Team-Based learning and Problem-Based learning. Developed multimodal videos on all materials utilizing power points with voice overlay that included YouTube videos, podcast, TEDx Talks, and Sage text resources.
SOWK 3070-Social Work Values and Ethics	Uses a program called Geopro for students to create genograms—a generational mapping of family patterns used in social work.
SOWK 4030-Statistics in Social Work Research	Utilized NSU Virtual Machines and Laerd Digital Services for students to learn and use SPSS in the classroom. Utilized Team-Based learning and Problem-Based learning. Developed multimodal instructional videos through Microsoft stream on all materials utilizing power points with voice overlay that included YouTube videos, TEDx Talks, and Kahn Academy.
ASN and BSN didactic courses	Utilized one-on-one tutoring or small group remediation sessions via face-to-face, phone calls, WebEx, or distance learning classrooms; Utilized ATI online resources such as case studies, demonstration videos, learning templates, custom quizzes, and proctored exams; Utilized textbook online resources such as case studies, virtual simulation, and computer adaptive testing.
College of Nursing and School of Allied Health	
ASN & BSN clinical courses	Participated in real-time simulation at Willis Knighton Innovation Center & NSU Skills Lab, including preparatory assignments, pre- and post-brief conferences; students utilized age-appropriate health teaching for their patients.
BSN Clinical courses, 1st & 2nd Levels	Utilized iPads and Exam Soft(a secure testing platform) for proctored exams.
NURB 3050-Pathophysiology	Utilized Anatomage virtual reality for visualization of anatomical structures.
NURB 3160-Research in Nursing	Three students chosen as Sigma Rising Stars to present their research at the Sigma Theta Tau (International Honor Society for Nursing) conference in Indiana.
NURB 3220-Child Health	Assessed real-time knowledge of students using Socrates, a mobile response system.
NURB 3223-Health Assessment for RNs	Utilized Shadow Health Virtual Simulation for UG nursing physical assessments.
MSN & DNP didactic courses	Utilized WebEx, FlipGrid, Quizlet, YouTube, and PlayPosit (platform for making interactive presentations) to increase student engagement; Utilized current research through NSUs Library's online databases.

College of Nursing and School of Allied Health, cont.	
NURG 5700-Methods of Clinical Nursing Assessment	Utilized Shadow Health Virtual Simulation for advanced practice nursing physical assessments
RADS 5210 -Development & Teaching Methods in Radiologic Sciences	Module describing best practice principles to include teaching theories and models and applying those in the course; assignment requiring students to provide examples of effective technology use in the classroom.
RADS 5220-Assessement in Radiologic Sciences	Assignment requiring students to apply best practices in student assessment.

Analysis:

Academic administrators submitted 140 courses to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs by academic administrators as evidence for meeting this metric. A sample of 60 college courses were then selected to demonstrate how faculty expect their students to use current technologies to learn or to apply the subject matter. Also, courses were sampled to illustrate how faculty use best practices in teaching the subject matter.

This year's sample of courses was higher than the number cited in 2017-2018. Fifty-eight courses were submitted in 2017-2018, and 34 were selected as a sample. This year 140 submitted, and 50 were selected. During the baseline year, 71 courses were submitted and all were selected.

Decision:

The sample of courses (*N*=50) clearly illustrates effective, innovative instruction occurring at Northwestern during the academic year. The target for 2021 is a sample of 35-50 courses.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Department Heads, Faculty.

Metric:
3. *Mean student evaluation of instruction for each course (overall course quality) and course instructor (instructor's effectiveness).*

Findings:

Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 summative results for courses and instructors from the Student Evaluation of Instruction are given in Table 9.

Analysis:

Results of student surveys, distributed at the end of fall 2019 and spring 2020 semesters, revealed students hold Northwestern courses and instructors in high regard. The mean for all courses was 4.33/5 and all instructors was 4.41/5. The overall response rate was 36%, which is considered a good response rate for an internal survey. The overall student course evaluation of instruction in 2017-2018 was 4.3/5.0 and remained 4.3/5.0 in 2018-2019; the response rate over the past three years has also improved, moving from 37% to 41% to 43% respectively. In 2019-2020, the response rate dipped slightly, but shows consistency over a four-year period. Response in Spring 2020 was slightly lower due, in part, to COVID-19, revised academic calendar policies, and student access to the internet.

Table 9

a. Fall 2019 Student Evaluation of Course and Instructor

Consider this course: Overall, I would rate this course as…			
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent
Extremely Poor	(1)	228	1.30%
Poor	(2)	479	2.74%
Fair	(3)	1688	9.64%
Good	(4)	6467	36.93%
Superior	(5)	8650	49.39%
Response Rate	**Mean**	**STD**	**Median**
16,022/42,543 (37.66%)	**4.30**	0.85	4.00
Consider this teacher: Overall, I would rate this teacher as…			
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent
Extremely Poor	(1)	244	1.40%
Poor	(2)	466	2.67%
Fair	(3)	1428	8.18%
Good	(4)	5475	31.37%
Superior	(5)	9842	56.38%
Response Rate	**Mean**	**STD**	**Median**
15,975/42,543 (37.55%)	**4.39**	0.85	5.00

b. Spring 2020 Student Evaluation of Course and Instructor

Consider this course: Overall, I would rate this course as…			
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent
Extremely Poor	(1)	111	0.79%
Poor	(2)	293	2.09%
Fair	(3)	1237	8.82%
Good	(4)	5068	36.15%
Superior	(5)	7311	51.15%
Response Rate	**Mean**	**STD**	**Median**
12,496/37,297 (33.50%)	**4.37**	0.79	5.00
Consider this teacher: Overall, I would rate this teacher as…			
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent
Extremely Poor	(1)	129	0.92%
Poor	(2)	279	1.99%
Fair	(3)	1086	7.75%
Good	(4)	4199	29.98%
Superior	(5)	8311	59.35%
Response Rate	**Mean**	**STD**	**Median**
12,475/37,297 (31.25%)	**4.45**	0.80	5.00

Decision:

The quality of instruction at Northwestern is good. Over 87% of students rated courses/instructors as superior or good. With continued professional development of faculty and students, we will obtain our

target in course/instructor effectiveness by 2021. We will continue to encourage students to participate in course/instructor evaluations and raise the overall response rate to 45% by 2021.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Deans, Department Heads/Directors, and Faculty.

Objective 2:

Demonstrate a comprehensive commitment to core competencies.

Strategies:

- Expand the online resources available through the Academic Success Center to include discipline-specific links to useful websites and resources/tutorials
- Appoint course stewards for each course in the University core curriculum
- Review and strategically monitor the size of classes in the University core curriculum
- Review student satisfaction with instruction in core classes
- Evaluate the measure(s) for each core competency to insure alignment
- Develop a proactive advising system for students not successful in University core classes, beginning with procedures to follow for students not passing the first exam or first major assignment.

Metrics:

1. Average class size in University core courses.
2. *Mean student evaluation of instruction in University core courses.*
3. Number of University core classes with a designated course steward.

Metric:
1. **Average class size in University core courses.**

Findings:

The average class size over 44 University core courses in fall 2018 and spring 2019 was 26.16 (Table 10).

Analysis:

Forty-three University core courses were offered in fall 2018 and 44 in spring 2019. Fall 2018 courses with the largest enrollment included Geography (N=51) and Science 1010 (N=43); for spring 2019, large classes included Chemistry 1030 (N=49) and Philosophy 1010 (N=46). For both semesters, core courses with the lowest enrollments were English 2070, Math 2100, and Math 2110 with an average of five students for the year.

In comparison, the mean class size in 51 University core courses in 2016-2017 was 31; in 2017-2018, the mean was 28 in 51 University core courses. With the implementation of the redesigned University core curriculum in 2018-2019, the number of courses offered for each baccalaureate curriculum has decreased (51 to 44 courses). Also, the mean class size for University core courses has decreased from 31 (2016-2017) to 28 (2017-2018) to 26 (2018-2019).

Table 10

Average Class Size in University Core Courses, Fall 2018 and Spring 2019

Course Prefix & Number	Average Course Size	Course Prefix & Number	Average Course Size
ANTH 1510	33.23	HIST 1020	28.20
ANTH 2020	17.50	HIST 2010	28.10
BIOL 1010	21.35	HIST 2020	30.90
BIOL 1020	32.50	MATH 1020	22.00
BIOL 2250	36.50	MATH 1035	19.60
BIOL 2260	30.68	MATH 1060	21.30
BUAD 2200	23.60	MATH 1090	21.00
CHEM 1030	44.50	MATH 1100	13.60
CHEM 1040	33.60	MATH 1810	18.15
CHEM 1070	21.60	MATH 2010	22.60
COMM 1010	19.30	MATH 2100	5.00
COMM 2500	25.00	MATH 2110	5.00
ECON 2000	24.50	PHIL 1010	40.50
ENGL 1010	20.00	PHYS 2030	24.00
ENGL 1020	17.50	PSCI 2010	23.00
ENGL 2070	5.00	PSYC 1010	32.90
ENGL 2110	21.70	PSYC 2050	29.90
EPSY 2020	27.40	SCI 1010	38.30
FA 1040	28.00	SCI 1020	35.60
GEOG 1010	47.40	SCI 2010	34.25
GEOG 1020	43.50	SCI 2020	21.50
HIST 1010	28.00	SOC 1010	32.80

Decision:

NSU is pleased to report an average class size of 26 in University core courses. During 2019-20, it is recommended that the General Education Committee review University core data from 2017-2019, such as the number of sections offered, class size, and student success rates, for the purpose of evaluating cost efficiency and instructional quality across all baccalaureate programs. Committee members should determine whether core courses should have a minimum enrollment per semester or year, if the course is meeting general education requirements. The 2021 target will remain a mean of 28 in University core courses, as a result of the recommendation provided in this section.

Responsibility: Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, Deans/Directors/Department Heads, and Institutional Research.

Metric:
2. Mean student evaluation of instruction in University core courses.

Findings:

The average course rating and average instructor rating on the Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI) in core courses (Table 11) were higher in Fall 2019 when compared to fall 2018; the same was true for Spring 2019 and 2020.

Table 11

Average Evaluation of Course and Instructor in University Core Courses

Semester	N	Core Course Mean	Response Rate Mean	Core Instructor Mean	Response Rate Mean
Fall 2017	51	4.19	35.9%	4.28	35.75%
Spring 2018	52	4.27	41.7%	4.36	41.64%
Fall 2018	43	4.19	47%	4.20	47%
Spring 2019	44	4.27	35%	4.37	35%
Fall 2019	390	4.6	33.19%	4.48	32.77%
Spring 2020	91	4.7	27.91%	4.65	27.91%

Analysis:

The overall rating by students for University core courses was 4.65/5.00; this compares to an 4.15/5 average rating in the baseline year. The mean instructor effectiveness score in core courses was 4.56/5.0 an increase (4.14/5.0) in comparison to the baseline year. Student participation rates in University core courses have increased from 2016-2019, moving from 31% (2016-2017) to 39% (2017-2018) to 41% (2018-2019). A significant drop occurred between Fall 2018 and 2019; a marginal drop between Spring 2019 and Spring 2020.

Decision:

Northwestern achieved the 2021 target of superior ratings (4.5/5.0) in *all* University core courses. We will continue to review student evaluations in University core courses in an effort to retain our achieved target. Our goal is to earn an average 42% response rate from students.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Department Heads, Faculty, and Institutional Research.

Metric:
3. Number of University core classes with a designated course steward.

Findings:

Ten University core courses had a designated course steward (Table 12).

Analysis:

Based on recommendations from 2017-2018, the University's course steward plan was revised to give priority to core courses with multiple sections and large student enrollment (400+ students). In fall 2018, 11such courses were identified, including Biology 2250; Chemistry 1070; Communication 1010; English 1010, 1020, 2110; Geography 1010; Psychology 1010, 2050; Fine Arts 1040; and Science 1010.

Course stewards were given an extra services contract and were expected to complete an effort schedule to show their level of stewardship. Science courses (and the one geography course) did not participate in the course steward plan, due to faculty shortages in their respective departments. (Most science faculty were teaching overloads.)

In 2018-2019, the program focused on courses with large enrollment. Thus 10 of the 11 courses identified were stewarded; four courses having multiple sections and large enrollments were not.

Table 12

Course Stewards for AC 2018-2019

Course #/Title	Course Steward
COMM 1010–Oral Communication	Dr. Paula Furr
COMM 2500–Interpersonal Communication	Dr. Paula Furr
ENGL 1010/1011–Composition & Rhetoric I/Enrichment	Ms. Mariann Wilson
ENGL 1010–Composition & Rhetoric I	Dr. Thomas Reynolds
ENGL 1020–Composition & Rhetoric II	Dr. Thomas Reynolds
ENGL 2110–Introduction to Literature	Dr. Allison Rittmayer
FA 1040–Introduction to Fine Arts	Dr. John Dunn
MATH 1020–College Algebra	Ms. Melissa Kelly
PSYC 1010–General Psychology	Ms. Neeru Deep
PSYC 2050–Developmental Psychology	Ms. Shannon Wall-Hale

The purposes of naming course stewards are to ensure course goals/objectives/key assessments are the same across all course sections offered and to ensure that instructors are engaging with students and responsive in meeting their learning needs.

Decision:

The General Education Committee should review data findings from 2016-2019 and recommend solutions for better meeting the purpose and goals of metric three, objective two. Should all core courses be assigned a steward, either fall or spring semester or both? Or should only core courses with multiple sections and large enrollments be assigned a steward?

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Department Heads, and Faculty.

Objective 3:

Offer exemplary graduate and professional school preparation.

Strategies:

- Establish a workshop series to prepare students for graduate/professional school admission exams.
- Support student and mentor travel to present research at professional conferences.
- Offer mini-courses/workshops on test-taking skills, tips on the application process, and interview preparation.
- Offer discipline-specific courses focused on student transition from undergraduate to graduate/professional school.

Metrics:

1. *Number of graduate students engaging in research/scholarly activities and mentored by faculty.*
2. *Number of undergraduate and graduate students mentored by faculty who publish, present, or perform scholarly endeavors in a professional setting.*
3. Undergraduate student performance on graduate/professional school admission exams (e.g., GRE, LSAT, MCAT).

Metric:
1. ***Number of graduate students engaging in research/scholarly activities and mentored by faculty.***

Findings:

Graduate students presented 13 papers and posters at five conferences. Forty-two graduate students were accepted to deliver 14 presentations at NSU Research Day. NSU Research Day was cancelled due to COVID-19.

The number of graduate research products required for graduation (summer 2019-spring 2020) included the following: Graduate theses (*N=7*), field studies *(N=2),* performance documents (*N=1),* Scholarly projects (*N=11),* Creative research projects (*N=5)*, and Papers-in Lieu of Thesis (*N=252).*

Approximately 14% of Northwestern's full-time faculty were engaged in directing or assessing the capstone research of graduate students. On average, graduate supervisors worked with 5.7 graduate students. This data is unchanged from the previous assessment cycle.

Analysis:

The Beta Chi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) Nursing Research and Evidence Based Practice Conference is held during the spring of even-numbered years, but was cancelled this year. In 2019-2020, 42 student authors would have presented on 14 graduate projects during NSU's Research Day had it not been cancelled.

This year, overall, the number of graduate students engaging in research and scholarly activities declined (*N* = 329 in 2018-2019; N = 278 in 2019-2020). The decrease was likely due to fewer graduate students registered in theses, field studies, creative projects, and paper-in-lieu courses (*N* = 218 in 2018-2019; N = 191 in 2019-2020), and perhaps due to the COVID-19 pandemic which caused many graduate students to halt their research until a time when it was again safe.

The percentage of full-time faculty mentoring graduate students remained steady (14% in 2019-2020; 14% in 2018-2019 compared to 25% in 2017-2018), as did the number of graduate students supervised by each full-time faculty member in a capstone course--approximately five students—consistent with the two previous years.

Decision:

The target for 2021 will remain at 80 graduate presenters at professional conferences and 29 presentations. To facilitate mastery of this goal, faculty across all graduate programs will mentor their students by recommending professional conferences to attend and will encourage them to submit their student research for review/consideration. Additionally, to obtain a yearly increase in the number of graduate presentations, Northwestern will partially fund (e.g., registration or travel) graduate students whose proposals are accepted to a national, regional, or state professional conference. Faculty mentors will have internal funding opportunities, such as endowed professorships or faculty grants, to support their scholarship.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Faculty Grants Chair, Research Council Chair, Directors/Department Heads, and Faculty.

Metric:

2. *Number of undergraduate and graduate students mentored by faculty who publish, present, or perform scholarly endeavors in a professional setting.*

Findings:

Seventy students (24 undergraduates, 46 graduate) were accepted to present papers and posters at professional meetings this year. NSU Research Day included 14 presentations by 42 graduate students and 10 presentations by 26 undergraduate students. Student presenters and faculty mentors represented all four colleges. Due to COVID-19, all Spring conferences and symposiums were cancelled including NSU Research Day. Data remains inconclusive of conference proceedings and inclusion of abstracts or creative work in the proceedings. It is hypothesized that most, if not all, conferences have or will publish a program or proceedings at some point.

Analysis:

The number of undergraduate students making conference presentations was comparable to 2017-2018 (70 in 2019-2020; 77 in 2018-2019; 76 in 2017-2018, but fewer presentations were made, perhaps due to less participation at the University of Louisiana Lafayette Undergraduate Research Conference in November, and cancellation of all conferences in Spring 2020. Northwestern undergraduates presented at 15 additional conferences, including internationally at the School of Economics and Business-Universtat d'Alacant Universidad de Alicante. All undergraduates attended conferences with one or more faculty mentors.

Research Day provides a venue for students to present thesis research and research projects in progress that may not yet be ready to present at a conference.

Decision:

Northwestern will continue to emphasize the importance of graduate and undergraduate research/scholarship by providing partial or full funding to conduct research or to travel to professional meetings to present research findings.

The number of student presenters will represent all colleges and increase by 10% each year at both undergraduate and graduate levels. The 2021 target will remain as is–154 students mentored by faculty and presenting or performing in scholarly endeavors in a professional setting. Collecting this data during AC 2020-2021 will be imperative to have accurate data and a comparison to COVID-19 affects.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Faculty Grants Chair, Research Council Chair, Directors/Department Heads, and Faculty.

Metric:

3. **Undergraduate student performance on graduate/professional school admission exams (e.g., GRE, LSAT, MCAT).**

Findings:

Test scores on graduate or professional school exams were verified for 113 undergraduates and graduating seniors for tests administered during the period June 1, 2018 to May 31, 2019. The largest number of students took the GRE (Verbal: 148.5 ± 1.46, Quantitative: 145.6 ± 1.27, *N* = 75).

From June 1, 2018-May 30, 2019, 20 students/graduates took the LSAT. The average score was 142.3 (*SD* = 5.61), while the average percentile rating was 21.5 (*SD* = 15.3). The percentile ranking of the average score is 18.3%. LSAT scores ranged from a low of 133 to a high of 157.

In the evaluation period, 8 graduating seniors, 2 seniors, 4 juniors, and 4 graduates from 2018 took the MCAT (95% confidence interval--Total: 494.1 ± 4.8, CBPS: 122.9 ± 1.2, CARS: 124.1 ± 1.5, BBFL: 123.7 ± 1.4, and PSBB: 123.5 ± 1.4, *N* = 18).

Analysis:

For the GRE, 15 (40%) of those tested scored above the national median on the verbal component, while seven (9.3%) scored above the median on the quantitative reasoning component, both comparable to last year. Northwestern's Graduate School requires a composite score (V + Q) of at least 280; 72 (96%) attained this benchmark, a significantly larger proportion than last year (*p*=.007).

LSAT scores range from 120-180; the median is 151. One of this year's test-takers (5%) scored above the median. In the 2018 application year, 17 students completing a bachelor's degree at NSU applied to law school. Twelve (70.6%) were accepted by one or more schools. Of these, eight (75%) matriculated to a law school fall 2018, three more than in 2017

The majority of the MCAT scores and sub-scores were below the national median. The best performance was on the CARS sub-score where 10 scores (56%) were above the national median. Overall, five (28%) scored above the national median. Nationally, approximately 38% of medical school applicants are accepted. In the 2018 application year, 14 students completing a bachelor's degree at NSU applied to medical school. Three of these (21%) were accepted by at least one medical school and matriculated this fall. This is not significantly different from the national average.

Decision:

The 2021 target for GRE test takers this year was obtained. The mean verbal and quantitative scores were acceptable for admission into graduate schools. In subsequent evaluation periods, the target for GRE scores will remain as stated i.e., at least 90% of test takers to score at or above the level of 280, combined verbal and quantitative.

On the LSAT, most scores (65%) were in the first quartile, a much lower performance than last year. The target for subsequent evaluation cycles will be to raise the number of students scoring above the national median by one each year. Acceptance data for the current cohort will be assessed next year to determine whether this target needs to be changed.

Curricular and advising changes were made two years ago by the two academic units advising pre-medical students, but these changes will not be reflected in the performance of medical school applicants for another year. The target for subsequent evaluation periods is to raise the number of students scoring above the national median on the total score for the MCAT (*Median* = 500) by one each year.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dean of Graduate School, Institutional Research, and Deans/Department Heads/Directors.

Foster quality student-faculty interactions.

Strategies:

- Create and utilize program-specific advising packets to improve/streamline the advising process
- Establish a Meet the Faculty program
- Identify successful/meaningful student-faculty interactions
- Provide transportation or other funds for faculty and students who take educational trips or engage in experiential learning activities
- Reward faculty who serve as recognized student organization sponsors
- Create a space for faculty/staff and students to meet in informal gatherings and engage in conversations about educational and social topics
- Create and promote opportunities for faculty to interact with students and their families such as academic recognition ceremonies or extracurricular activities

Metrics:

1. *Mean scores from student evaluation of instruction that represent quality student-faculty interactions (e.g., my teacher encouraged interactions between faculty and students; my teacher gave prompt feedback; and my teacher displayed an appropriate demeanor).*
2. Number of department or college events, such as social functions or academic ceremonies, that bring faculty, students, and families together.

Metric:

1. ***Mean scores from student evaluation of instruction that represent quality student-faculty interactions (e.g., my teacher encouraged interactions between faculty and students; my teacher gave prompt feedback; and my teacher displayed an appropriate demeanor).***

Analysis:

Student evaluations for fall 2019 and spring 2020 indicate superior student-faculty interactions. Overall, 76.21% of students indicated Northwestern teachers *always* encourage interaction between faculty and students; 10.21% stated their teachers *usually* encourage interaction. The mean for both semesters was 4.60/5.

For the criterion, *my teacher gave prompt feedback to questions and assignments,* 76.02% responded *always* and 11.70% answered *usually.* The mean for both semesters was 4.57/5.

Seventy-four percent of students believed their teachers *always* displayed an appropriate demeanor both inside and outside the learning environment; 9.34% stated their teachers *usually* displayed an appropriate demeanor. Overall, the mean for this criterion was 4.67/5.

University-wide, the response rate for student evaluation of instruction for fall was 38.20% and 34.09% for spring.

Findings:

Table 13
Spring 2020 Student Evaluation of Instruction

My teacher encouraged interaction between faculty and students.			
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent
Never	(1)	273	1.93%
Occasionally	(2)	338	2.40%
Sometimes	(3)	649	4.54%
Usually	(4)	1441	10.21%
Always	(5)	10752	76.21%
Not Applicable	(0)	665	4.71%
Response Rate	**Mean**	**STD**	**Median**
12,56/37,297 (33.68%)	**4.64**	0.85	5.00
My teacher gave prompt feedback to questions and assignments.			
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent
Never	(1)	296	2.10%
Occasionally	(2)	422	2.99%
Sometimes	(3)	660	4.68%
Usually	(4)	1650	11.70%
Always	(5)	10724	76.02%
Not Applicable	(0)	355	2.52%
Response Rate	**Mean**	**STD**	**Median**
12,556/37,297 (33.66%)	**4.61**	0.88	5.00
My teacher displayed an appropriate demeanor and enthusiasm both inside and outside the learning environment.			
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent
Never	(1)	233	1.66%
Occasionally	(2)	285	2.04%
Sometimes	(3)	442	3.16%
Usually	(4)	1241	8.86%
Always	(5)	10900	77.85%
Not Applicable	(0)	901	6.43%
Response Rate	**Mean**	**STD**	**Median**
12,471/37,297(33.44%)	**4.70**	0.79	5.00

Decision:

The mean scores of these components, obtained as selected items from the overall student evaluation of instruction, indicate an exemplary relationship between faculty and students at Northwestern. These items were first collected during the 2017-2018 year, with the mean scores identical to those for 2018-19. Data for these components indicate a slight decrease, but much of that is due, for Spring 2020, to COVID-19 and its effects on the academic calendar and grading changes. Data will be collected and analyzed in 2020-2021, as they specifically address objective four: quality student-faculty interactions.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Department Heads, Faculty, and Institutional Research.

Table 14

Fall 2019 Student Evaluation of Instruction

My teacher encouraged interaction between faculty and students.			
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent
Never	(1)	521	2.96%
Occasionally	(2)	508	2.89%
Sometimes	(3)	938	5.33%
Usually	(4)	1891	10.75%
Always	(5)	12799	72.77%
Not Applicable	(0)	931	5.29%
Response Rate	**Mean**	**STD**	**Median**
17,065/42,543 (37.76%)	**4.56**	0.96	5.00
My teacher gave prompt feedback to questions and assignments.			
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent
Never	(1)	466	2.65%
Occasionally	(2)	675	3.84%
Sometimes	(3)	930	5.29%
Usually	(4)	2019	11.48%
Always	(5)	12973	73.75%
Not Applicable	(0)	528	3.00%
Response Rate	**Mean**	**STD**	**Median**
16,068/42,543 (37.77%)	**4.54**	0.96	5.00
My teacher displayed an appropriate demeanor and enthusiasm both inside and outside the learning environment.			
Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent
Never	(1)	380	2.18%
Occasionally	(2)	479	2.75%
Sometimes	(3)	635	3.65%
Usually	(4)	1642	9.43%
Always	(5)	13026	74.78%
Not Applicable	(0)	1257	7.22%
Response Rate	**Mean**	**STD**	**Median**
15,921/42,543(37.42%)	**4.64**	0.88	5.00

Metric:

2. **Number of department or college events, such as social functions or academic ceremonies, that bring faculty, students, and families together.**

Findings:

Faculty, students, and (many times) family members of students participated in 160 events during the year. This compares to 152 events documented in 2017-2018 and 93 events during the baseline year.

A sample of events includes:

- **Advising and Registration Round-Up Event, fall 2018, and Business and Industry Showcase, spring 2019** linking College of Business and Technology faculty, staff, and students together for the purposes of encouraging students to register for the next semester and providing an innovative venue for faculty and students to showcase their research and innovative projects to members of the business community.

- **All Night Art and Math Activities** held each fall and spring semester and sponsored by faculty in the Department of Art and Department of Mathematics.

- **Band Camps** offered to Middle School, High School, and Honors High School students in June 2019; faculty are involved in instruction/master classes; families arrive on the final day of camp to hear concerts.

- **Cammie G. Henry Research Center** hosted or sponsored 17 activities, such as

  - Clementine Hunter photographic images and biographical sketches at NSU Folklife Center, July 21, 2018;
  - Get Loud @ Watson (games, music, door prizes, cookie bar) to introduce freshman to the on-campus library and library faculty/staff, August 23, 2018;
  - Traveling exhibit in celebration of Creole Heritage through images and sources, September 14-15, 2018;
  - Stationery exhibit featuring Cammie G. Henry and her guests with author Pat Austin and held at Melrose Plantation on October 18, 2018;
  - Hashtag parties on Twitter: "Archives at the Movies" (February 8, and May 5, 2019); "Archives Herstory" (March 8, 2019); and
  - A traveling exhibit of book covers of authors using a wide variety of resources, April 12-13, 2019 and co-sponsored by NSU Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Cultural Studies.

- **College of Nursing and School of Allied Health** hosted 31 events, such as:

  - Back to School activities (August 20-24, 2018 and January 14-18, 2019)–Welcome Back Breakfast, Ice Cream Social, BBQ, GLOW Zumba, Color Chaos Paint War, Taco Tuesday, Selfie Station, and Orientation Sessions for new students;
  - Career Fair (October 8, 2018 and February 18, 2019) to connect students with potential employers;
  - Halloween and Christmas Parties (October 29, 2018 and December 3, 2018); Mardi Gras Mambo (February 25, 2019);
  - Black History Month Celebration (February 21, 2019); and
  - De-stress activities during final exams (December 3-6, 2018 and May 6-9, 2019).

- **Creole Heritage Celebration** to honor Creole groups in the USA, including awards to individuals who have contributed to the preservation of Creoles and their communities; held on September 14, 2018.

- **Engineering Technology Annual Robotics Competition** opened to middle school students within 200 miles of Natchitoches (November 28, 2018) and **Engineering Technology Symposium** with speakers from academia, industry, and workforce development (October 17, 2018).

- **Family Day Concert** for family members of NSU Concert Bands to visit campus to hear performances of four concert bands; held April 28, 2019.

- **Flavor of Louisiana** event sponsored by the NSU Foundation and the Louisiana Seafood Board; a spring fundraising event that also showcased academic programs and involved faculty, administrators, students, and alumni; held March 22, 2019.

- **Freshman Connection Sessions** held summer 2018 to register freshman for fall classes, make connections between students and their families and university faculty/staff, and acquaint them with the NSU campus and services; six separate events occurred.

- **Full Stage Productions** of Spring Awakening, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Christmas Gala, Modern in Motion, and Second Season Shows during fall 2018 and The Cat in the Hat,

1940s Radio Hours, Second Season Shows, and Senior Dance Concert directed and produced by the Department of Theatre and Dance.

- **Graduation Ceremonies/Receptions** by each College to recognize all graduates of each degree program; NSU Commencements (December 14, 2018 and May 10, 2019).

- **Hall of Distinguished Educators** recognized young and veteran educators for their contributions to K-20 education; held October 21, 2017.

- **Honor convocations/Induction Ceremonies** held to recognize outstanding students in various academic fields, such as:

  - Alpha Beta Alpha–Watson Library, spring 2019;
  - Beta Gamma Sigma–Business, fall 2018;
  - Epsilon Delta Pi–CIS; spring 2019;
  - Phi Beta Lambda–Business; spring 2019;
  - Phi Delta Kappa–Education; spring 2019;
  - Phi Kappa Phi–all majors, spring 2019;
  - Psi Chi–Psychology, fall 2018; spring 2019; and
  - Sigma Theta Tau–Nursing; spring 2019.

- **Hope for Paws**–de-stress for students during final exams, Watson Library.

- **Marching Band Honors Day** to honor band students and families on November 3, 2018; participants had the opportunity to perform with NSU Marching Band at halftime of the football game.

- **New Media Showcase** to feature photography of new media students and faculty; reception was April 17, 2019 and gallery showing was April 7-28, 2019.

- **Reading Events and LitCon** hosted each fall and spring semesters by English, Foreign Languages, and Cultural Studies Department to support literature stories and studies. LitCon, held April 12-13, 2019, in the Orville Hanchey Gallery to "bring the energy and atmosphere of pop culture conventions to the realm of humanities and academic conferences".

- **Smarty Party** (December 4, 2018) to recognize scholarship recipients and encourage scholarship applications and to fellowship with students, faculty, and staff in the Department of Hospitality Management and Tourism (HMT).

- **Summer Send Off Party** (May 2, 2019) to pin on the US map where faculty and students in HMT will travel and work during summer 2019.

- **University-wide Events** such as NSU Scholarship Banquet (March 21, 2019), NSU Research Day (April 25, 2019), N-Side View (March 9, 2019 and October 13, 2018).

- **Walter Porter Forum** brought business and industry professionals to campus to share their life experiences with students as a way of bridging the gap from college to career; held October 20, 2019.

Analysis:

Adhering to the recommendation from the baseline year, academic units in 2018-2019 and 2017-2018 kept better records of events hosted for faculty, students, and families. As a result, events documented by colleges or departments/schools increased 70% during 2018-2019. These events serve an important purpose for faculty and students interacting with one another in both social and academic settings.

Decision:

This measure contributes to the purpose of objective four. During 2019-20, academic units will improve their record-keeping of social functions and academic ceremonies. The target of 180 events will be met by 2021. It will be important to capture events and promote them using social media.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Deans, Department Heads/Directors, Director of Marketing, and NSU Press.

Objective 5: **Support faculty in teaching, research, and service.**

Strategies:

- Survey faculty to determine needs in teaching, research, and service.
- Establish policies for internal research and travel funding opportunities.
- Participation (directly/indirectly) in the strategic budgeting process.
- Promote the goals/activities/outcomes of The Center for Faculty Excellence in Research and Teaching.
- Develop methods for establishing faculty workload policies.
- Ensure that faculty across the University are equitably compensated for their rank, expertise, and service to the University, profession, and/or community.
- Inform faculty of University endowed professorship policies and encourage their participation in the application process.
- Recognize faculty for their contributions in teaching, research, and service.
- Ensure that all classroom/laboratory technologies are functional and updated and that faculty are trained on their usage

Metrics:

1. *Number of faculty participating and receiving internal funding opportunities, including grants, EPs, operating, and strategic planning and budgeting.*
2. *Percent of faculty/staff receiving external grants.*
3. Number of faculty attending department or college-sponsored workshops focusing on innovative instruction in content or pedagogy.
4. Number of faculty/staff attending University, department and/or college-sponsored professional development workshops including lunch and learn.
5. *Number of departments or sites acquiring new classroom or laboratory technologies.*
6. Number of events or activities to recognize faculty for their contributions in teaching, research, or service.

Metric:

1. ***Number of faculty participating and receiving internal funding opportunities, including grants, EPs, operating, and strategic planning and budgeting.***

Findings:

Twenty-five faculty were awarded research or travel grants by the Office of Academic Affairs; 16 utilized the award. Five faculty received research or instructional enhancement grants and 11 received

travel grants to support their participation in professional meetings during the year. A total of $25,000 was budgeted for this purpose; a total of $17,000 was used. Due to COVID-19, many spring conferences and symposiums were cancelled, or research trips interrupted.

QEP Learning for Life Coordinators (*N*=8) were awarded up to $2,000 each to redesign their curriculum to include experiential learning as a capstone course. QEP implementation Team (N=5) were awarded $2,000 each, and the QEP Assessment Team (N=5) were awarded $1,250 each. Up to $35,250 was budgeted to support this work.

The Office of Academic Affairs was set to host the ULS Academic and Performing Arts Summit, but the event was cancelled due to COVID-19. 15 undergraduate students were slated to present 9 undergraduate research projects; 1 student was selected to perform on the performing arts showcase; and 2 students had 5 pieces selected for the visual arts showcase. Additionally, Academic Affairs paid registration fees for 42 faculty to attend the *ULS For Our Future Conference*, January 30-31, 2020 at the University of Louisiana Monroe. Approximately $5,000 was used to support these events, which focused on undergraduate research, service learning, visual and performance arts exhibits, and higher education topics.

Seventy-one faculty received endowed professorships and three faculty were endowed chair recipients. Seven endowed scholarships were awarded. The 74 honorees were provided $821,444 to support their professional development during the year. An additional $260,539 was utilized from the spend-down requirement from the Louisiana Board of Regents. A total of $1,119,652 was funded through Endowed Professor and Chair monies.

The Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee (18 members) did not receive budget enhancement requests in 2019-2020 due to budget restrictions. In 2018-2019, 40 enhancement requests totaling $692,048 were funded. Using the committee's recommended priority list as well as the recommendations of the President's advisory team, NSU directly funded 11 initiatives totaling $102,848 in new resources awarded in the 2019-20 year. Additionally, by leveraging other sources of funding, two other requests were partially funded. For 2017-2018, 14 initiatives were funded for approximately $500,000.

Analysis:

Due to COVID-19 in Spring 2020, many of the faculty research support fund grants were not utilized. The faculty grants committee reviewed applications twice during 2019-2020. Due to over-awarding of faculty grants in 2017-2018, the faculty grants chairperson and committee members were encouraged to monitor their budget more carefully in 2018-2019. Thus, $25,000 was allocated for 25 faculty recipients, whereas 34 faculty were awarded in 2017-2018 for a total of $29,829. The faculty grants committee reviewed applications two times during 2018-2019 and three times during 2017-2018. During the baseline year, 31 faculty grants were awarded, including four grants involving students' research projects.

The number of faculty awarded endowed professorships increased by nine this year (48 to 57 or 18.75%). Of the funds available to faculty ($764,141), 86.5% was used for professional development purposes ($661,304) and 13.5% ($102,837) will carry-over to the 2019-2020 year. In comparison, over $1 million was available to faculty in endowed spending for 2017-2018, as compared to $562,009 in the baseline year, 2016-2017.

Decision:

Monies dedicated to support faculty in their research and professional development should be increased during 2020-21. For example, a budget of $30,000 or 30 recipients for the new year. The target will remain as 45 faculty grants for the year 2021.

Endowed professor recipients will be encouraged to mentor new faculty, including adjuncts, during 2020-2021 by financially assisting them in professional development activities. Examples include using endowment funds to pay a new or adjunct faculty member's expenses for participating in a professional meeting where their research findings are co-presented; or inviting a nationally recognized content expert to campus to inform or update faculty knowledge and skills. NSU needs to secure 13 additional endowments to reach our 2021 target of 70.

Responsibility: NSU Foundation, Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors/Department Heads, and Faculty.

Metric:
2. *Percent of faculty/staff receiving external grants.*

Findings:

Due to COVID-19, many external grant applications were frozen, discontinued, or did not reach fruition. For this reason, we will include the data for 2019-2020 in next year's report. The Louisiana Folklife Center received a total of $25,983.71 in grants for the NSU Folk Festival and 12th Annual Louisiana Studies Conference; all funding has been forwarded to 2020-2021. NSU received an external grant from LOSFA for the LA GearUp program; total funding in year one was $765,414. Additionally, we are in year 2 of 5 for a CLIP grant of $3.4 million.

Table 15
Funded grants in 2018-2019

PI	Department/College	Title	Funded Amount
Alexander, N.	NSU Child & Family Network-E&HD	LA Pathways Career Development	$367,873.00
Alexander, N.	NSU Child & Family Network-E&HD	LA Pathways Scholarship	$2,146,423.75
Alexander, N.	NSU Child & Family Network-E&HD	Comprehensive Child Care Resource & Referral for Regions 7 and 8	$730,786.00
Alexander, N.	NSU Child & Family Network-E&HD	CCDFCAC Food Program	$46,850.00
Alexander, N.	NSU Child & Family Network-E&HD	Curriculum Initiative	$51,947.00
Alexander, N.	NSU Child & Family Network-E&HD	Ancillary Certificate	$137,753.92
Clawson, D.; Badeaux, A.	Willis Knighton Health System	WKHS BSN to DNP – CRNA	$2,742,100 (five years)
Clawson, D.	CHRISTUS Health-LA	"Undergraduate Faculty Support #2"	$337,265 (four years)
Clawson, D.	CHRISTUS Health-LA	"Undergraduate Faculty Support #3"	$531,710 (four years)
Clawson, D.	The Rapides Foundation	"Psych-Mental Health NP"	$166,666
Clawson, D.	Capitation Funding	Undergraduate Nursing Faculty	$224,000
Clawson, D.	Willis Knighton Health System	WKHS Support Fund and Scholarships	$60,000
Johnston, D.	NIH	"All of Us"	$25,000
Simmons, P.	Willis Knighton Health System	"BSN Faculty Support"	$300,000 Per year
Johnson, M.	Community Foundation of North Louisiana	Annie Lowe Stiles Scholarships	$30,000
McGuire, C.	ULS Geer Grant	"Bridging the Digital Divide"	$1,000
Harrell, R.	NSU Faculty Research Fund	Faculty Research and Travel Grant	$1,000
Hickman, D.	NSU Faculty Research Fund	Faculty Research and Travel Grant	$1,000
TOTAL			

Analysis:

During the past three years, the number of NSU employees receiving grants from external agencies has declined; it should be noted, however, that the College of Nursing and School of Allied Health has had an increase of funding from external agencies, including a generous $3,000,000 from Willis Knighton to assist in developing a DNP-CRNA program. For the baseline year, 37 administrators, faculty, or staff received external grants; 32 were funded in 2017-2018; and 30 in 2018-2019. Funds received increased from 2016-2017 to 2017-2018 (~$4,685,348 to ~$6,006,857), and decreased from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019 (~$6,006,857 to $4,475,338).

Decision:

Due to the decline in the number of NSU grant recipients and the fact of fewer funds awarded to NSU from external agencies, it is recommended for Northwestern to dedicate at least one full-time person to grant writing or to provide release time for one faculty member in each College for discipline specific grant writing. It is unlikely that Northwestern will reach its target of 45 grant recipients in 2021 without human resources to support this measure.

Responsibility: Office of Sponsored Programs, Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors/Department Heads, and Faculty.

Metric:
3. **Number of faculty attending department or college-sponsored workshops focusing on innovative instruction in content or pedagogy.**

Findings:

There were **893** faculty who attended sessions in their department, school, or college focusing on innovative instruction in content or pedagogy. Total attendance included 329 faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences, 60 in the College of Business and Technology, 110 in the College of Education and Human Development, 300 in the College of Nursing and School of Allied Health, and 94 in Watson Library.

A sample of the professional activities includes:

- Twelve math faculty participated in a Pearson My Math Lab Workshop at the beginning of the fall 2018 semester.

- Approximately 130 music faculty participated in three events during the spring 2019 semester: Saxophone Festival, Double Reed Day, and Day of Percussion.

- New media faculty reviewed existing and new features of McGraw-Hill Connect at the beginning of each semester; they participated in NSU Journalism Day (November 2018) and visited KTBS television station in Shreveport various times during the year. Students also participated in these career building activities.

- The Criminal Justice, History, and Social Sciences Department held WebEx training in the fall semester (10 faculty) and a spring advising workshop (24 faculty).

- Scholars' College faculty (*N*=13) held sessions on student learning outcomes and assessment of outcomes.

- A total of 11 theatre and dance faculty participated in the American College Dance Association Festival, the Southeastern Theatre Conference, the United States Institute for Theatre Technology, and/or the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, all events held during the spring 2019 semester.

- McGraw-Hill conducted a workshop, fall 2018, for 20 faculty in the Department of Psychology, and they held a Brown Bag Lecture Series each semester (20 faculty each session) on topics of Experiential Learning; Equine Therapy for Children and Adults with Disabilities; Disrupting the Cradle to Prison Pipeline for Louisiana Children, Youth, Families, and Communities; Understanding Families, Careers at Behavior Specialists of Louisiana; and Counseling in Correctional Facilities.

- The College of Education and Human Development held an Open Educational Resources Workshop (fall 2018), a Quality Matters Workshop (spring 2019), and an *Educators Rising Conference* for education and laboratory school faculty and prospective educators. PRAXIS Social Studies content workshops were also held two times during the spring 2019 semester with 30 participants each session.

- Six workshops were hosted by the College of Nursing: Quality Improvement: A Standard of Excellence (July and November 2018); Creating a Positive Patient Experience (November 2018); LGBT+ Advocacy Training (February 2019); Quality Matters (May 2019). One session was sponsored by the School of Allied Health, November 2018: Improving Patient Care and Professionalism in the Clinical Environment. Participants included 250 nursing faculty and 50 radiological faculty.

- The School of Business and Technology holds monthly lunch and learn events. One session focused on Cisco recording equipment used in Russell Hall classrooms. Usually 10-15 faculty attend each session.

- From October 2018 through April 2019, Watson Library held nine sessions pertaining to Human Library Collections, including establishing guidelines for a Watson Library Collection, sharing these guidelines with faculty representatives from NSU departments, visiting Texas A&M University to observe their collection, and following-up with NSUs Human Collection team. A total of 94 faculty participated.

Analysis:

The baseline for this measure in 2016-2017 was 582; however, wording for the measure changed in 2017-2018, resulting in lower faculty participation numbers (*N*=284). Originally, "the number of students and/or faculty…" was used; during 2017-2018 and 2018-2019, "the number of faculty…" was recorded to give greater attention to meeting the objective "supporting faculty…".

Nevertheless, the total number (*N*=893) of faculty participants for the year increased. It is uncertain as to the cause for the increase. This number represents an estimate (only) of faculty participation in department or college sponsored workshops and such workshops may not always focus on innovation or pedagogy.

Decision:

Because faculty learning and use of innovative practices in teaching a discipline are important, academic leaders will be encouraged to keep an accurate record of faculty headcount specific to meeting this measure (innovation in content or pedagogy) in 2019-2020. Metric three and four (objective five) overlap somewhat and should be differentiated or further clarified before the 2019-2020 year. The target for 2021 is revised to 900 faculty participants.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Deans, Department Heads/Directors, and Faculty.

Metric:

4. **Number of faculty/staff attending University, department and/or college-sponsored professional development workshops including lunch and learn.**

Findings:

In addition to innovative, discipline-specific professional development activities offered by colleges or departments (metric 3, objective 5), Northwestern provided other professional development opportunities during the year. A sampling of the sessions and participation numbers for each session are provided below.

- **Faculty Institute**, August 13, 2018. A University-wide event with approximately **225** participants, covering Institutional Effectiveness, SACSCOC, QEP, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Diversity Survey Results, Watson Library website revisions, and Incident and Accident Reporting.

- **QEP Conference**, August 14, 2018. Open to all QEP Coordinators; required for faculty applying for a QEP grant and revising their program's curriculum to include experiential learning. **30** participants.

- **New Faculty Orientation**, August 16, 2018. Required for all new faculty. Topics included: Human Resources & Payroll Policies and Procedures; Required Annual Trainings; Academic Resources; Student Conduct and Accommodations; and Academic Affairs Policy and Procedures. **100** participants.

- **Lunch and Learn**, September 19; October 18; and November 14, 2018. The presenters were Ms. Abbie Landry and Dr. Patricia Brown; Dr. Beth Prejean and Dr. Eddie Horton; and Dr. Malenda McLaren. **35** participants.

- **NSUs Textbook Cost Reduction Forums**, with Follett Regional Manager, October 8, 2018; November 5, 2018. The purpose was to promote an awareness of current costs by discipline and a reduction in costs to NSU students, effective 2019-20. **60** participants.

- **Interfolio Weekly Sessions**, with NSUs Team and Interfolio Project Manager. Fifteen sessions were held during spring 2019. **90** participants.

- **IRB Training**, February 6, 2019. Required for all faculty mentoring undergraduate or graduate students or conducting their own research during spring or summer 2019. **50** participants.

- **Louisiana Higher Education Commissioner Kim Hunter-Reed**, January 25, 2019. **50** participants.

- **ULS Chief Financial Officer Edwin Litolff**, March 6, 2019. **50** participants.

- **Technology and Innovation Professional Development Sessions** offered to faculty and staff (small groups and individual classes); taught by staff in the Office of Technology, Innovation, and Economic Development. **170** participants.

- **Research Day**, April 25, 2019. Faculty and students reported their research findings in art posters (N=1 faculty) and oral presentations (N=16 faculty). Fifty-eight faculty served as faculty mentors to oral student presentations; 35 faculty served as faculty mentors to students' poster presentations; and one faculty member served as a faculty mentor to 10 students in art. **130** participants.

Analysis:

A total of **990** faculty and staff participated in professional development sessions sponsored by the Provost/VPAA and Dean of Graduate Studies, the Vice President of Technology, Innovation, and Economic Development, or the President. The sessions support University efforts, such as accreditation, research, e-learning, or student recruitment. Keeping faculty current on higher education and K-12 topics is essential for academic program growth. Showcasing faculty expertise is also helpful for student recruitment and retention and maintaining community relations.

Trend analysis for this metric reveals the following: During 2016-2017, 730 faculty (full-time; part-time) and staff participated in University and/or college, department, or school professional development workshops. Participation rates increased 96% (N = 1,434) in in 2017-2018, but a slight decline has been noted for the 2018-2019 year (N = 990). However, the total number of faculty participating in metrics three and four was 1,883.

Rewording metrics three and four (objective five) occurred in 2017-2018 and may have accounted for the 96% increase. However, it remains challenging to keep an accurate headcount of faculty participation in professional development activities. There must be a clear distinction and better understanding of what is being measured in both the third and fourth metrics of objective five.

Decision:

Professional development opportunities will continue to be a priority for Northwestern. The 2021 target for this metric will remain at 1,600 participants. It is recommended that metrics three and four (objective five) be revisited by the responsible parties and clarification offered, if appropriate, before the 2019-2020 year begins.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Department Heads, and Faculty.

Metric:
5. Number of departments or sites acquiring new classroom or laboratory technologies.

Findings:
Twenty-seven campus sites acquired new classroom or laboratory technologies (Table 16).

Analysis:

In 2019-2020, the number of departments or sites acquiring new or upgraded classroom or laboratory technologies decreased. This was likely due to strategic budget enhancement grants not being awarded,

and freezes on other funding sources due to COVID-19. In 2018-2019 the number of departments or sites acquiring new or upgraded classroom or laboratory technologies increased from 17 units (2017-2018) to 38 units (2018-2019), and from 27 (2016-2017) to 38 (2018-2019). Data collected for this measure was obtained from department heads/directors, deans, and the student technology coordinator.

Decision:

Computer and classroom laboratories located in on- and off-campus instructional sites will receive upgrades on an annual basis, typically every three years with funding provided by student technology fees. The Louisiana Board of Regents provides a cycle of funding for most academic disciplines. Although the application is competitive, Northwestern faculty have been successful in receiving funds to support technology use in the classroom. Private donations, including endowed professorships, also contributed to classroom upgrades this year. A systematic University-wide process (Jump Start) was established in 2018-2019 and will provide computer upgrades for faculty on a rotational basis. Our target is adjusted by 10% or 42 departments or units by the year 2021.

Responsibility: Office of Information Technology Systems, Office of Sponsored Programs, Vice Presidents, Deans, and Directors/Department Heads.

Table 16

New Technologies Acquired in AC 2019-2020

Site Name/Location	Purpose
College of Arts and Sciences	
Biological and Physical Sciences	New Gas Chromatography Mass Spectrometry (GCMS)
Biological and Physical Sciences	LabQuest Equipment/Chemistry
Biological and Physical Sciences	Polarimeter/Organic Chemistry
Biological and Physical Sciences	Computer for A&P Lab/Biopac Software
Biological and Physical Sciences	Drones and TV Studio Equipment/Natural Science and Physics
Biological and Physical Sciences	Software updates for GIS computers (w/CJHSS)
Biological and Physical Sciences	Robotics Equipment
English, Foreign Languages, & Cultural Studies, 327, 329 & 331 Kyser hall	116 Chromebooks; four charging cabinets; three cell-phone charging stations
English, Foreign Languages, & Cultural Studies, 316-J Kyser hall	Purchased Content Creation
English, Foreign Languages, & Cultural Studies, Kyser hall	5 professional-level camcorders; 5 media storage cards for camcorders; podcast studio equipment and software
Mathematics, 401-G Kyser Hall	8 iPads and 8 Apple Pencils; Math software
CAPA: Fine and Graphic Arts; Sculpture Lab	Plastic recycling, Glowforge, Blacksmith Forge
CAPA: Music, Magale Recital Hall	Projector and video upgrades to livestreaming system
CAPA: New Media, Journalism, and Communication Arts; Kyser 400 and 404	Upgrade computers, software, and AV system
CAPA: Theatre/Dance	Computer Numerical Control Machine; Computerized Stage Turntable
CAPA: Theatre/Dance	Theatre History classroom technology upgrades
Scholars'/Morrison Hall 221 and 223	Microsystem with wireless keyboard and mouse
Scholars'/Morrison 115, and 146	New projector, webcam
College of Business and Technology	
HMT, Rooms 119 and 230	Instructor podium upgrades
HMT, Room 225	Wall mount TV, microcomputer
College of Education and Human Development	
HHP 113, 115, 117, 123	New projector upgrades for Smart Boards
HHP 119	Screen, projector, podium, computer
HHP 125 (Dance Studio)	Big screen TV and sound system
Social Work, Kyser 310	Upgrade to webEx video conferencing suites
College of Nursing and School of Allied Health	
Warrington/Rapides Radiology Labs monitors and Codec equipment	
Alexandria/Air Park Clinical Lab	
203 and 205 Distance Education Upgrades	
Other Units and Off-Campus Instructional Sites	

Metric:

6. Number of events or activities to recognize faculty for their contributions in teaching, research, or service.

Findings:

One hundred and ninety-nine events were documented for recognizing faculty and staff for their work in teaching, research, or service.

Analysis:

The University recognizes outstanding teachers of each College and one or two advisors of the year at its first fall semester workday, *Faculty Institute*, and followed by the University-wide luncheon. The

NSU News Bureau distributes a press release, which is printed by local newspapers and shared by social media platforms. This year, 128 press releases related to faculty teaching, research, and professional service were filed. The outstanding teachers of the year were also recognized at halftime for a home football game. For colleges hosting a reunion during Homecoming, such as Education and Business, the distinguished faculty member was presented to a different audience.

At the fall luncheon following Faculty Institute, faculty and staff are recognized for their years of service to the University-25, 30, 35, etc. Twenty-six service awards were given at the University Faculty/Staff Luncheon. Another way to recognize personnel who go beyond the call of duty is called Above and Beyond Awards. Approximately 20 staff members received one of these awards at the University luncheon, fall 2018.

During Northwestern's Research Day (April 25, 2019), faculty were selected for outstanding contributions in three areas: research, lifetime achievement, and Louisiana studies. The criteria for each award are published and nominations are presented to the Research Council for review. The outstanding Research Award, named to honor Dr. Mildred Hart Bailey, began in 1989; the Lifetime Achievement named for Dr. Jean D'Amato Thomas began in 2011; and the Louisiana Studies award, first given in 2012, honors Dr. Marietta LeBreton. The 2019 recipients for each respective award were Dr. Sarah McFarland, Dr. Massimo Bezoari, and Dr. Shane Rasmussen. An NSU Press Release followed the event and posted to social media.

The President and First Lady of NSU sponsored breakfast and luncheon events to honor faculty and staff for their contributions to NSU. The Maggios held 20 departmental luncheons and four birthday breakfast events during the year.

The following activities, hosted by a college, school, or department or a professional organization, represent a sample to honor faculty for their teaching, research, or service:

- Collier Hyams exhibit of research and artwork, NSU campus, September 20, 2018.

- Clyde Downs, Matt DeFord, and their students, Fine Arts Group Exhibition, New Mexico, September 10, 2018.

- Biology Ball, School of Biological and Physical Sciences, spring 2019; recognizing Distinguished Professor of the Year: Millard Mangrum; Excellence in Teaching Physical Sciences: Dr. Daniel Rivera; Excellence in Research Mentorship: Dr. Shreyashi Ganguly; Excellence in Teaching Biological Sciences: Dr. Allyson Spence; Excellence in Research Mentorship in Biological Sciences: Dr. Zeljko Radulovic.

- English, Foreign Language, and Cultural Studies Honors Convocation, April 2019: Recognized department advisor of the year (Dr. Rebecca Macijeski) and department 'shining star' recipients (Ms. Mariann Wilson and Mr. Daniel Gordy).

- Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development Honors' Ceremony, April 29, 2019.

- New Media Awards Day, May 1, 2019: All faculty and staff were recognized for their work with students.

- Patrice Moulton Book Signing, Kathmandu, Nepal, April 2019.

- Paula Furr Retirement Reception, May 3, 2019.

- Neeru Deep's service to Eta Mu Chapter of Phi Beta Delta and Ben D. Johnson Education Center as a member of the Board of Directors for each professional group, fall 2018 and spring 2019.

- College of Nursing and School of Allied Health:
  - Jaime Usie, Anna Morris, and Leah Ann Young completed DNP degrees, August and September 2018;
  - Pam Holcombe elected Shreveport District Nurses' Association President, August 2018;
  - Leah Pearce, Melissa Rennie, Tamara Baxter, Dana Clawson, Pamela Simmons, and Windy Jaep completed Certified Nurse Educators program, September 2018;
  - Leah Ann Young, Dana Clawson, and Pamela Simmons passed the NLN Certified Nurse Educators Exam, October 2018;
  - Pamela Simmons elected CCNE Board of Commissioners Vice Chair 2019;
  - Julie Gayle, 2019 Nurse of the Year; Patricia Akins 2019 Educator of the Year; Ann Deshotels, 2019 Above & Beyond, and Maxine Johnson, 2019 Distinguished Alumni of the Year; and
  - Connie Hale, Danita Potter, and Callie Roberts completed the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Certificate program, May 2019.
- Watson Library
  - Sharon Wolff earned certification by the Academy of Certified Archivist, August 2018 and
  - Mary Linn Wernet was honored by the St. Augustine Historical Society for her consistent dedicated service to this group, January 2019. She was also recognized for her assistance in preserving the history of Jefferson Highway at their 8th Annual Conference, April 2019. She was inducted into Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, April 2019.

During the baseline year, eight events or activities recognized faculty accomplishments. Twenty-one events were documented in 2017-2018; 199 in 2018-2019. Obviously, awareness and better record-keeping by academic and University leaders resulted in the number increase. This year, the number of press releases (N=128) by NSU News Bureau also contributed to the increase. From 2016 to 2019, the number of events or activities for recognizing NSU faculty and staff increased markedly (2,387%).

Decision:

Northwestern values its faculty and staff members and will continue the tradition of honoring faculty/staff for their excellence in teaching, research, and service to the University or to their profession. Our target is adjusted to 200 events or activities by 2021. NSU made good progress in meeting the revised target set in 2017-2018.

Responsibility: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Deans, Directors/Department Heads; and NSU News Bureau.

Comprehensive Summary

For AC 2019-2020, it is difficult to state "all academic excellence (AE) objectives were met." While we were on target to meet all objectives and exceed the metrics to support them, the onset of the pandemic and COVID-19 affected our ability to measure accurately, required quick changes that didn't always take into account the objectives and metrics associated with them, and skewed our data. Nonetheless, metric results to support the identified objectives remained consistent or exceeded, in most cases, the gains made last year. Noteworthy accomplishments included impactful technology upgrades in many classrooms and departments, advantageous use of spend down allocations in Endowed Professorships and Chairs that resulted in new or upgraded technologies used for student instruction and responsiveness to current students, and securing a private partnership to study and propose a BSN-DNP-NA program in the College of Nursing and School of Allied Health. While COVID-19 impacted faculty and staff ability to utilize internal funding opportunities awarded through the Faculty

Research Support Fund, as well as travel and presentation at conferences, data indicated that we were on par to stay consistent or exceed prior AC numbers. While the response rate of students for evaluating course and instructor effectiveness declined, satisfaction remained consistent or improved; the average class size in University core courses remained consistent; and the course steward program continued to develop and reinforce efforts to develop consistency of content and delivery across all sections.

While the course steward metric was not assessed this year, it is important to note that criteria for this metric changed fall 2018, producing different results in comparison to 2017-2018. During 2018-19, University course stewards were identified for core courses with multiple sections and 400+ students. Eleven courses met this criterion, and 10 of the 11 designated a steward for course oversight. For AC 2019-2020, 100% of multi-section core courses had the oversight of a course steward. This metric has direct effects on course evaluations and student satisfaction, and we must prioritize this again for AC 2020-2021 to maintain the 2021 target of 100% multi-section core courses. It is likely that more course stewards must be appointed to assist in the evolving work and responsibilities of a course steward.

An area of concern in the AE focus area pertains to how COVID-19 will affect data collection in support of objectives and metrics for AC 2020-2021. Many conferences have already cancelled in-person for next year; many are exploring virtual conferences. We will need to reflect this in our reporting next year and may need to evaluate how we look at data in support of our Academic Mission.

The AE focus area will strive to address the following concerns during the 2019-2020 year: Dedicate time to data analysis provided in this year's report for the purpose of AE improvement, including clarification of what to measure and how to efficiently and accurately count faculty/staff participation; provide consistent oversight by course stewards of all University core courses with multiple sections and large enrollment; seek ways to engage our faculty and staff in professional development opportunities, and seek ways for growing graduate school enrollment and graduate student opportunities in research/scholarship.

Research within its mission

The *Research Council* enables, supports, enhances, recognizes, and promotes research activities by undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and staff across all academic units of the University. The Council advises the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) and the Provost on guiding principles and policies for the OSP, as well as on policies and guidelines for administering competitive grant programs, Research Day, research awards, participation in undergraduate research conferences, and other research activities.

Within the University's mission, research plays multiple roles. *Undergraduate Research* is a pedagogical tool to increase understanding of theory through practice and to prepare students for success in graduate and professional programs, business, and other career paths. As stated in the Graduate School's General *Guidelines for Preparing Your Final Research Document at Northwestern State University*, *Graduate Research* "provides graduate students an opportunity to design and implement research, explore historical and current trends, create new designs and products, and engage in problem-solving" as a component of their professional training. Both undergraduate and graduate research activities represent best practices in higher education. The research activities of *Faculty and Staff* contribute to the generation of new knowledge in their disciplines and to innovation, best practices, and problem-solving in applications ranging from Northwestern's traditional strengths in education and nursing to newer areas such as computer information system and engineering technology. Collectively, research activities at

Northwestern contribute to a more capable workforce, service to the community and industry, innovation in the classroom, and an increase in scholarly knowledge. Thus, it is important to foster a culture of scholarship at all levels (faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students).

AY 2019-2020 Key Findings (in comparison to AC 2018-2019):

- 299 undergraduate and graduate capstone research projects were completed (up 12%).
- 55 faculty members directed capstone research projects to completion (up 4%).
- 13 presentations by graduate students at 5 scholarly conferences.
- 11 presentations by 14 undergraduates at 5 conferences (down 74%). Spring conferences, including the University of Louisiana System Academic Summit, were cancelled due to COVID-19.
- 14 presentations were submitted by 42 graduate students for Research Day (down 47%). Research Day was cancelled due to COVID-19 prior to the submission deadline.
- 10 presentations were submitted by 26 undergraduate students for Research Day (down 77%). Research Day was cancelled due to COVID-19 prior to the submission deadline.
- 4 students published in peer-reviewed journals papers based on their senior thesis research.

Plan of Action Moving Forward.

- Develop a new system using Interfolio to capture faculty presentations and publications. Not all faculty have adopted the system yet.
- Launch Undergraduate Research Fellows and Undergraduate Research Mentors programs to better capture student presentations and publications and faculty mentoring efforts.
- Secure funding for supplies and equipment necessary to produce research posters for conference and Research Day presentations for students and faculty.
- Prepare for a virtual version of Research Day, in case it is needed.

General Education Competencies

In January 2018, under the direction of the Provost, the General Education Committee completed a deliberate and systematic 18-month review of the University Core Curriculum to ensure its alignment with policy 2.16 Statewide General Education Requirements, Louisiana Board of Regents. As a result, the University modified its General Education Core Curriculum, ensuring the courses selected were introductory, survey, or appreciation courses and not tied to a specific degree program. The current broad-based core curriculum leverages six key competencies central to the University's mission and is consistent with the Louisiana Board of Regents' requirements for general education. The selection of courses encompasses the knowledge and abilities that Northwestern believes are essential to college graduates. The requirements are designed to improve students' writing and speaking skills; provide students with mathematical skills at the level of college algebra and above; strengthen students' understanding of biological, physical, social, and behavioral sciences; and develop an appreciation and knowledge of the arts and humanities. These courses provide the breadth of a student's educational program while the degree program requirements provide the depth of education.

The goal of the core curriculum is for undergraduate students, depending on their respective degree programs, to obtain appropriate learning outcomes for the general education competencies. The effort in Fall 2018 was to validate the tool/method of assessment while cataloging the number of students being tested. In some cases, there was no formal assessment completed other than as mentioned. In

Spring 2019, all core competencies conducted a full assessment of the student learning outcomes. The only exception was in Behavioral and Social Sciences, where the data for each measure was not specified/reported. Nonetheless, the data collected did reflect whether the student met or failed to meet the student learning outcome.

AC 2019-2020 is the first complete (fall/spring) iteration of assessing the University core competencies. Each core competency assessment is located on the University Institutional Effectiveness website under Assessment Cycle Reports, AY 2019-2020, General Education Core Competencies.

The 2019-2020 Core Competency assessment results: ***16,703 student assessments were completed, a 43% increase*** *over the 9,497 assessments in AC 2018-2019*. (Some courses have more than one assessment and some students may have been assessed in more than one course.) Eleven of the twelve or 92% of the Student Learning Outcomes were met for the core competencies as compared to 67% last year. Only the Natural Science Competency did not reach the desired target. There are 31 measures this year; Fine Arts added four additional measures as compared to last year's total of 27. This year 21 of the 31 or 68% of the measures remained positive with three improving. A total of 10 measures (32%) were not met this year. The findings for each competency are provided below.

English. To demonstrate writing as a purpose-driven process of communication within specific contexts. **Findings**: Target met. *1,749 students were assessed, 44% increase over AC 2018-2019.*

> **SLO 1.** Students will write a variety of types of texts for diverse audiences, purposes, and contexts.
>
> > **Measure 1.1. Target 75%** of student portfolios assessed from ENGL 1010 in the fall semester will score 2 (acceptable) or higher on Rubric 1.1.
> >
> > **Findings**: Target was met with 88.46% (920/1040) of students evaluated scoring 2 or higher on the assessment, showing an 11% improvement over AC 2018-2019.
> >
> > **Measure 1.2. Target: 75%** of student portfolio letters assessed from ENGL 1010 in the fall semester will score 2 (acceptable) or higher on Rubric 1.2.
> >
> > **Findings**: Target was met with 87% (900/1040) of students evaluated scoring 2 or higher on the evaluation, 10 percentage points higher than AC 2018-2019.
>
> **SLO 2.** Students will perform writing as a process of planning, researching, prewriting, drafting, evaluating, and revising to develop and strengthen their compositions.
>
> > **Measure 2.1. Target: 75%** of student portfolios assessed from ENGL 1020 in the spring semester will score 2 (acceptable) or higher on Rubric 2.1.
> >
> > **Findings**: Target was met with 88% (620/707) of students evaluated scoring 2 or higher on the rubric.
> >
> > **Measure 2.2. Target: 75%** of student portfolio letters assessed from ENGL 1020 in the spring semester will score 2 (acceptable) or higher on Rubric 2.2.

Findings: Target was met with 85% (604/707) of students evaluated, scoring 2 or higher on the assessment, showing a 2% improvement over the previous year.

Mathematics/Analytical Reasoning. To apply mathematical and analytical reasoning skills. *1,510 assessments completed. Ten additional students assessed in AC 20919-2020 than in AC 2018-2019.*

Course Name - Sequence	Methodology	Target	Term
Math 1020 & 1060	Quiz	70%	Fall and Spring
Math 1035 & 1060	Quiz	70%	Fall and Spring
Math 1020 & 1090	Quiz	70%	Fall and Spring
Math 1020 & 2010	Quiz	70%	Fall and Spring
Math 1810	Quiz	70%	Fall and Spring
Math 2100 & 2110	Quiz	70%	Fall and Spring

SLO 1 Students will apply mathematics/analytical reasoning skills by translating a word problem into an appropriate mathematical model.

Measure 1.1. Target: 70% of students will attain a score of 2 (Acceptable) on the questions that ask the student to pick an appropriate mathematical model for a problem.

Finding. 1510 students were assessed and 930 (61.5%) met the goal. Target not met.
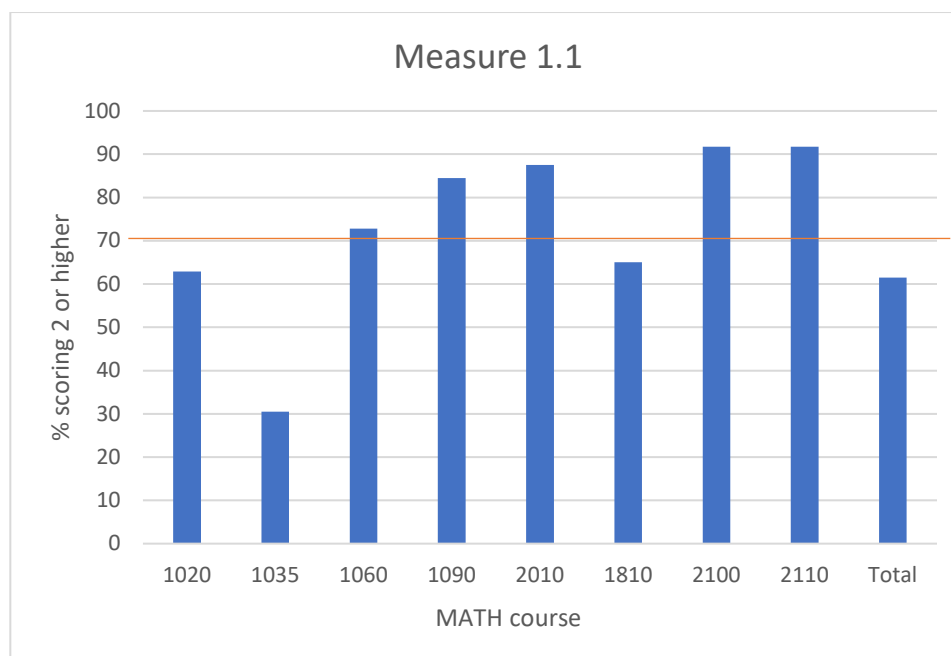
Measure 1.2. Target: 70% of students will attain a score of 2 (Acceptable) on questions that ask the student to interpret the solution to a mathematical model as an answer to a practical problem.

Finding. 1510 students were assessed. 1197 (79.3%) met the goal. Target met.

Measure 1.2

SLO 2 Students will demonstrate the ability to solve a mathematical problem through algebraic, graphical/geometrical, or numerical/statistical methods as appropriate.
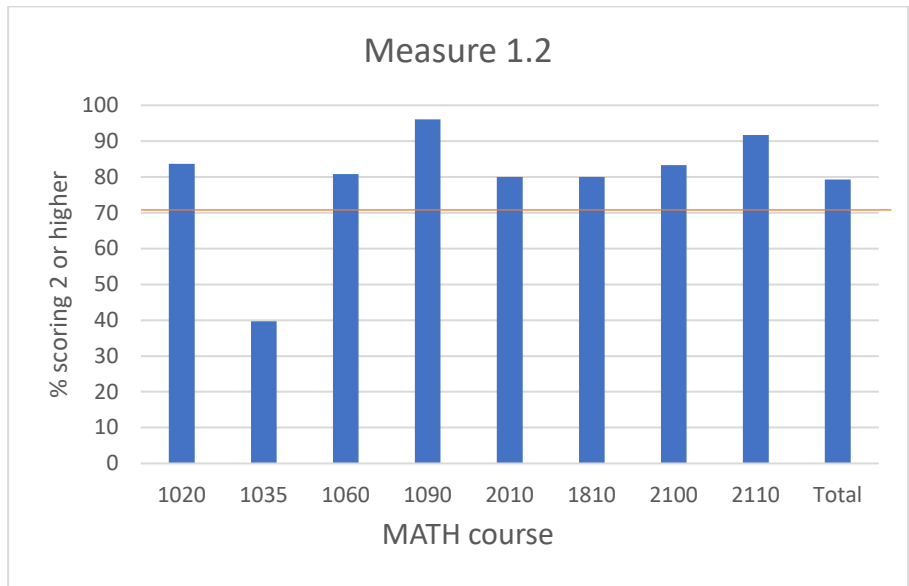
> **Measure 2.1 Target: 70%** of students will attain a score of 2 (Acceptable) on the questions that ask a student to solve a problem stated in mathematical symbology.

> **Finding**. 1510 students were assessed. 1074 (71.1%) met the goal. Target met.
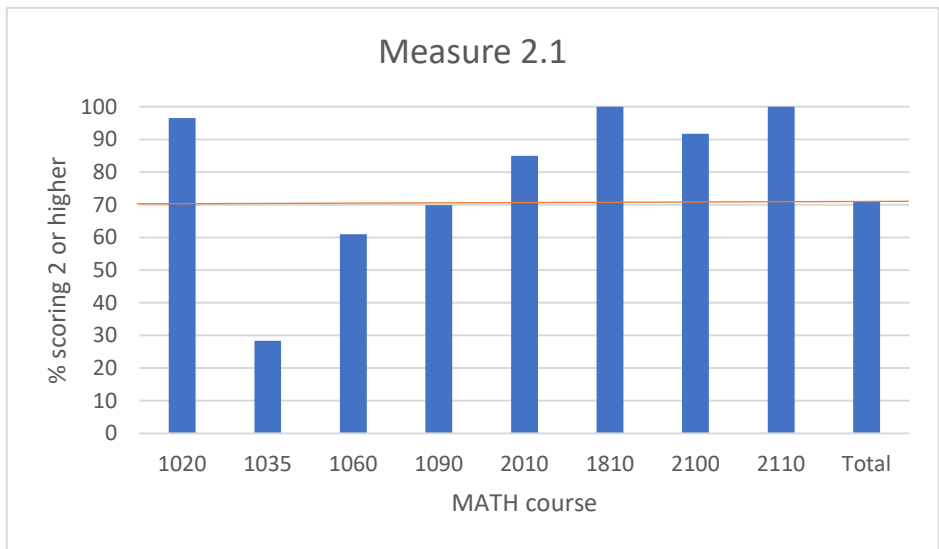
Measure 2.1

> **Measure 2.2. Target: 70%** of students will attain a score of 2 (Acceptable) on the questions that ask a student to solve a word problem.

> **Finding.** 1510 students were assessed; 952 (63.0%) met the goal. Target not met.

Measure 2.2

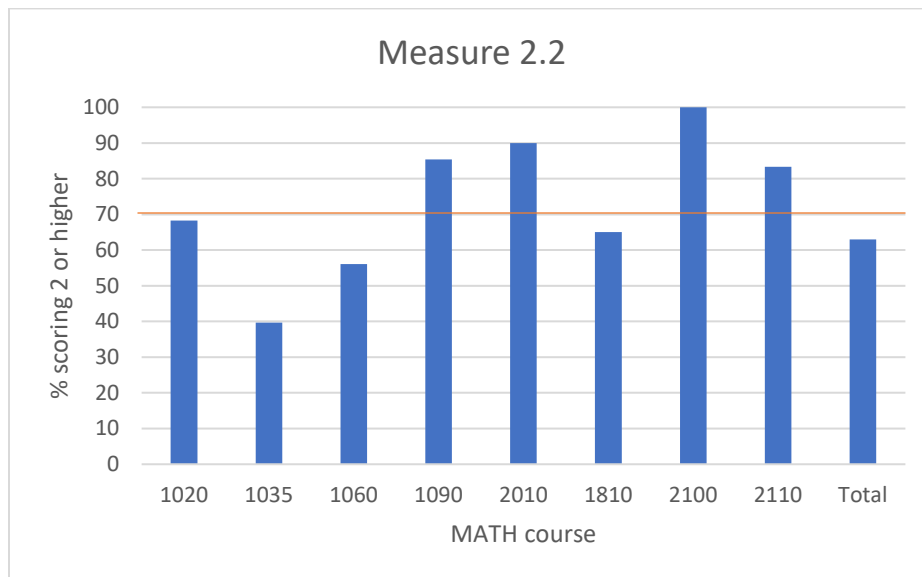**Natural Sciences.** To understand the universe through the study of life and physical sciences. *751 total students assessed a 51% decrease from AC 2018-2019.* **Findings**: Target not met.

> **SLO 1.** Students will identify the parts of the scientific method and design scientifically-sound experiments*.*
>
> **Measure 1.1. Target, 80%** of students will identify the parts of the scientific method. Throughout the indicated courses, students will learn about the parts of the scientific method including observations, hypotheses, and the various forms of experimental variables. Each student is required to pass a quiz covering these concepts. The target is to have 80% of students attain a quiz grade of ≥ 70%.
>
> **Finding.** 751 Students assessed (590 in Fall 2019 and 161 in Spring 2019). Target Not Met.

Course Name	Methodology	quiz grade ≥70%.	Term
BIOL 1010	Quiz	69.31% (201/290)	Fall and Spring
BIOL2250	Quiz	60.06% (182/303)	Fall and Spring
SCI1020	Quiz	66.46% (105/158)	Fall and Spring
Total		64.98% (488/751)	

> **Measure 1.2. Target, 80%** of students will demonstrate the ability to recognize scientifically-sound experiments. Throughout the indicated courses, students will learn how to use their knowledge of the parts of the scientific method to design scientifically-sound experiments. This will require the ability to identify relevant dependent and independent variables and understand how to use them to design appropriate experiments to test a given hypothesis. Each student is required to pass a quiz covering these concepts. The target is to have 80% of students attain a quiz grade ≥ 70%.
>
> **Finding.** 751 students assessed (590 in Fall 2019 and 161 in Spring 2019). Target Not Met.

Course Name	Methodology	quiz grade ≥70%.	Term
BIOL 1010	Quiz	56.55% (164/290)	Fall and Spring
BIOL2250	Quiz	49.49% (148/299)	Fall and Spring
SCI1020	Quiz	53.80% (85/158)	Fall and Spring
Total		50.18% (397/747)	

SLO 2. Students will analyze scientific data to draw conclusions about the natural and physical world

Measure 2.1. Target, 80% of students will demonstrate their ability to make experimental predictions. Throughout the indicated courses, students will learn how to use their knowledge of the scientific method and experimental design to make predictions of experimental results. This will require the ability to interpret experimental design to use those interpretations to predict the results of the executed experiments. Each student is required to pass a quiz covering these concepts. The target is to have 70% of students attain a quiz grade ≥ 70%.

Finding. 751 students assessed (590 in Fall 2019 and 161 in Spring 2019). Target Not Met.

Course Name	Methodology	quiz grade ≥70%.	Term
BIOL 1010	Quiz	45.86% (133/290)	Fall and Spring
BIOL 2250	Quiz	49.49% (148/299)	Fall and Spring
SCI 1020	Quiz	37.97% (60/158)	Fall and Spring
Total		39.41% (296/751)	

Measure 2.2. Target, 80% of students will analyze scientific data to draw conclusions about the natural and physical world. Throughout the indicated courses, students will learn how to use their knowledge of the scientific method and experimental design to analyze scientific data and to make conclusions based on that data analysis. This will require the ability to interpret scientific data presented in verbal, tabular, or graphic form then use those interpretations to provide scientific explanations for those results. Each student is required to pass a quiz covering these concepts. The target is to have 80% of students attain a quiz grade ≥ 70%.
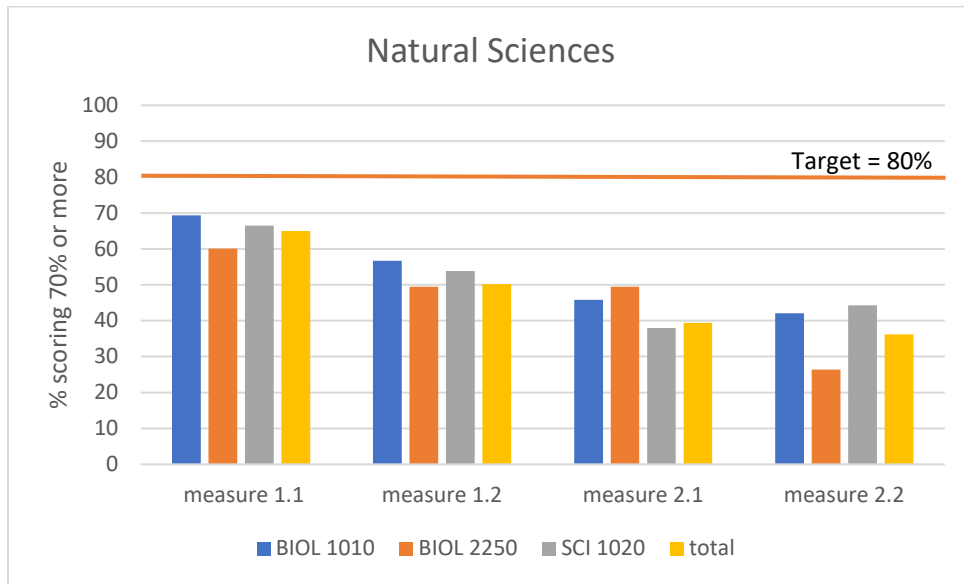
Finding. Overall, 751 students assessed (590 in Fall 2019 and 161 in Spring 2019). Target Not Met.

Course Name	Methodology	quiz grade ≥70%.	Term
BIOL 1010	Quiz	42.07% (122/290)	Fall and Spring
BIOL 2250	Quiz	26.40% (80/303)	Fall and Spring
SCI 1020	Quiz	44.30% (70/158)	Fall and Spring
Total		36.21% (272/751)	

Natural Sciences

Y-axis: % scoring 70% or more (0 to 100)

X-axis categories: measure 1.1, measure 1.2, measure 2.1, measure 2.2

Target = 80%

Legend: BIOL 1010, BIOL 2250, SCI 1020, total

Humanities. To understand the diversity of human knowledge and experience across cultures as examined through the humanities. *3,385 total students assessed. 35% increase over the 2,205 in AC 2018-2019.*

Course Name	Methodology	SLO/Measure	Target %	Term	# Assessed
BUAD 2200	Paper/Pres.	1.7	95%	2019-20	229
COMM 1010	Presentation	1.5, 1.6	88%	2019-20	1,268
COMM 2500	Project/Paper	1.5, 1.6	86%	2019-20	152
ENGL 2070	Writing Assign.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4	69%	2019-20	12
ENGL 2110	Writing Assign.	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4	89%	2019-20	1,084
HIST 1010	Post Class Survey	2.1	85%	2019-20	138
HIST 1020	Post Class Survey	2.1	83%	2019-20	74
HIST 2010	Post Class Survey	2.1	84%	2019-20	202
HIST 2020	Post Class Survey	2.1	76%	2019-20	40
PHIL 1010	Writing Assign.	2.2	84%	2019-20	86

SLO 1. Students will communicate an understanding of the diversity of human experience, including issues such as nationality, ethnicity, race, language, gender, sexuality, exceptionalities, religion, and culture. This SLO was assessed by at least one measure in 2,745 students.

Measure 1.1. Target 70%. One written assignment of at least 500 words from all ENGL 2110 and 2070 students will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized Assessment Rubric for ENGL 2070/2110. The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic awareness and understanding of cultural differences (behaviors, expressions, etc.). At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (Competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding: 1,096 students assessed. Target Met.

Course Name	Methodology	% scoring 3 or higher	Term
ENGL 2070	Writing Assignment	85%	Fall, Spring
ENGL 2110	Writing Assignment	89%	Fall, Spring

Measure 1.2. Target 70%. One written assignment of at least 500 words from all ENGL 2110 and 2070 students taught will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized Assessment Rubric for ENGL 2070/2110 (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic knowledge of social, literary, and historical contexts. At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (Competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding 1,096 students assessed. Target Met.

Course Name	Methodology	% scoring 3 or higher	Term
ENGL 2070	Writing Assignment	73%	Fall, Spring
ENGL 2110	Writing Assignment	89%	Fall, Spring

Measure 1.3. Target 70%. One written assignment of at least 500 words from all ENGL 2110 and 2070 students taught will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members, using the standardized Assessment Rubric for ENGL 2070/2110 (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine students' ability to analyze literary material and show understanding of diversity through that literary analysis. At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (Competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding. 1,096 students assessed. English 2070: Target Not Met, English 2110: Target Met.

Course Name	Methodology	% scoring 3 or higher	Term
ENGL 2070	Writing Assignment	50%	Fall, Spring
ENGL 2110	Writing Assignment	86%	Fall, Spring

Measure 1.4. Target 70%. One written assignment of at least 500 words from all ENGL 2110 and 2070 students will be evaluated by a faculty panel, using the standardized Assessment Rubric for ENGL 2070/2110 (attached). The writing will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic understanding of the relationships between identities and writing. At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (Competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding. 1,084 students assessed. Target Met.

Course Name	Methodology	% scoring 3 or higher	Term
ENGL 2070	Writing Assignment	N/A	Fall, Spring
ENGL 2110	Writing Assignment	90.6%	Fall, Spring

Measure 1.5. Target 70%. Students will demonstrate competence in researching and delivering an effective oral persuasive presentation designed for diverse audiences and contexts. At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (Competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding 1,420 students assessed. Target Met.

Course Name	Methodology	% scoring 3 or higher	Term
COMM 1010	Persuasive Presentation; Informative Culture Presentation	88.3%	Fall, Spring
COMM 2500	Culture Project Presentation	89.8%	Fall, Spring

Measure 1.6. Target 70%. Students will recognize and analyze how verbal and nonverbal communication styles vary across cultures and affect the way people communicate by completing a Culture Project and Presentation. At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (Competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding 1,420 students assessed. Target Met.

Course Name	Methodology	% scoring 3 or higher	Term
COMM 1010	Persuasive Presentation; Informative Culture Presentation	88.6%	Fall, Spring
COMM 2500	Culture Project Research Paper	82.3%	Fall, Spring

Measure 1.7. Target 70%. On an annual basis, one written assignment and one individual presentation of the written assignment from all BUAD 2200 (Business Communications) students taught that year will be evaluated by a panel of faculty members. The writing and oral presentation will be evaluated to determine if students can demonstrate a basic awareness and understanding of cultural differences (socialized norms, politics, religion, economic values etc.). At least 70% of the students sampled will score a 70% or higher on the evaluation.

Finding. 2,745 students assessed, with 95% scoring 70% or higher. Target Met.

SLO 2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of how various political, economic, social, and cultural movements emerge, evolve, and influence human thought and experience over time. This SLO was assessed by at least one measure in 640 students.

Measure 2.1. Target 70%. Students will demonstrate their understanding of political, economic, social, and cultural movements. Comprehension of how human thought and historical concepts emerge over time will be evaluated in a post-class survey, in each of the four core classes (HIST 1010, 1020, 2010, and 2020). At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (Competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding. 554 students assessed. Target Met.

Course Name	Methodology	% scoring 3 or higher	Term
HIST 1010	Post-class Survey	85%	Fall
HIST 1020	Post-class Survey	83%	Fall
HIST 2010	Post-class Survey	84%	Spring
HIST 2020	Post-class Survey	76%	Spring

Measure 2.2. Target 70%. The specific assessment is to be chosen by the instructor of each section of PHIL 1010, consisting of a written assignment of at least 400 words integrated into some part of the course. The writing can be obtained in several ways: as a Discussion Forum posting, as an essay question on an exam, a journal entry, or something similar. At least 70% of students sampled will score a 3 (competency) or higher on the evaluation.

Finding: 86 students assessed, with 84% scoring 3 or higher. Target Met.

<u>Social/Behavioral Sciences.</u> To demonstrate an understanding of human behavior and the relationship between individuals and their societies. 7,438 *total students assessed a 80% increase from AC 2018-2019.*

SLO 1. Students will develop the skills to think critically, analyze, and discuss geographical, political, economic, and cultural variances in today's global environment.

Measure 1.1. Target 70%. Number students will demonstrate their critical thinking skills through the development of a research paper, project, presentation, or examination, scoring a minimum of 70% on the assessment rubric.

Finding: 76% of students, or 2,163 out of 2,832, scored 70% or higher. Target Met.

Category	Course Name	Methodology	% scoring 70%or higher	Term
Behavioral Science	EPSY 2020	Pretest/Post-test	75%	Fall/Spring
	PSYC 1010	Pretest/Post-test	68%	Spring
	PSYC 2050	Pretest/Post-test	26%	Fall
	SOC 1010	Pretest/Post-test	95%	Fall/Spring
Social Science	ANTH 1510	Exam 4	73%	Fall
	ANTH 2020	Pretest/Post-test	93%	Spring
	ECON 2000	Pretest/Post-test	67%	Fall/Spring
	GEOG 1010	Pretest/Post-test	78%	Fall
	GEOG 1020	Pretest/Post-test	97%	Spring
	PSCI 2010	Exams 3 and 4	90%	Fall/Spring

Measure 1.2. Target 70%. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the concept of culture and its importance through the development of a research paper, project, presentation, or examination, scoring a minimum 70% on the assessment rubric.

Finding: 67% of students, or 1,575 out of 2,358, scored 70% or higher. Target Not Met.

Category	Course Name	Methodology	% scoring 70%or higher	Term
Behavioral Science	EPSY 2020	Pretest/Post-test	75%	Fall/Spring
	PSYC 1010	Pretest/Post-test	20%	Spring
	PSYC 2050	Pretest/Post-test	22%	Fall
	SOC 1010	Pretest/Post-test	92%	Fall/Spring
Social Science	ANTH 1510	Exam 1	61%	Fall
	ANTH 2020	Pretest/Post-test	93%	Spring
	ECON 2000	Pretest/Post-test	67%	Fall/Spring
	GEOG 1010	Pretest/Post-test	N/A	Fall
	GEOG 1020	Pretest/Post-test	N/A	Spring
	PSCI 2010	Exams 3 and 4	90%	Fall/Spring

SLO 2. SLO 2 applies to the Behavioral Science Core courses. Students will demonstrate their understanding of various sources of human behavior and socialization thereby developing the skills necessary to navigate professional and personal landscapes.

Measure 2.1. Target 70%. Students will demonstrate their understanding of various sources of human behavior and its impact on group and individual interactions through

the development of a research paper, project, presentation, or examination, scoring a minimum 70% on the assessment rubric.

Finding: 64% of students, or 717 out of 1,124, scored 70% or higher. Target Not Met.

Category	Course Name	Methodology	% scoring 70%or higher	Term
Behavioral Science	EPSY 2020	Pretest/Post-test	82%	Fall/Spring
	PSYC 1010	Pretest/Post-test	52%	Spring
	PSYC 2050	Pretest/Post-test	35%	Fall
	SOC 1010	Pretest/Post-test	72%	Fall/Spring

Measure 2.2. Target 70%. Number assessed 1,124. Student will demonstrate their understanding of the socialization process and traditional and contemporary theoretical schools of thought through the development of a research paper, project, presentation, or examination, scoring a minimum 70% on the assessment rubric.

Finding: 88% of students, or 992 out of 1,124, scored 70% or higher. Target Met

Category	Course Name	Methodology	% scoring 70%or higher	Term
Behavioral Science	EPSY 2020	Pretest/Post-test	82%	Fall/Spring
	PSYC 1010	Pretest/Post-test	96%	Spring
	PSYC 2050	Pretest/Post-test	70%	Fall
	SOC 1010	Pretest/Post-test	95%	Fall/Spring

Fine Arts. To explore purposes and processes in the visual and performing arts and the ways in which fine arts conceive and express the human experience. *1,761 total students assessed.*

SLO 1. Students identify genres, artists, works, techniques, and trends within the arts

Measure 1.1. Target 30% growth, 80% participation. The student will recognize important terminology used in describing the arts, important individual works of art, famous composers, playwrights, artists, choreographers, and performers, and identify important historical periods and trends in the arts. **Target:** 30% growth between the two tests with at least 80% of the students enrolled taking the exam. 40% growth is ideal. Students take two online tests to partly assess their understanding of basic terminology, important artists, and critical moments in the history of art.

Finding. Target Partially Met. Target met for growth percentage and Pre-test Participation. Target not met in Post-test participation.

Course Name	Methodology	% participating
FA 1040	Pre- and Post-Test	Pretest: 88% - 1659/1870 student participation*
		Post-test: 74% - 1398/1870 student participation
FA 1040	Participation Count	74% Participation - 1398/1870

Measure 1.2. Target 30% growth, 80% participation. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the arts in European culture as well as the arts and culture of other countries. Students take two online tests to partly assess their understanding of European and non-European cultural trends and important examples and people in the artistic community.

Finding: Target Partially Met. Target met for growth percentage and Pre-test Participation. Target not met in Post-test participation.

Course Name	Methodology	% participating
FA 1040	Pre- and Post-Test	Pretest: 1659/1870 student participation Post-test: 1398/1870 student participation*
FA 1040	Participation Count	36% Participation - 1140/1761 student participation

SLO 2. Students will examine the arts through event attendance and reflection.

Measure 2.1. will attend, review, and analyze a music event using Standard American English with 70% student participation. Performance Critiques. By the end of each of the fall and spring semesters, the student will have completed the music performance critique, which is a reflection paper based on their participation as a member of the audience for a musical performance.

Finding; 75% - 1398/1870 students completed the assignment during the 2019-2020 AY, with 288 of those total students being dual enrollment students. Target Met.

Measure 2.2. **Target 70%** of students will attend, review, and analyze a theater event using Standard American English with 70% student participation. Performance Critiques. By the end of each of the fall and spring semesters, the student will have completed the theater performance critique, which is a reflection paper based on their participation as a member of the audience for a theatrical performance.

Finding: 71% - 1330/1870 students completed the assignment during AY 2019-2020, with 288 of those total students being dual enrollment students. Target Met.

Measure 2.3. Target 70% of students will attend, review, and analyze an art gallery using Standard American English with 70% student participation. Performance Critiques: By the end of each of the fall and spring semesters, the student will have completed the visual art performance critique, which is a reflection paper based on going to an art gallery.

Finding. 72% - 1349/1870 students completed the assignment during the 2019-2020 AY, with 288 of those total students being dual enrollment students. Target Met.

Measure 2.4. **Target 70%** of students will attend, review, and analyze a dance event using Standard American English with 70% student participation. Performance Critiques. By the end of each of the fall and spring semesters, the student will have completed the dance performance critique, which is a reflection paper based on their participation as a member of the audience for a live dance performance or viewing of a pre-approved list of dance films.

Finding. 75% - 1398/1870 students completed the assignment during the 2019-2020 AY, with 288 of those total students being dual enrollment students. Target Met.

Plan of Action Moving Forward. Each core competency will implement strategies for improvement ensuring standardization in the application of the measures to the variety of courses applicable. Each competency will deliberately integrate dual enrollment students into the assessment process.

"*Learning for Life: Experience Your Future*", expanded its goal in AC 2019-2020 by adding 13 additional undergraduate degree programs to the *Learning for Life* initiative. The grant and implementation teams have completed their work and the remaining academic programs will begin collecting student data in AC 2020-2021. The assessment team made changes to the student pre and post surveys. The surveys were edited to make them shorter to improve student response rates.

No programs elected to change the wording of the Learning for Life rubrics. Program coordinators continue to state that learning how to evaluate students with the existing rubrics is more important than changing descriptor language at this juncture. QEP assessment team meetings were held once each semester and individual meetings with Program Coordinators were held as needed. The COVID-19 Pandemic had an impact on data collection during the spring semester of 2020. Educational internships were halted in March due to school closures and other programs relaxed the number of hours required for face to face internships Overall, approximately, 25% of all programs in 2017 and 2018 implementation groups were unable to report data for the spring 2020 semester due to COVID

2019 Implementation Cohort 1
Benchmark met (57% /reporting incomplete)
Forty-three percent of programs in this Cohort have reported findings for AC 2019-2020. Two programs reported that their data was incomplete due to university closure. Eight of the fourteen programs had not reported data as of 7/8/20. At this time, it is not clear if this can be attributed to COVID-19 or other factors. Of the programs that provided complete data, 82% met benchmark.

2018 Implementation/Cohort 1 and 2
Benchmark met (80%)
The benchmark for this Implementation group improved from 14.92% in AC 2018/2019 to 80% in AC 2019-2020. Three programs in this group do not have any students in their program due to course redesign.

2017 Implementation/ Cohort 1,2 and 3
Target met (71%)
Programs in grouping have programs fully in place for six out of seven programs. A change in Program Coordinators in one program led to some confusion over data collection. A new PC is in place for fall. Assessment will work with this PC to ensure data collection is in place for AC 2019-2020.

University Wide
Target Met (60%)

Indirect assessment—Some information is emerging regarding the skills students acquire during their experiential learning activities. Students in each type of experiential activity indicate time management (68%) and problem solving (65%) are skills that improves during their EL learning experiences. Other skills for EL activity type are:
    Project/Presentation- Collaboration (56%), Creative Thinking (54%), and Critical Thinking (48%)
    Research- Presentation (69%) Written Communication (63%), and Working Independently (49%)
    Internship- Oral Communication (89%), Listening (78%), and Delegate/Instruct Others (67%)

Strategic Focus Area 3–Market Responsiveness

Higher education institutions are recognizing the need to change in order to provide an affordable, high quality education to a broader population. Transformation might involve revising current curriculum and creating new curriculum based on findings from review and evaluation processes and in response to employer needs. As the source of advanced learning, universities help prepare the workforce of tomorrow while supporting the innovations of today. Employers of recent college graduates value cross-cutting skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, oral, and written communication, and teamwork. These skills can be developed in programs of study throughout the university. However, universities must review current courses and program offerings to determine their effectiveness and currency, both in terms of cross-cutting skills and discipline-based knowledge and identify new programs to address changing workforce needs.

Industry partners are engaged to solicit input about current and future needs. Their feedback is invaluable as we enact changes that involve continuous assessment of programs and reflection about the needs of graduates.

Established in year one of our assessment cycle, clear benchmarks (Table 19) provide quantifiable measures to assess our progress and gauge our success. Progress towards meeting these targets include:

- 100% of departments have active advisory councils or established processes that reflect the University's efforts to productively engage alumni, employers, and the community to ensure that programs are aligned with workforce demands.

- The vast majority of new alumni (97.2%) continue to feel that they are well-prepared upon graduation and have increased their knowledge in the academic field. Confidence in the acquired knowledge in one's field is recognized as a driver of productivity and economic growth.

- 95% of graduates feel that they completed requirements for a job in their chosen field. Due to the nature of certain programs or demands by industry, some occupations operate under a high degree of regulation and oversight from associations, governmental agencies, or legislation. Other occupations require on the job training, so the time between degree completion and acquisition of such training may be delayed.

- Graduates responded that 60.8% have full-time jobs at graduation, and 64.5% of graduates planned to pursue an advanced degree. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in 2017, the employment rate was higher for those with higher levels of educational attainment. For example, the employment rate was highest for young adults with a bachelor's or higher degree (86%). While the target metric remains the same, the data obtained from NSU graduates provides an opportunity to explore further internal and external factors that contribute to the post-commencement full-time employment of NSU students.

- Collaboration among 2-year and 4-year institutions and industry partners has been widely viewed as a positive endeavor. The University has successfully established 129 articulation agreements to provide the clearest pathway for students to transfer credit towards a degree. This represents a 5.73% gain towards achieving the 2021 target.

- Of the 70 degree programs currently offered at NSU, 61 (87%) have been modified in the last 5 years, and 51 (73%) have been modified in the last 3 years.

- The labor market has changed significantly, and institutions are using terms like *market responsiveness* as a form of rebranding. Northwestern State University continues to be focused on the importance of preparing a skilled and dynamic workforce capable of thriving in what will be the next generation economy.

Table 19

Metrics for Assessing Market Responsiveness–those in blue were assessed in 2019-2020. Those in black were assessed in 2018-2019.

AC 2018-2019	AC 2019-2020	Market Responsiveness Metrics	AC 2022-2023 Target
86%	87%	*New or redesigned programs, concentrations, or certifications approved by the Curriculum Review Council that meet workforce needs*	100%
23		Number of faculty funded for faculty development	45
122	129	*Number of academic articulation and industry partnership agreements*	300
97.2%		Percent of students/alumni who feel they are/were well-prepared upon graduating (increased knowledge in academic field)	100%
96.3%		Percent satisfaction of students/alumni who feel they completed the requirements for a job or career in their chosen field	100%
60.8%		Number of graduating seniors who have a full-time job working in their degree field at graduation	100%
64.5%		Number of graduating seniors who will pursue an advanced degree	50%
1	5	*Number of new degrees, concentrations, or certifications approved by the Board of Regents that meet workforce needs and reflect occupational forecasts* *11 (16-17) + 2 (2017-2018) + 1 (2018-2019) + 5 (2019-2020)*	3 (Annually)
4	Target Met	*Processes for collecting data and monitoring workforce and industry needs*	4 Target Met
95% (21/22)	100%	*Number of departments that have active advisory councils or established processes*	100%

Note. Benchmarks for AC 2018-2019 are reflected on the far left with AC 2019-2020 results to the immediate right. Green reflects progress, orange reflects a decline, and grey demonstrates no progress or not measured. Blue italicized text indicates metrics evaluated in 2019-2020.

AC 2019-2020 metrics and objectives and AC 2020 targets were reaffirmed per the AC 2019-2020 Assessment Report briefed to the President, his Leadership Team, and University Assessment Committee in August 2019.

We understand that the university's role is vital in developing a productive and dynamic labor force to the meet the demands of the global economy. The processes being established will continue and be refined as we continue our dialogue with alumni and our workforce partners in this process to identify key indicators required for market responsiveness.

Four objectives support our efforts to respond to our market needs.

Modify programs through continuous reflection and thoughtful advancement.

Strategies:

- As required, increase the number of faculty members with industry-recognized certifications and competencies.
- Analyze current and projected academic program needs.
- Develop University funding opportunities for faculty development, education, certifications, and skill development.

Metrics:

1. *New or redesigned programs, concentrations, or certifications approved by the Curriculum Review Council that meet the needs of the workforce.*
2. Number of faculty funded for faculty development.

Metric:
1. ***New or redesigned programs, concentrations, or certifications approved by the Curriculum Review Council that meet the needs of the workforce***

Findings:

Of the 70 degree programs currently offered at NSU, 61 (87%) have been modified in the last 5 years, and 51 (73%) have been modified in the last 3 years. This is not statistically different from last year (58 of 69 and 52 of 69, respectively).

Curriculum changes approved by the CRC during AC 2019-2020 included revised courses, three new concentrations, one master's degree, and four certificate programs submitted to and approved by the Louisiana Board of Regents.

- New concentrations:
  - Nuclear Surety Management; Unified Public Safety Administration
  - Academic Content (MEd); Gallaspy Family College of Education & Human Development
  - Nurse Anesthesia (DNP); College of Nursing and School of Allied Health
- Master of Science in Computer Information Systems
- Undergraduate certificates:
  - Strategic Communication; New Media, Journalism and Communication Arts
  - Business Analytics; College of Business
  - Leadership Studies; College of Business
- Post-Master's certificate, Adult-Gerontological Acute Care Nurse Practitioner; College of Nursing and School of Allied Health

Analysis:

Departmental curriculum review is a process that employs data and feedback from internal and external constituents to guide curriculum development and redesign.

Curriculum development and redesign has become an economic-endorsed effort, due to the fact that curriculum should mirror the needs of the global economic market. To produce well equipped and professionally skilled graduates for the 21st century work environment, the University collaborates with internal and external stakeholders to identify and understand the skills required by employers. Northwestern State University has created a forum by which business and industry partners can be actively become engaged and communicate their knowledge of required skills.

The University and its partners consult and revise programs and courses as necessary as we work to realize a shared vision for the region. University departments assess local industry and business needs and set forth strategies for the region's workforce development system consistent with the state's strategic workforce system goals. The University is deeply committed to the economic vitality of the community and has confidence in our ability to redesign programs and curricula to meet workforce needs and evolving talent demands in local and global economies. Unless approval by outside agencies is required, departments can revise or develop new courses, concentrations, and minors internally, with the approval of the Curriculum Review Council; new majors, degrees, and certificate programs require additional approval from the Board of Regents. It is evident by the analysis of data that the University is deeply committed to responding to workforce needs.

Decision:

This process provides relevant information for decision making by academic departments. Input from internal and external constituents forges an opportunity for the institution to remain at the forefront of leading trends. As a result, the institution remains focused on activities that lead to the production of relevant programs and courses that are taught by highly qualified faculty while producing graduates who enter the workforce prepared to engage in today's economic opportunities.

Responsibility: Vice President of Technology Innovation and Economic Development, Provost/ Vice President Academic Affairs, Deans, Department Heads

Metric:
  2. **Number of faculty funded for faculty development.**

Findings:

Institutional professional development opportunities during AC 2018-2019 included:

- The Office of Electronic and Continuing Education (ECE) offered 154 workshops in 2018-2019 to enable faculty to design or redesign online courses and learn more about the latest teaching practices and quality standards in online education.
- The Faculty Research Support Grant program assisted 23 faculty members with partial funding to attend conferences or workshops or to provide services or supplies necessary to conduct their research.

Analysis:

The work that we do in faculty development is aimed at continuous improvement of our faculty, and this is what guides sustainable engagement. Professional development is generally initiated by faculty but may be provided at the institutional level or arranged by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (*Faculty Handbook*, p. 2). Professional development is also viewed as a scholarly activity and emphasis is placed on these types of activities (*Faculty Handbook*, pp. 36-37).

The Office of Electronic and Continuing Education (ECE) provides monthly <u>professional development workshops</u> for faculty that are offered face-to-face, via WebEx, and online. Of the 154 workshop opportunities offered, 83 were conducted, based on faculty demand. An extended program engages faculty in the design or redesign of online courses and provides media and instructional support as they learn more about the latest teaching practices and quality standards in online education. A new addition to the website, <u>The Tech Toolbox</u>, was created in 2018 to archive the presentation of monthly newsletters available for faculty which include new upcoming technology and tools for course improvement and productivity. The Faculty Research Support Grant program prioritized $25,000 for faculty grants for 2018–2019. Grant awards were awarded to 23 faculty members for travel or professional development. Funds were awarded on a competitive basis to faculty from 11 departments, representing all four colleges. Proposals were evaluated based on benefit to the individual faculty member, their students, their department, and the University, in addition to their budget justification.

Additional opportunities continue to be initiated at the college and departmental levels and through external funding agencies. However, sustaining faculty development initiatives can be a challenge considering budget constraints. Continued work will glean opportunities to identify practices that best support the faculty and departments in their efforts to remain at the forefront of leading pedagogical practices and workforce trends.

Decision:

The university has embraced technology advancements and is proactive in its efforts to provide opportunities for faculty development, education, certification, and skills development. Professional development is important because education is an ever growing, ever changing field. Professional development allows teachers to learn new teaching styles, techniques, and tips and interact with educators from other areas in order to improve their own teaching. Additional professional development for faculty and staff will be provided as new technology and software become available to the university. Moving forward, the university will continue to explore professional development needs and develop opportunities that support faculty in their professional growth.

Responsibility: Vice President of Technology Innovation and Economic Development, Provost/ Vice President Academic Affairs, Deans, Department Heads

Objective 2:

Align curricula with tomorrow's workforce demands.

Strategies:

- Review current degree programs for productivity and connection to workforce.
- Monitor the development of public and private agreements
- Develop or redesign programs to align with workforce demands.
- Monitor graduate success and preparedness using alumni and employer feedback.

Metrics:

1. Number of academic articulation and industry partnership agreements
2. Spring 2019 Graduating Student Survey

Metric:
*1. **Number of academic articulation and industry partnership agreements***

Findings:

An additional 7 articulation agreements and partnerships were added in AC 2019-2020 to better enable students to pursue industry-specific credentials or advanced degrees.

Analysis:

The University now has 129 established articulation agreements and partnerships to provide clear pathways for the articulation of credit. As an example, Departments engage both public and private institutions and organizations to provide seamless pathways by which students can be successful in achieving work-ready skills while advancing through curriculum patterns that have been coordinated to promote student achievement.

Decision:

Collaboration between the university and its partners is a critical driver of the innovation economy. These agreements simplify the college transition of credit from technical and 2-year programs and highlight the University's acceptance of credit while providing very specific course plans for students. Forging long-term relationships with industry partners provides opportunities for students through internships, cooperatives, and research. Further, these relationships provide firsthand knowledge about the immediate and long-term needs for an industry's workforce. In the broadest sense, these relationships create public good while satisfying the mission and objectives of each partner.

Responsibility: Vice President of Technology Innovation and Economic Development, Provost/Vice President Academic Affairs, Department Heads, Deans

Metric:
 2. Spring 2019 Graduating Student Survey

Findings:

Of the 108 graduates completing the Spring 2019 Graduating Student Survey:

- 97.2% were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the way their experiences at NSU increased their knowledge in their chosen academic field (*N* = 108);

- 96.3% were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the way their experiences helped them complete job or career requirements (*N* = 108);

- 60.8% indicated their principal activity upon graduation would be full-time employment, and 10.0% part-time employment (*N* = 108);

- 64.5% reported a desire to pursue graduate or professional school studies (*N* = 108).

Analysis:

A high proportion of graduates were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the way their experiences at NSU increased their knowledge in their chosen academic field and the way their experiences helped them complete job or career requirements. A 3.3% increase was reported in student satisfaction with job or career placement requirements. Overall, alumni feel prepared for the workplace and satisfied with the skills and knowledge developed at a university.

Decision:

The University will continue to monitor alumni preparedness for the workforce and workforce trends using alumni and employer feedback and use the results in academic program design and redesign.

Responsibility: Vice President of Technology Innovation and Economic Development, Provost/ Vice President Academic Affairs, Department Heads, Deans

Objective 3: Deliver class-leading employer service and industry-recognized competencies

Strategies:

- Evaluate and implement employer recommendations on competencies needed into curriculum and program development.
- Use results to create or redesign programs aligned with workforce demands.

Metric:
Number of new degrees, concentrations, or certifications approved by the Board of Regents that meet workforce needs and reflect occupational forecasts.

Findings:

During AC 2019-2020, the Louisiana Board of Regents approved three undergraduate certificates in Leadership Studies, Business Analytics, and Strategic Communication. The Master of Science in Computer Information Systems received approval as well as a post-master's certificate in Adult-Gerontological Acute Care NP.

Analysis:

During 2019-2020, the Louisiana Board of Regents approved 3 new undergraduate certificates, 1 master's program, and one post-master's certificate for Northwestern State. The process involves a review of market demand data and input from stakeholders by departments to determine changes that are needed to existing curriculum and future academic needs.

In September 2019, the university received approval for a certificate in strategic communication. The purpose for this program was to give students more options to learn skills that today's employers are looking for in media professionals. The department underwent significant curriculum changes, and the new 18-credit certificate in Strategic Communication was part of this effort. The department undertook these changes as a response to the current media environment, which requires all communication to possess a trove of skills to be employable and what employers indicated that they wanted in hiring prospective employees.

In February 2020, the university received approval for a certificate in Leadership Studies and Business Analytics. The certificate in business analytics is designed not only to prepare students for business analytics positions such as market research analyst, management analyst and financial analysts, but to bridge the gap between employer needs and student skills in the area of business data analysis. Key workforce needs identified by NSU that can be served by this program include accounting, business administration and computer information systems. University officials conducted a job search on the LA Works website and found 282 five-star jobs posted for business analyst positions.

The certificate in leadership builds on the successful Presidential Leadership Program (PLP) which selects 90 students per year to participate starting in their freshman year. The program utilizes a combination of classroom instruction and experiential learning. The program is designed to build the soft skills employers report lacking in recent graduates such as problem solving and the ability to work on a team, while also building students' confidence and ability to work autonomously. The program is designed to supplement a student's undergraduate studies in any major to provide work-place valued leadership, mentoring, mediation, and communication skills. These skills also translate into the employer desired traits of critical analysis and problem solving.

The approval of the MS in Computer Information Systems was a milestone for the university. The program was the first graduate program offered by the School of Business in more than 30 years. The program was established to address a business need to improve organizational information systems in a growing information technology sector in Louisiana. Three of the top 10 largest areas of growth requiring a baccalaureate degree are in the computer information system field. Students who have already earned a bachelor's degree can return to college to increase computer information systems skills and develop new skills. Those without information systems backgrounds can develop new skills to change to an occupation with a higher salary and larger number of job prospects.

The post masters certificate in Adult-Gerontological Acute Care NP program was approved in September, 2019 and addresses a state and national shortage of advanced practice registered nurses who possess specialized nursing knowledge and advanced nursing skills to provide quality health care to adults, older adults and the elderly who are critically or chronically ill, have urgent or emergent conditions, a traumatic injury or are at risk for life-threatening instability or rapid physiologic health deterioration. NSU employer partners fully supported the offering of this program and their support was instrumental in gaining approval.

Table 20
New Programs Submitted on Behalf of Northwestern State University and Approved by the Louisiana Board of Regents for 2019-2020 (Fiscal Year 07/2019–07/2020)

CIP Code	Degree	Subject/ Discipline	Approved
620213	UC	LEADERSHIP STUDIES	2020/02
521301	UC	BUSINESS ANALYTICS	2020/02
090909	UC	STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION	2019/09
110401	MS	COMPUTER INFORMATION SYSTEMS	2019/08
513821	PMC	ADULT-GERONTOLOGICAL ACUTE CARE NP	2019/08

The addition of the master's program and 4 certificates approved in 2019 combined with previously approved programs by the Louisiana Board of Regents reflects 19 approved programs or certificates in the last three years.

The development and proposal of new programs and certificates require an analysis to determine current and future program needs and may be driven by the department, by alumni input, or by employers. At all levels of the continuum, academic departments and employers work closely together to analyze workforce needs and develop curriculum and training to meet those needs.

Decision:

Input from internal and external constituents forges an opportunity for the institution to continue to remain at the forefront of leading trends. As a result, the institution remains engaged in activities that lead to the production of relevant programs while producing graduates who enter the workforce prepared to engage in today's economic opportunities.

Responsibility: Vice President of Technology Innovation and Economic Development, Provost/Vice President Academic Affairs, Deans, Department Heads

Objective 4:

Prepare graduates to work, learn, and lead.

Strategies:

- Increase efficiency in which information is collected, analyzed, and disseminated that is needed to make institutional decisions that affect our graduates' abilities to work, learn, lead, and achieve success in their chosen careers.
- Create a process for collecting data and monitoring workforce and industry needs.
- Collect feedback from alumni, advisory councils, and employers

Metrics:

1. *Processes for collecting data and monitoring workforce and industry needs.*
2. *Number of departments that have active advisory councils or established processes.*

Metric:
1. ***Processes for collecting data and monitoring workforce and industry needs.***

Findings:

Systematic data collection includes:

- Graduating Senior Survey
- Review of departmental advisory councils
- Newly approved degrees and certificates
- Current academic and industry partnerships

Analysis:

During AC 2019-2020, the process for data gathering included the collection of data by individual departments. This represents data acquired from state and national workforce authorities, departmental advisory councils, surveys, a compilation of newly created degrees and certificates, and an analysis of existing academic and industry partnerships.

The departments have established advisory councils or processes to assist in providing input into programmatic alignment with workforce needs. Business and industry partners assist academic departments by advising on relevant industry expectations, identifying experiential work-based learning and mentorship opportunities for students, actively participating on committees to enhance curricula and student achievement, strengthening career and college pathways by linking the integration of academic instruction and industry needs to real jobs, or participating as guest lecturers to share their professional expertise with students and give credibility to the curriculum. Departmental processes also include the use of data sources and research to inform curricular change and opportunities for innovation.

Decision:

Faculty and administrators at colleges and universities are accountable to stakeholders for the relevancy and quality of academic programs. Advisory boards support academic program accountability by providing guidance and feedback and serving as partners in community collaborations. The data collected provides appropriate and relevant information for academic departments, and the process by which the data is collected and made available has been established. Annually, data will continue to be collected and analyzed by departments. Further discussion regarding advisory boards will be conducted to determine how best to improve upon or establish new processes in the engagement of industry and community partners.

Responsibility: Vice President of Technology Innovation and Economic Development, Provost/Vice President Academic Affairs, Deans, Department Heads

Metric:
2.   *Number of departments that have active advisory councils or established processes*.
100% of academic departments have active advisory councils or processes which included employer representation.

Analysis:

All of the departments at the University have established advisory councils or processes that provide guidance on workforce needs. Some, such as the School of Nursing or School of Business advisory councils, have been established for a long time and enable their departments to be particularly nimble in identifying new trends in workforce needs.

Decision:

Efforts will continue to engage business and community partners and refine processes that provide input into the future of workforce needs in order to prepare graduates to be job ready upon commencement.

Responsibility: Vice President of Technology Innovation and Economic Development, Provost/Vice President Academic Affairs, Deans, Department Heads

The University is evolving and becoming an even greater partner in our state's and nation's economic vitality.

The analysis reveals a united effort in the responsiveness of university departments across specific occupations and degree programs combined with alumni who reveal satisfaction with preparation and preparedness for the workforce.

The University eagerly engages in partnerships with employers, embraces curriculum alignment and redesign, and prepares alumni to enter the workforce to embark upon long-lasting, successful careers as educators, engineers, law enforcement personnel, lawyers, doctors, nurses, artists, authors, business owners, chief executive officers, legislators, military service members, and other professions of elite status. Our institution has a long history of being a responsive university.

Maintaining and enhancing the institution's responsiveness to students and employers is important. Activities targeted for development are based on the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to make informed and effective decisions about the alignment of Northwestern's program offerings to market demand. The University's efforts must be agile to meet the needs of constituents.

The institution must continue to build upon its existing partnerships to provide additional pathways for students, engage business and industry partners through its advisory councils and solicit their feedback for program alignment with workforce needs. To this end, the institution will maintain and enhance strategies that allow it to be market responsive and deliver educational programs that directly address the needs of a 21st century workforce.

Supporting Documentation and References:

Bureau of Labor Statistics. https://www.bls.gov/emp/

Electronic and Continuing Education. https://www.nsula.edu/ece/professionaldevelopment/

GRAD Act. 2016. http://oir.nsula.edu/assets/GRADAct/NwSUGRADActReport201516.pdf

Louisiana Board of Regents CRIN: Inventory of Degree and Certificate Programs.
        https://apps.regents.state.la.us/Reports/Report.aspx?reportPath=/CRIN/CRINDLOAD

Louisiana Workforce Commission Career Exploration Database.
        http://www.laworks.net/Stars/default.aspx

National Center for Education Statistics. https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=561

Northwestern State University Articulation and Partnership Agreements. University Registrar.
        https://www.nsula.edu/registrar/articulation-partnership-agreements/

Northwestern State University Curriculum Review Committee Minutes.
        https://www.nsula.edu/registrar/

Northwestern State University Departmental Advisory Councils.
        https://oir.nsula.edu/advisory-panels/

Northwestern State University Graduating Senior Student Survey. Question 4.

Northwestern State University Graduating Senior Student Survey. Question 7.

This strategic focus area is benchmarked by world-class performing arts programming, robust alumni engagement, mutually beneficial donor relationships, institutional culture of collaboration and accountability, and thriving town-gown relationships in cities where university campuses are located. We conducted a survey of more than 6,700 alumni, business and industry representatives, educators, appointed and elected officials, and others to determine their interest in our existing community enrichment programs and the effectiveness of these activities. We also requested their recommendations for expansion of community enrichment efforts. Based on survey results, we have numerous new initiatives underway and existing programs have been enhanced to address various aspects of our plan for continued and increased community enrichment, shared governance, and the engagement of university stakeholders.

Growth in AC 2019-2020 includes:

- Social media participation has increased across all CAPA and Alumni Association platforms.

- Restricted endowment assets increased 10%% during the AC 2018-2019, totaling over $44 million as of June 30, 2020.

- The Board of Regents cleared the backlog of 13 First Generation Scholarship requests and provided $520,000 in matching funds to be combined with $780,000 in private gifts totaling $1.3 million in endowment funds.

- The NSU Foundation provided $4,797,118 in institutional support including $2,695,577 for student scholarships, $1,060,217 for faculty/staff support, $160,165 for capital improvements, $82,119 for recruiting/marketing initiatives, $693,836 for operating expenses, and $105,204 for alumni/community outreach events.

- Over the past 12 months, NSU students collaborated with 157 campus and community partners and spent 306,304 hours serving the community, resulting in an economic impact of $2,220,704.00.

By 2021, we will have experienced tremendous growth and expansion in all areas of community enrichment. World-class performance arts programming will be evidenced through increased participation and widespread program awareness. Robust alumni engagement and mutually beneficial donor relationships will be revealed through increases in communication, participation, and financial support. An institutional culture of collaboration and mutual accountability, as well as thriving town-gown relationships, will be illustrated through the growth of internal and external partnerships and increased brand identity and awareness. By achieving success in community enrichment, the institution will move ever closer to becoming "the nation's premier regional university."

We will continue our dialogue with all stakeholders to best identify and modify the key indicators of program improvement.

Table 21

Metrics for Community Enrichment–those in blue were assessed in 2019-2020. Those in black were assessed in 2018-2019.

AY 2018-2019	AY 2019-2020	Community Enrichment Metrics	AY 2022–2023 Target
36,830	27,050	*Number of patrons attending recitals, concerts, art exhibits, theater/dance productions*	35,000
34	31	*Number of off-campus performances*	30
35,474.47		Expenditures dedicated to advertisement	$51,136.78
15,408	15,433	*Number of active users on Creative and Performing Arts social media outlets*	10,000
22,744		Frequency of e-communications and number of participants	20,000
54		Number of Student Alumni Association members	200
24		Number of active alumni chapters nationwide	35
627*		Number of Alumni Association members	1,500
8,173	8,995	*Number of active users on Alumni Association social media outlets*	10,000
5,516,859.92	5,010,624.29	*Amount of annual private support*	$6,000,000
2,444	1,724	*Number of individual contributors*	5,000
$40,087,912.27/ 181,986.87	$44,294,756.67 $284,487.26	*Value of restricted/unrestricted endowment assets*	$50,000,000/ $1,000,000
58*		Number of partnerships with business, industry, and government agencies	40
1,602		Number of advisory volunteers	3,000
81		Number of activities including athletic promotions, cultural events, and other programs at off campus instructional sites	100
349	306,304/157	*Number of projects and internships involving students in University and community activities and events*	400

*Note. Benchmarks for AC 2018-2019 are reflected on the far left with AC 2019-2020 results to the immediate right. Green reflects progress, orange reflects a decline, and grey demonstrates no progress or not measured. Blue italicized text indicates metrics evaluated in 2019-2020. *Since January 1, 2019*

Five objectives support community enrichment

Objective 1:   **World Class Performing Arts Program**

Strategies:

- Increase emphasis in Natchitoches and other communities on the excellence of Creative and Performing Arts at the university.
- Increase regional and national recognition of "The Spirit of Northwestern Marching Band."
- Expand advertising for other groups such as the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony Orchestra, NSU Jazz Orchestra, and the NSU Dance Company.
- Expand performance schedules to include state conferences, community events, arts festivals and master classes for citizens from Natchitoches and surrounding communities.

- Increase regional and national recognition of our Creative and Performing Arts programs through events such as the President's Command Performance, a high-profile program that attracts alumni and other friends from the local community and far beyond.
- Induct distinguished alumni into the Creative and Performing Arts Hall of Fame each year, which focuses widespread positive attention on the university and its music, dance, theater, and visual arts programs.
- Expand social media activities to increase attention in the community and develop stronger relationships between the university and stakeholders who have an interest in Creative and Performing Arts.

Metrics:

1. *Number of patrons attending on-campus recitals, concerts, art exhibits, and theater/dance productions*
2. *Number of off-campus performances*
3. Expenditures dedicated to advertisement
4. *Number of active users on Creative and Performing Arts social media outlets*

Findings:

1. *Number of patrons attending on-campus events are down from 2018-2019 (Table 22):*

Table 22
Attendance at Campus Events

Event	Attendance			Decrease 2018-2019 to
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2019-2020
Classic on the Cane Marching Contest	9,500	9,500	9,500	0.0%
GALA	15,000	15,000	10,000	33.3%
GALA at the Strand			1,100	
Theatre/Dance Mainstage	6,700	6,700	3,700	44.8%
Journalism Day	130	130	(cancelled)	
Symphony Concerts	2,200	3,000	1,500	50.0%
Art Exhibits	2,500	2,500	1,250	50.0%
Total	**36,030**	**36,830**	**27,050**	**26.6%**

2. *Number of off-campus events are down from 2018-2019 (Table 23):*

Table 23
Attendance at Off-Campus Events

Event	Performances			Change 2018-2019 to 2019-2020
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	
Musical Theatre @ Civic Organizations	5	10	10	0.0%
Design Center Students with outside contracts	6	6	8	0.0%
Voice Faculty @ Community Events	1	4	4	0.0%
Regional Symphony Performances	8	8	4	50.0%
Modern in Motion Dance Concert	2	2	2	0.0%
Mardi Gras Balls Performance	2	2	2	0.0%
The Natchitoches Christmas Parade	1	1	1	0.0%
CAPA on the Cane		1	(cancelled)	
Total	25	34	31	8.8%

3. Expenditures dedicated to advertisement in 2018-2019 totaled $35,474.47 as compared to $26,852.15 in 2017-2018.

4. *Number of users on CAPA social media outlets are up from 2018-2019 (Table 24)*

Table 24

Users on CAPA Social Media Outlets

Organization/Platform	Users			Increase 2018-2019 to 2019-2020
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	
CAPA Facebook	2,866	3,448	3,718	7.8%
SON Facebook	4,492	5,061	5,801	14.6%
Theatre/Dance Facebook	1,698	1,773	1,863	5.1%
NSU Choirs Facebook	176	1,011	1,121	10.9%
CAPA Twitter	1,194	1,414	1,425	0.8%
SON Twitter	829	951	1,003	5.5%
NSU Theatre Alumni Facebook	350	1,750	320	400.0%
NSU Choirs Alumni Facebook			182	
Total	11,605	15,408	15,433	0.2%

Analysis:

1. The number of patrons attending on campus events is down due to cancellations related to COVID-19. Prior to COVID-19 restrictions, renovations to A.A. Fredericks Auditorium required the annual Christmas to be held off campus reducing the capacity for attendance.

2. The number of off-campus performances is down due to COVID-19 event cancellations. However, the number of off campus events still exceeded the target.

3. Expenditures dedicated to advertising continue to represent a significant portion of the overall marketing budget. Expenditures dedicated to advertising are up 31% from 17-18.

4. The number of users on CAPA social media outlets continues to rise and is significantly above the target.

Decision:

1. The School of Creative and Performing Arts will continue to host events that are currently at capacity. To increase annual participation, additional performances would require increases in faculty/staff resources.

2. The number of off campus performances has a healthy window for growth and the School of Creative and Performing Arts will seek more opportunities in this area as well as a stronger way to track these performances. The School of Creative and Performing Arts will continue to explore strategies to become more visible throughout the state and region. GALA at the Strand will be held in Shreveport in December of 2019.

3. Expenditures dedicated to advertising are up 31% from 2017-2018 and need to increase at that rate annually to meet the 2020-21 target.

4. Promotions of special events and increased financial investments will help social media outlets continue to grow.

Responsibility: Director of Creative and Performing Arts, Assistant Vice President External Affairs, Director of Marketing and Branding

Objective 2:

Robust Alumni Engagement

Strategies:

- Expand communications through online initiatives such as the "Purple Pulse" e-newsletter and "DemoNSUnite" networking platform to provide opportunities and information to alumni and to increase membership and participation in alumni activities.
- Establish a Student Alumni Association to focus on membership, spirit and traditions, alumni connections, student philanthropy and other aspects of Student participation in alumni-related activities.
- Utilize the Natchitoches Alumni Chapter as a model to expand the role and involvement of community chapters across the state and nation in university alumni initiatives.
- Inform soon-to-be graduates of opportunities for participation in alumni events and endeavors through expansion of the Gradfest program, free first-year Alumni Association membership and the new Fork 'em Farewell program.
- Increase social media activities such as Twitter Chats, Alumni Spotlights, "Why I Love NSU" campaigns, and other programs.
- Establish programs to better connect graduates with careers and jobs through social media and websites, new databases, links to Fast Start, partnerships with the Louisiana Department of Economic Development, electronic and magazine advertising and the establishment of a career-based Speakers Bureau and Directory.
- Establish a dues-based Alumni Association program to include expanded benefits and a membership card with tracking capabilities.
- Increase number of active chapters, alumni events and activities throughout Louisiana and across the nation.

Metrics:

1. Frequency of e-communications and number of participants
2. Number of Student Alumni Association members
3. Number of active alumni chapters nationwide
4. Number of Alumni Association members
5. *Number of active users on Alumni Association social media outlets*

Findings:

1. The Purple Pulse e-newsletter is sent monthly to 22,744 alumni (number of alumni with active email addresses on file). This is up 12.6% from 19,870 reported during AC 2017-2018.
2. The NSU Student Alumni Association currently has 54 members up from 40 reported during the 2017-2018 cycle.
3. Currently NSU has 24 active alumni chapters nationwide. No new chapters were established during the 2018-2019 cycle.

4. Since January 1, 2019, 627 alumni have renewed their membership. During the 2017-2018 cycle, 1,300 active members were reported reflecting membership totals from the second half of 2017 and first half of 2018.

5. The NSU Alumni Association *Facebook* "likes" for the fiscal year ending 2020 were 5,963. The NSU Alumni Association *Twitter* page has 2,077 "followers" for the fiscal year ending 2020. The *Instagram* page has 955 "followers" for the fiscal year ending 2020. Total active users among the three outlets number 8,995. Each has increased in numbers during AC 2019-2020.

Analysis:

1. Continued growth of verified e-mail addresses is attributed to utilizing data mining strategies. Monthly e-communications to alumni and supporters continue to assist in fundraising and event awareness activities.

2. The NSU Student Alumni Association was re-established in 2016 and soon after slated as a recognized student organization. Growth has increased slightly, but additional support is needed to meet the 2020-2021 target.

3. Efforts to add additional chapters have continued but did not result in the establishment of new chapters during the 2018-2019 cycle. Staff resources were dedicated to sustaining the 24 chapters currently in place (Table 25).

Table 25
NSU Alumni Chapters

City	State	Name	City	State	Name
Los Angeles	CA	Los Angeles Chapter	Monroe	LA	Northeast LA Chapter
Washington, DC	DC	Washington DC Chapter	Natchitoches	LA	Natchitoches Chapter
Orlando	FL	Orlando Chapter	New Orleans	LA	New Orleans Chapter
Pensacola	FL	Emerald Coast Chapter	Shreveport	LA	Northwest LA Chapter
Atlanta	GA	Atlanta, GA Chapter	Raleigh	NC	Carolina's Chapter
Bloomington	IL	Bloomington, IL Chapter	New York	NY	New York Chapter
Alexandria	LA	Central LA Chapter	Seattle	OR	Pacific Northwest Chapter
Baton Rouge	LA	Baton Rouge Chapter	Austin	TX	Austin Chapter
Houma	LA	South Louisiana Chapter	Dallas	TX	DFW Chapter
Lafayette	LA	Lafayette Chapter	Houston	TX	Houston Chapter
Lake Charles	LA	Southwest LA Chapter	San Antonio	TX	San Antonio Chapter
Mandeville	LA	Northshore Chapter	Tyler	TX	East Texas Chapter

4. Reporting has been restructured to show progress within the current calendar year. The renewal of 627 memberships during the first half of 2019 illustrates potential to meet previous year totals. Efforts to exceed previous year totals and meet the 2020-21 benchmark need to be enhanced.

5. Growth of social media outlets is attributed to increased participation of volunteers, additional funds dedicated to advertising, and the addition of the Assistant Director of Marketing for University Advancement position.

Decision:

1. The NSU Alumni Association will continue to utilize data mining strategies to capture valid email addresses. A review of open and click rates will be conducted to determine whether format changes should be considered.

2. To increase growth of the Student Alumni Association, a special committee of the NSU Alumni Association board of directors was established.

3. The NSU Alumni Association will continue to add chapters in areas where alumni are concentrated. A focus on sustaining existing chapters will continue. While self-sustaining activity is ideal, staff members will continue to attend chapter events to ensure a strong base of consistent support is established.

4. The NSU Alumni Association will contract and consult with a marketing and branding professional to increase membership.

5. The NSU Alumni Association will continue the use of social media platforms with a focus on increasing exposure. Paid advertisement and sponsored posts on these platforms will continue to be utilized to increase engagement. The Associate Director of Marketing for University Advancement will continue to work with the NSU Alumni Association to increase participation.

Responsibility: Assistant Vice President External Affairs, President Student Government Association

Objective 3:

Mutually Beneficial Donor Relationships

Strategies:

- Increase number of staff members with job duties directly related to the cultivation and stewardship aspects of fundraising.
- Promote an "every contribution counts" concept to engage supporters not currently giving back the university.
- Rebrand the "Columns Fund" annual giving program to provide an income stream to support non-scholarship needs at the university and endow a portion of revenue and contributions to generate perpetual earnings.
- Increase focus on income-generating initiatives such as the acquisition of property contiguous with the campus that will create new revenues and enhance the aesthetic appeal of the area.
- Increase on-campus and off-campus events for prospective and current donors with a focus on recognition and awareness of giving opportunities.
- Showcase the positive impact of private funding through messages to alumni and public.

Metrics:

1. *Amount of annual private support*
2. *Number of individual contributors*
3. *Value of restricted/unrestricted endowment assets*

Findings

1. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, the NSU Foundation secured $5,010,624.29 in private funding for the institution. This is down 10% from $5,516,869.92 recorded during the 2018-2019 cycle.

2. The number of individual contributors for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 was 1,724. This is down 30% from 2,444 recorded during the 2018-2019 cycle.

3. As of June 30, 2020, restricted endowment assets totaled $44,294,756.67 while unrestricted endowment assets totaled $284,487.26. Totals are up from approximately $40,000,000 and $181,000 reported during the previous cycle.

Analysis:

1. Non-revenue contributions have increased. However non-contribution revenues have decreased. Increases in non-revenue contributions are attributed to larger gifts by existing donors. Decreases in non-contribution revenues is attributed to event cancellations and related registration fees.

2. The number of individual donors has decreased. As cited previously, overall participation is down due to event cancellations. Number of individual donors is recorded by total number of revenue participants as opposed to participants providing non-revenue contributions alone.

3. Restricted endowment growth has continued by securing large endowed gifts and the anticipated surge of $520,000.00 in state matching funds. Unrestricted endowment growth has continued, but not at the level needed to meet the target. While Columns Fund giving has increased, increased expenditures requiring the use of unrestricted funds has limited to ability to increase the unrestricted endowment.

Decision:

1. Development officers will continue to seek contributions from both current and new donors. As development officers build relationships through the cultivation process, more opportunities for solicitation will arise resulting in increased contributions. Vacancies in development positions will restrict the ability to secure non-revenue contributions. It is recommended that vacant development positions be filled as soon as financially feasible.

2. The NSU Foundation has contracted with a marketing consultant to analyze strategies to increase participation. However, event participation will continue to be at issue if COVID restrictions are extended. Focus will be shifted to non-event participation strategies.

3. The NSU Foundation will continue to promote the "Columns Fund" by educating donors on the purpose and importance of giving to the unrestricted account. As increases in unrestricted giving are realized, and expenses are mitigated, an annual percentage will be set aside and added to the NSU Foundation endowment to ensure perpetuity. Annual yield from the endowment will be applied to the corpus to grow the fund until annual unrestricted budgetary needs can be paid through interest earnings.

Responsibility: Assistant Vice President External Affairs and University Advancement, Director of Development

Objective 4:

Institutional Culture of Collaboration and Mutual Accountability.

Strategies:

- Expand decision-making at the administrative level through an internal Leadership Team structure that includes more than 20 individuals from across the campus.

- Enter partnerships with business, industry, government agencies and especially cities where NSU campuses are located in an effort to increase collaboration and mutually-beneficial relationships with entities associated with the school.
- Encourage alumni, supporters, and other stakeholders to act in an advisory capacity for university activities.
- Develop an overarching communications strategy designed to expand validation of the university's brand, core goals, and mission directed at all stakeholders.

Metrics:

1. Number of partnerships with business, industry, and government agencies
2. Number of advisory volunteers
3. Brand identity and alumni surveys

Findings:

1. NSU is currently engaged in 58 cooperative endeavors with public and private entities, up 3.6% over 2017-2018. These include relationships such as those with the Building our Regions Future organization to invest in startup companies, the Central Louisiana Economic Development Alliance to promote manufacturing in the region, the Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce to promote economic development, the Bossier Parish Chamber of commerce to promote military events, and numerous state agencies and institutions comprised of 41 articulation and partnership agreements: https://www.nsula.edu/registrar/articulation-partnership-agreements/.

2. The demoNSUnite.net platform currently has over 1,522 users comprised of advisory volunteers, internship providers, and occupational network supporters, up from 1,436 in 2017-2018. The NSU Foundation, Alumni Association, and Demons Unlimited Foundation maintain 80 volunteer board members serving in fiduciary roles overseeing private investments and outreach initiatives.

3. A brand identity survey has not been conducted since 2010. Alumni satisfaction surveys are administered following events and results have averaged over 90% positive feedback.

Analysis:

1. Growth of partnerships with business, industry and government agencies is healthy. Cooperative endeavors with private partners allow for shared cost and mutual invested interest. Growth of articulation and partnership agreements allow for expanded academic flexibility and assist greatly in increasing the number of transfer students. The NSU Campus Marketplace has proven successful as a model for future real estate investments and private revenue streams.

2. The demoNSUnite.net platform was launched in April of 2016 and has since grown to over 1,522 users. Of these users, 74 % indicated they are willing to help by serving in a mentor or ambassador capacity. The response rate of 74% demonstrates the willingness of participants to provide a service. Considering the intent of the platform to not only involve these constituents but encourage others to join because of their need for support, trends show that the community will continue to grow.

3. The NSU Marketing and Branding division was established in 2010. During the first year a brand identity survey was conducted to gauge recognition and affinity. Initial reports revealed area in which immediate improvement could be realized. Since then, incremental increases in the budget have allowed for growth in enrollment and record achievements in fundraising. Alumni surveys show positive feedback and details are being used to enhance outreach experiences and increase event attendance.

Decision:

1. Continue to seek partnerships with business, industry, and government agencies. Work closely with the recently formed special committee of the NSU Foundation board of directors to identify investment and revenue opportunities.

2. The demoNSUnite.net platform will continue to be promoted. As growth continues and volunteers are categorized by field, the Office of Career Counseling will be engaged to assist in matching students with mentors for internship and job opportunities.

3. The last brand identity survey was conducted in 2010. A new brand identity needs to be conducted by 2020 as a measure to re-assess overall recognition and garner constituent feedback concerning reputation. Results will be analyzed to determine returns on investment and used as consideration for increases in budgetary allocations. Alumni surveys will continue to be submitted following events and feedback will be utilized for enhancement.

Responsibility: Assistant Vice President External Affairs and University Advancement

Objective 5:

Thriving Town-Gown Relationships

Strategies:

- Plan activities such as athletic promotions, cultural events, and other programs to increase awareness of the university at sites away from the main campus.
- Identify and establish a database of graduates who earned degrees online or at sites other than the main campus to help provide a network to expand town-gown relationships at all of the university's educational sites.
- Promote increased involvement of online and off-campus learners in both community and university events and programs.
- Expand community service projects and internships involving Northwestern students with a focus on youth programs, food bank initiatives, beautification, preservation, economic development, literacy, improved health, and other initiatives that provide valuable experiences for students, positive recognition for the university and beneficial assistance to the communities.
- Increase cooperative programs with the community and technical colleges, public schools, business and industry and other entities that cultivate town-gown relationships for the university not just at its main campus in Natchitoches but also in Shreveport-Bossier City, Leesville-Fort Polk, Alexandria, and Marksville, where the university offers classes at the Tunica-Biloxi Cultural and Educational Resources Center.

Metrics:

1. Number of activities including athletic promotions, cultural events and other programs at off campus instructional sites
2. Number of online and off-campus graduates participating in university activities and events
3. *Number of hours students spend serving the community through projects and internships.*
4. Number of cooperative endeavors with public and private entities

Findings:

1. 81 events are held annually at the satellite campuses, up from 73 in 2017-2018.

2. Currently, data on the number of online and satellite campus graduates participating in university and activity events is not captured.

3. During AC 2019-2020, NSU students spent 306,304 hours serving the community. The economic impact of these hours (calculated at $7.25 per hour) is $2,220,704.00. For AC 2019-2020 students collaborated with 157 campus and community partners.

4. NSU is currently engaged in 58 cooperative endeavors with public and private entities.

Analysis:

1. Event and activity growth at the satellite campuses continues to thrive. Many of the events that were previously exclusive to the main campus such as Gradfest, Freshman Connection, Welcome Week, and Student Activity Board events are now being held at the satellite campuses. Other activities include events such as the "Victory Tour" promoting athletic events, "Transfer Day" highlighting students transferring in from the 2-year institutions and "Military Appreciation Day" at satellite campuses located on military instillations.

2. This data is not easily captured and a number of issues must be overcome before accurate counts can be taken. Examples include the self-identification of a student as online (many students take classes both online and on campus), and the lack of identification post-graduation of alumni who attended satellite campuses rather than the main campus.

3. Previously, this metric was assessed by the total number of university and community activities gathered through a survey. Reporting and tracking was cumbersome. Three major service areas provided information for the report in AC 2019-2020, providing the number of hours rather than the number of activities. Data on the number of campus and community partners was also collected.

4. Cooperative endeavors with organizations such Bossier Parish Chamber of Commerce, Building our Regions Future, Central Louisiana Chamber of Commerce, Central Louisiana Economic Development Alliance, the Coordinating and Development Commission, and North Louisiana Economic Partnership, along with numerous state agencies and institutions comprising 41 articulations and partnerships have increased transfer enrollment and the ability of NSU to share resources with private partners. The potential for growth in this area is large, as the benefits the university can provide to private partners are vast and readily available.

Decision:

1. The university will continue to develop strategic initiatives and activities and host events at satellite campuses. Growth in this area is possible and increases will continue with proper planning and adequate funding.

2. The Office of University Advancement will coordinate with the Division of Technology, Innovation and Economic Development to better define and identify online students. Initial data has been requested evaluating two major categories: students who take between 51% and 99% of classes online and students who take 100% of classes online. These "hybrid" and "fully online" groups will be tracked after graduation to allow for assessment.

3. The Office of Service Learning will continue to gather information from the major service areas and will provide data in the form of total hours served and number of campus and community service partners

4. The university will continue to identify opportunities for partnerships with business, industry, regional support groups and peer institutions to enhance opportunities for mutual growth.

Responsibility: Vice President of Technology Innovation and Economic Development, Assistant Vice President External Affairs and University Advancement

Comprehensive Summary

Community Enrichment is essential in increasing the major growth areas of enrollment and funding. Every aspect plays a unique role in achieving success in these areas. Whether it be national recognition for world class performing arts or local prestige through regional outreach and community service, the identity and reputation of the institution are crucial to continued success.

To ensure Community Enrichment initiatives continue to thrive, respective increases in financial investments will be required. As state funding decreases, funding from private sources will be necessary to sustain growth. By building the perpetual endowment fund and investing in programs that provide a return on investment, the institution will be able to achieve financial independence and continue toward the goal of becoming the nation's premiere regional university.

Community and Public Service Within the Mission

Northwestern Community/Public Service Mission Statement:

The university is committed to serving the citizens in its region through organized community and public service projects that are relevant and meaningful to the volunteers and to those being served. Service projects that target community-identified needs enhance (and are enhanced by) university-community partnership.

Purpose:

Service projects provide an educational platform through which the university can contribute to the quality of life of the citizens of its region. Students benefit by learning, first-hand, about social responsibility. Meanwhile, the community benefits from responsive service projects that address real-life matters.

Data Collection:
Last year's Plan of Action included streamlining the 2019-2020 University-wide Community/Public Service Assessment strategy to increase efficiency in reporting and tracking. The original method involved an annual survey that was emailed to faculty and staff at the end of Spring, asking them to provide several (quantitative and qualitative) responses for each project in which their students were involved. Reporting and tracking was cumbersome. In AC 2019-2020, community/public service hour estimates were solicited from three university divisions:
- Academic Affairs
- The Student Experience
- Athletics
Estimates came from administrators involved with the highest-volume producers of community/public service hours within each division twice during the year (after each semester).

AC 2019-2020 Key Findings (with comparisons to AC 2018-2019)

- For AC 2019-2020 the grand total of service hours was 306,304, approximately 13% fewer hours than last year's grand total of 351,809.5
  - The V. L. Roy day of Service was cancelled this spring, due to COVID-19.

- Estimated economic impact of 306,304 reported hours, calculated at federal minimum wage of $7.25/hour, was $2,220,704.

- For AC 2019-2020 the number of Campus and Community Partners with whom students collaborated was 157, approximately 5% fewer partners than last year's total of 165.

- AC 2019-2020 Community/Public Service projects at NSU addressed all 11 previously established community/public service focus areas of the University.

- This year, professional development/presentations on community/public service did not occur during the annual UL-System Academic Summit or NSU's Research Day. Both events were cancelled due to COVID-19.

- In the Spring, there were eight (8) press releases about NSU Student Community/Public Service Activities and Events involving:
  - Healthcare
  - Economic Development
  - Education
  - Environmental Stewardship

Plan of action moving forward.

1. Students will have increasing opportunities to serve the community through participation in service activities.

2. The community will benefit from responsive service projects that address the community's unique and evolving needs.

3. Faculty and staff will have access to up to date resources with which to track and enhance their service projects.

University Capital Outlook

The Capital Outlay Office works with the University President and administration to develop capital outlay, deferred maintenance, and small capitalization projects that meet the needs of the University's Strategic Plan and Strategic Focus Areas (SFAs). It is also responsible for maintaining a five-year plan for facilities in compliance with the State Legislature's capital outlay program. In FY 2018-2019, the State elected to direct capital outlay resources toward deferred maintenance rather than extensive new construction. In support of these efforts, the University's Capital Outlay Office identified and addressed several critical deferred maintenance needs using resources from the State and the University General Fund. Completed projects include the resurfacing Caspari Drive South and adjacent parking lots; the installation of new HVAC units and control systems in Bienvenu Hall; the installation of new seating in Bienvenu and Russell Hall; the remodeling of bathrooms in the Student Union; and the construction of new stadium seating at the Ledet Track Complex. These projects address all five of the University's SFAs. The University also continues to address ADA components of the Five-Year Plan at all campuses. This year, this included the completion of projects at Warrington Hall on the Shreveport instructional site and a new elevator to meet ADA standards for the building at the Teacher Education Center/Middle Laboratory School in Natchitoches.

During the 2019 Regular Legislative Session, the University's Capital Outlay Office secured 37.4 million dollars for the construction of an academic building to replace Kyser Hall, as well as funding to replace the roof on Fournet Hall. The University has also requested capital outlay funding to remodel the NSU Nursing complex in Shreveport on Warrington Street, an 8-million-dollar project. The State also allocated funding for building demolition and deferred maintenance. The University will use these funds to demolish Dodd Hall and (eventually) Caddo Hall and Prudhomme Hall. The University will also receive funding for overlay of Caspari Drive from University Parkway to the Sam Sibley intersection. The construction of a new academic building will be a momentous accomplishment for the University, its administration, and the Capital Outlay Office: it will be the first new academic building constructed on the Natchitoches campus in more than 37 years (1982). Going forward, the Capital Outlay Office's priorities focus on securing emergency funding and capital outlay funding for roof repair and replacement; for ongoing ADA improvements; and for the future extension of South Jefferson Street for emergency entrance and exit to the Highway 1 bypass road which runs on the west side of campus.

Technology at Northwestern State University-2019

Information Technology Services creates a foundation that provides faculty, staff, and students the tools and services they need to succeed. IT resources must be evident, practical, and useful to the campus community and align with the overall University mission. Technology must be stable, and services must meet the needs and expectations of users. The ITS staff strives to provide excellent support and simple processes. With these statements in mind, IT planning at NSU includes these ten fundamental ideals.

Innovation: promote new and creative ideas to improve and enhance communication with constituents and deliver services

Leadership: actively work with campus offices and groups to identify and incorporate proper technologies to enhance the student experience

Collaboration: foster and encourage an environment of collaboration

Student Experience: support activities and projects that are student-centered and considerate of how they influence student recruiting and retention

Infrastructure: develop infrastructure capable of supporting access to the services needed to help our students, faculty, and staff

Customer Service: support projects, processes, and interactions originate with a focus on customer service

Support: supply technical and functional support to the campus community

Availability: focus on the creation, delivery, and maintenance of high-availability services

Mobile: embrace strategies to focus on creating applications and supporting services accessible from any device

Security: prioritize the security of campus resources and records

During AC 2019-2020, Information Technology Services focused on several strategic initiatives to enhance and expand service offerings. An overview of essential projects includes:

Email Security, and Phishing—ITS obtained a cloud-service designed to automate the identification and mitigation of phishing email attempts and other email-based threats. This system has dramatically

enhanced the tools available to data center staff to protect the faculty, staff, and students from cyber threats propagated via email.

Endpoint Security—Basic file scan anti-virus systems are not enough to protect organizations from the variety of threats found online today. A new comprehensive approach is required to evaluate more than the files being written or executed on a computer. Other vectors open to attack are system memory, processes, and other hosts communicated with over the Internet. All these metrics must be analyzed to determine the level of today's threats. The University is in the procurement stage of a new service to better combat threats. It allows for complete system protection regardless of its position on the network -on-campus or at home.

Voice Services—Both internal and external communications are critical to our success. ITS staff continues to work to secure funding for the VoIP (Voice over IP) project. This project will replace a traditional aging Nortel PBX and supply a new system that will be more flexible and allow for services to extend to places off-campus. This mobility will be beneficial during disaster recovery incidents or situations like the COVID-19 response.

Modern Workplace—ITS staff offers support in the adoption of Microsoft Teams across the University. A platform like Teams provides a better toolset for collaboration. Data and communications can be accessible for a variety of devices and performs well on mobile devices. The platform also offers better methods to organize discussions, meeting documentation, files, and other associated data. Teams is extensible and allows for tight integration to other Microsoft services.

Internal Infrastructure—The data center storage and the backup solution received refreshes. The data center storage is now a complete flash-based storage solution. Traditional hard drives are no longer used to store data but use flash memory similar to phones and tablets. This change results in a more robust system capable of handling the demands placed on our data center resources. Back up of our data is essential, and the University made investments in backup appliances to storage backups local in Natchitoches but also replicated to the disaster recovery location at the Shreveport campus.

The Student Experience

The mission of Instructional Technology is to create and maintain technology spaces in support of the teaching and learning process. Staff members work closely with faculty to identify needs and to craft solutions in response to those needs. A sample of faculty and student-driven initiatives implemented over the past year include:

Technology in Classrooms—Instructional Technology staff worked with six academic departments to enhance seventeen classrooms with new presentation technology. These enhancements supported innovative audio and visual systems to make the classroom space more engaging and to help faculty in the delivery of content while instructing.

Technology in Performance Space—Instructional Technology staff worked with CAPA faculty to obtain funding for a complete new audio-visual installation in the Magale Recital Hall. The screen is a proper aspect ratio, and the projector is bright enough to use with lights on in the space. The audio enhancements made are to improve the live performances captured in the room for recording or live streams.

Facilitating Core University Operations—Maintenance and operation of the campus-wide ERP software systems continue to be the primary charge of Administrative Services. The support of these

applications affects the institution's broader mission by helping the admissions, registration, financial aid, accounting, and human resources processes with a focus on student success. Work performed over the past 12 months has targeted improvements to the underlying database infrastructure and reconfiguring software components to reduce expenses allowing us to invest in new, modern software services to streamline further and enhance campus services.

ITS works closely with the university community to aid in determining needs and to advocate on their behalf when pursuing funding. Examples of this work include the acquisition of the Real Visions Imaging software in Business Affairs and the SMS Texting software now used in the Student Experience areas.

The Role of ITS in the University's COVID Response—The University used asynchronous and synchronous delivery methods, mobile apps, data, and other tech solutions to address the problematic challenges surrounding physical barriers. While the initial effort aimed at supplying essential services for faculty, staff, and students who were remote to the campus, the use has become more widespread and integrated into the mainstream of services. The collection and use of data have played a vital role in the University's response to the COVID pandemic. New services to collect data and alert students to relevant information. New websites and many existing sites were updated to ensure faculty, staff, students, and the public remained informed. Integrations to collect data from students about housing arrangements and CARES Act eligibility. A reimagining of systems to facilitate Freshman Connection remotely. Tracking mechanisms were put in place to address federal and state reporting requirements. Processes to manage thousands of non-standard student refunds with minimal disruption during a time when all the staff involved were working remotely. These are all examples of the innovation that NSU continually strives to meet needs and address issues.

As we look to the future, the landscape of higher education is changing rapidly. Students arrive having been immersed in modern technologies and applications, and Northwestern State recognizes that it is an expectation to supply proper tools and services for our internal and external constituents. We eagerly embrace the future as we redefine customer engagement for a new generation of students.

Strategic Focus Area 5–Athletic Prominence

It is often said that an athletic program is the "front porch of a university" based on the exposure that success can provide for an institution. Achieving the identified goals associated with the "Athletic Prominence" component of NSU's Strategic Framework will result in outcomes for student-athletes that emphasize academics, leadership, service learning, competitiveness, and an experience that will ultimately prepare them for life after NSU. The athletic prominence area will also provide all students, community members, and alumni with entertainment and pride at an unmatched value.

Several individual and team highlights during 2018-2019 generated positive publicity and a high level of alumni/community pride. Furthermore, the academic and citizenship emphases continued to produce positive results. Specifically, the athletic department's three core values all yielded levels of success:

Academic Achievement

- All teams exceeded the 930 NCAA Academic Progress Rate (APR) benchmark.

- Athletic Department recorded a record 3.17 cumulative grade point average for spring semester. The department GPA has exceeded a 3.0 for nine of the last ten semesters.

- The most recent NCAA Graduation Success Rate report reflected that NSU student-athletes graduated at a record 82% clip.

- Three teams–men's cross country, volleyball, and women's tennis–earned "Public Recognition" for recording four consecutive years of perfect scores on the NCAA Academic Progress Rate.

- Baseball student-athlete Kyle Swanson was named the Southland Conference Baseball Student-Athlete of the Year.

Personal Responsibility

- NSU student-athletes recorded 2,100 hours of community service.

- Softball student-athlete Mariah Denson was one of a select number of attendees at a leadership forum in conjunction with the NCAA Accelerating Academic Support Program conference in July, 2019.

Competitive Success

- Junior long jumper Jasmyn Steels, while unable to defend her national title due to cancellation of the NCAA Track and Field Championships, was nonetheless named a 2020 All-American.

- The women's track team earned the runner-up trophy at the Southland Conference Indoor Championships and sprinter Natashia Jackson was named high point scorer of the meet. The women's program has finished second or third in each of the past eight (four indoor/four outdoor) Southland Conference championship meets.

- Volleyball coach Sean Kiracofe and soccer co-head coaches Jess/Anna Jobe were named Louisiana Coaches of the Year for their respective sports.

- With 23 freshmen and sophomores on the roster, the soccer team finished second in the regular season standings and advanced to the conference tournament championship match.

- The volleyball team won its first conference tournament match since 2014 to advance to the tournament semi-finals and were selected to participate in the National Volleyball Invitational Tournament.
- Volleyball junior Hannah Brister was named the Southland Conference and Louisiana Player of the Year, as well as being chosen an honorable mention All-American by volleyballmag.com.

The Athletic Department continued to expand the program's external scope and brand by increasing social media reach, generating revenue, and expanding the program's profile through enhanced community service efforts. Furthermore, noticeable facility updates were completed as part of the "Victorious" facility campaign.

Table 26

Metrics to Assess Athletic Prominence–those in blue were assessed in 2019-2020. Those in black were assessed in 2018-2019.

AC 2018-2019	AC 2019-2020	Athletic Prominence Metrics	2022-2023 Target
92,374	54,727	*Yearly event attendance for all sports*	151,361
$2,537,545	$2,434,233	*Yearly revenue (tickets, annual gifts, sponsorships)*	2,380,264
11		Number of new merchandise outlets	18
19,498		Number of NSU Demons Facebook likes	25,458
9,747		Number of @nsudemons Twitter followers	11,511
$35,695	$44,683	*Licensing royalties (LRG)*	$70,746
2.965		Student-athlete GPA	3.11
396		N-Club membership	182
295		Number of non-Natchitoches season ticket holders (i.e., Leesville, Shreveport, Alexandria, Bossier City)	405
101		Vic's Kids Club membership	162
500	520	*Establish transparent budget exposures (i.e. Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, Faculty Senate, and Demons Unlimited Foundation Board of Directors, current/potential donors) and sustain/grow annually.*	600
17		Student-athlete participation in campus activities, (SGA, SAB, Greek organizations, BCM)	20
6,268		Yearly number of community service hours by the NSU Athletic Department (coaches, staff, and student-athletes).	4,000
222	246	*Number of Dean's/President's List honorees per year.*	250
197	217	*Southland Conference Commissioner's Honor Roll honorees per year.*	200
987/980	971/979	*Single year and multi-year NCAA Academic Progress Rate (APR) team scores.*	940
17	17	*Number of facility improvement projects planned or executed, commensurate with funding availability.*	10
4/14	3/9	*Number of teams with a winning percentage of .600 or better in conference play (note–eight teams have win-loss records to measure; for track and field/cross country, the metric will be to finish in the upper third of the 13-team conference standings).*	14

Note: Benchmarks for AC 2018-2019 are reflected on the far left with AC 2019-2020 results to the immediate right. Green reflects progress, orange reflects a decline, and grey demonstrates no progress or not measured.

Four objectives support our efforts to gain and retain athletic prominence.

Enhance Marketing Opportunities, Game Day Experience and Resource Acquisition

Strategies:

- NSU Athletics must be more externally assertive in terms of brand awareness and merchandise availability through increased advertising and affinity.

- Improving product variety and availability of merchandise through regional merchants, as well as informing fans of media coverage and outlets with which to engage dynamic content, will enhance school pride.

- Increasing the visibility and awareness of student-athletes and coaches representing NSU, as well as adding opportunities for the department to connect with a former student-athletes, will help to keep those alumni engaged and will cultivate supporters.

- Improving the game day experience with continuous attention to concessions and merchandise offerings, revamped tailgating amenities/options, and strategic in-game activities and giveaways will foster an environment that expands fan satisfaction, leading to heightened attendance and loyalty.

- Focus on the Northwest Louisiana market, inviting members of the Shreveport nursing campus and Fort Polk to participate in events both on the main campus and on-site in Shreveport and Central Louisiana, if appropriate. These locations will add new segments to our fan base.

Metrics:

1. *Yearly event attendance for all sports*
2. *Yearly revenue for all sports*
3. Number of new merchandise outlets
4. Social media exposure (i.e. Facebook, Twitter)
5. N-Club membership
6. Number of non-Natchitoches season ticket holders (i.e. Leesville, Shreveport, Bossier City)
7. Vic's Kids Club membership

Finding:

1. Compared to AC 2018-2019, both total attendance and average attendance per event were down in 2019-2020 for all sports except volleyball, which had higher attendance despite playing one less game than in 2018-2019. Although fall sports were not affected by COVID-19 restrictions, attendance was still down (Table 27).

2. Revenue from three main sources (tickets, Demons Unlimited Foundation attainment, and licensing/advertising/sponsorships) was $94,324 less than a year ago. Totals for AC 2019-2020 were $254,926 for ticket (season and single game) sales, $1,143,125 for Demons Unlimited Foundation unrestricted and restricted gifts (cash and in-kind), and $1,036,082 for sponsorships. Several factors are noted regarding this disparity–cumulatively, annual donations and sponsorships were $20,000 higher than a year ago, which is noteworthy in light of the economic impact of the COVID pandemic on the

Table 27

Change in Game Attendance by Sport, 2015-2016 to 2019-2020.

Sport	2016-17			2017-2018			2018-2019			2019-2020		
	Games	Attendance		Games	Attendance		Games	Attendance		Games	Attendance	
		Total	Average		Total	Average		Total	Average		Total	Average
Football	5	39,714	7942.8	5	37,749	7549.8	5	38,914	7782.8	5	33,122	6624.4
Soccer	7	2,196	313.7	7	1,867	266.7	10	1,981	198.1	2	238	119
Volleyball	9	2,489	276.6	9	3,057	339.7	10	2,721	272.1	9	2,891	321.2
M-Basketball	13	18,909	1454.5	14	16,175	1155.4	14	17,988	1284.9	14	15,722	1123.0
W-Basketball	16	14,943	933.9	15	12,715	847.7	15	10,585	705.7	15	10,072	671.5
Softball	27	11,286	418.0	23	8,976	390.3	26	7,395	284.4	4	1,061	265.3
Baseball	27	13,845	512.7	27	11,893	440.5	23	12,790	556.1	12	6,220	518.3
Total		103,382			92,432			92,374			54,727	

economy during the final quarter of AC 2019-2020; tickets sales were approximately $100,000 less than a year ago, attributed, in part, to the limited competitive success of the football and basketball programs, in addition to not having the opportunity to sell tickets for spring sports events (projections were for the baseball and softball teams to have successful seasons); ticket sales totals from the 2018-2019 year were, to an extent, an anomaly based on the inflated single game totals for the Grambling football game and the LSU baseball game. The licensing revenue was the highest to date.

3. While it is not possible to know exactly how many outlets carry NSU merchandise and apparel, the following 11 are of note for AC 2018-2019:

   • Businesses continuing to carry NSU apparel included Wal-Mart, Walgreen's, Lids, Marketplace (formerly Neebo), Barnes & Noble, Posey's, Super 1 (2), and Hibbett (Natchitoches and Leesville).

   • Simply Chic was added as a new vendor AC 2018-2019 and plans are in place for the Cane River Brewery to be added to the list in the near future.

   • Vendors who requested approval to sell the NSU brand, through Licensing Resource Group (NSU's licensing partner), increased.

   • Licensing revenues through the Learfield IMG (purchased former partner Licensing Resource Group), based on the last three quarters of calendar year 2019 and the first quarter of 2020 reflected an increase of $9,000 over the previous year (Table 28). Aside from the 2016-2017 total, which reflected a one-time payment of $12,000 from IMG during the previous year, the most recent licensing revenue figure ($44,683) represents the best four-quarter total ever.

4. Through the efforts of their marketing and media relations staff, the Athletic Department redesigned the athletic program's web site (www.nsudemons.com) in AC 2018-2019 to create a more user friendly and graphically attractive look.

   • Social media year over year numbers reflected the following in AC 2018-2019:
      ○ NSU Demons Facebook likes–19,498 (+9.4%; Figure 7)

   • Twitter (@nsudemons) followers increased for each sport –9,747 (+9.4%; Figure 8).

Table 28
Licensing Resource Group Revenue by Academic Year

AY	4th Qtr. (prior yr.)	1st Qtr.	2nd Qtr.	3rd Qtr.	Total
2013-2014	8,307.49	7,809.99	5,596.91	5,298.57	27,012.96
2014-2015	7,146.06	6,585.08	7,103.51	5,249.65	26,084.30
2015-2016	8,495.75	8,312.63	7,977.94	9,757.60	34,543.92
2016-2017	12,508.86	18,009.30	10,580.81	6,047.17	47,146.14
2017-2018	10,040.00	10,144.24	7,973.51	7,475.91	35,633.66
2018-2019	9,294.65	8,917.83	6,744.10	10,738.22	35,694.80
2019-2020	13,177.43	10,381.34	15,627.44	5,496.60	44,682.81
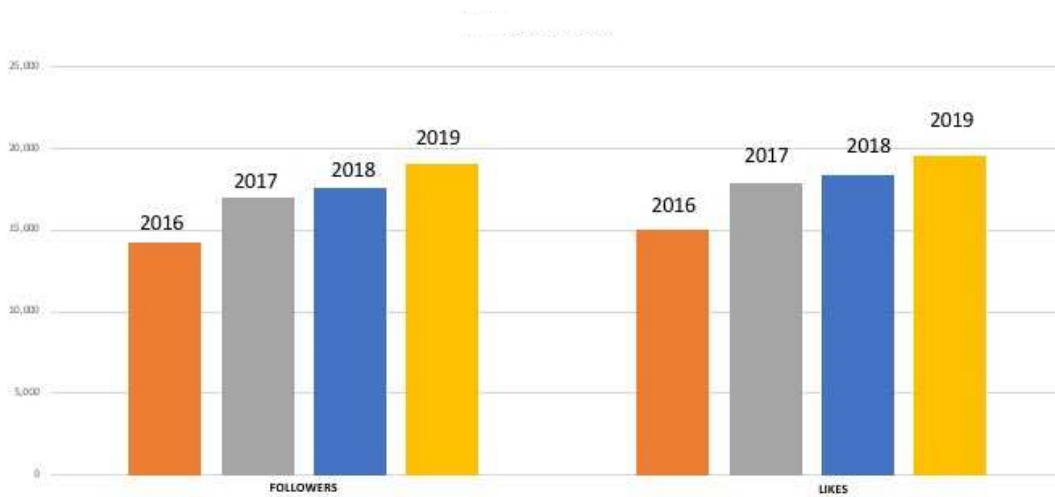
Figure 7: NSU Demons Facebook followers and likes, AC 2015-2016 to 2018-2019
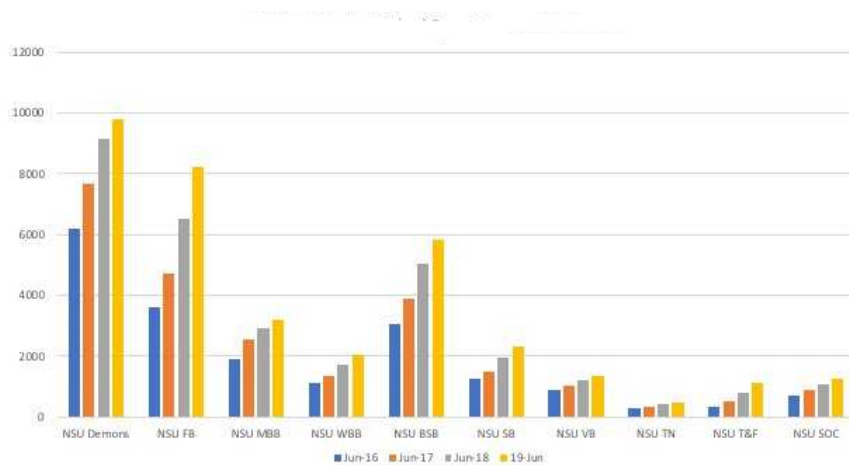

Figure 8. @nsudemons Twitter followers, AC 2015-2016 to 2017-2018

5. In AC 2018-2019, N-Club Membership continued to increase, totaling 397 members (281 paying and 116 first-year graduate complimentary membership), improving by 64%. A strong percentage of new members in AC 2017-2018 opted for the five-year membership at $250 (a savings of $50 over five years); thus, while not surpassing AC 2017-2018's dollar attainment of $17,715 the N-Club still generated nearly $14,000 in revenue.

6. Several initiatives in AC 2018-2019 also contributed to the athletic program's efforts to engage and cultivate former athletes, including: developing an official policy for retiring numbers of former athletes with extraordinary credentials; sending monthly newsletters to N-Club members; promoting the N-Club, especially new members and those who renew on social media; and installing a new, graphically improved and technologically updated display at Prather Coliseum for N-Club Hall of Fame members.

7. Vic's Kids Club membership generated $3,435 in AC 2018-2019, an 8% increase over 2017-2018.

Analysis:

While sports such as soccer, volleyball and women's track had successful seasons, the lack of success by the programs (football, men's basketball and women's basketball) that have the potential to produce revenue for the athletic program affected the athletic department's bottom line, specifically as it related to ticket sales. Also unfortunate was the fact that the spring sports teams were all predicted to either challenge for a championship or finish in the top three to four in the regular season standings, but their seasons were cancelled due to the pandemic. The football team, which was predicted to continue improving after a good 2018 season, started its 2019 season 0-7 before winning three of its last five games. The men's basketball team made the conference tournament for the first time in five years with an 11-9 Southland record while the women failed to qualify for the conference tournament for the third straight year, necessitating a coaching change. On the flip side, the volleyball team registered its best season since 2014 and the best under fifth-year coach Sean Kiracofe, who was named Louisiana Coach of the Year. The team won the program's first conference tournament match since 2014 and was selected to play at the University of Wyoming in the National Volleyball Invitational Tournament. Co-head soccer coaches Jess and Anna Jobe, in just their second year, led a team consisting of 23 freshmen and sophomores, with just one full-time senior starter, to the best regular season Southland Conference finish since 2005. The team also won the program's first conference tournament match since 2005, with quarter-final and semi-final wins to advance to the championship match. The Jobe's were named Louisiana Coaches of the Year. The women's track team claimed the runner-up trophy at the Southland Conference Indoor Championships in Birmingham as junior sprinter Natashia Jackson was the meet's high point scorer. Jackson was named the conference's Indoor Track and Field Athlete of the Year, as well as the Runner of the Year, while teammate Jasmyn Steels was named the Field Event Performer of the Year.

While ticket sales lagged for the 2019-20 year, several other revenue producing areas reflected an uptick in production. The athletic endowment fund surpassed the $2 million mark for the first time; the licensing revenue was an all-time high, as was N-Club membership; and the annual fund surpassed the previous year's total. The external staff members (Greg Burke, Haley Taitano and Mike Jaworski) developed a plan to communicate with donors during the COVID-19 "stay at home" directive with the intent being to express concern for their well-being. Those efforts, in part, contributed to a t-shirt fund raiser with a local sporting goods store that generated revenue for that small business while also resulting in a nearly $2,000 check from that business to NSU. A "#GivingTuesdayNow" initiative in May generated nearly $30,000, which served as a positive start to the 2020-2021 annual fund drive.

The athletic program sustained some of its more popular promotions–the Ladies Fashion Show sponsored by Lux Clothing and Accessories, the perennially popular Chili Cook-off at a home basketball doubleheader, "Fork Cancer" promotions for several sports and "Opening Night" promotions for baseball and softball– while adding a "Purple Out" promotion for the football home opener that featured a limited edition t-shirt. While LSU is a natural attraction, the NSU event and promotions staff worked tirelessly and creatively to create the best possible fan experience for the March 12 home game versus the Tigers. Examples of the latter include enhanced concession options to accommodate what was the second largest crowd in Brown-Stroud Field history, a "Fork LSU" t-shirt, a special student section and corporate hospitality areas.

In addition to such promotions, other steps were taken in AC 2018-2019 to improve the fan experience at NSU athletic events. Various concessions options (tacos, Dippin Dots, pizza, Moustache Mike's), expanding merchandise sales at events (i.e. Follett Books selling at the NSU alumni tailgating pavilion), fan engagement promotions on the new Turpin Stadium video board, enhanced signage and postseason fan surveys for football/basketball/baseball were all instituted.

NSU also hosted three Southland Conference championships events during the 2018-2019 year. The volleyball and softball tournaments were secured through a competitive bid process among Southland Conference members while the department had the option to host track and chose to do so. Those events provided unique opportunities for NSU fans to attend championship events. Furthermore, the economic impact of those three events–over the course of 12 days during the 2018-2019 year–was calculated to be over $1 million.

Efforts to expand the NSU brand through social media and merchandising sales also made strides in AC 2018-2019. Social media connectivity increased on all levels and upgraded its look through the department's partnership with BoxOut Sports Graphics. A year-old partnership with Mobile Cause enhanced on-line giving and text to give campaigns (text "Demons" to 71777 to donate).

The department assertively made efforts throughout AC 2018-2019 to better connect with fans/alumni and former athletes. The athletic staff continued to engage former athletes and increase membership in the N-Club. Former athletes continued to be involved in letter jacket presentations at home games and events, a positive way to engage them. Reunions were held for volleyball, football (1998 and 1988 conference championship teams), soccer, basketball, softball, and track. The Athletic Department, for the 15th year, coordinated a statewide "Victory Tour" in July to promote the upcoming football season. The fact that the percentage of season ticket holders across all sports (football, men's/women's basketball, baseball, softball) from outside of Natchitoches maintained the level achieved over a year ago–accounting for 34% of all season ticket accounts–is positive because: a) the athletic program can only count on Natchitoches so much based on its size and economic profile and b) the best opportunity to keep increasing ticket sales lies outside of the Natchitoches market.

In addition to the Victory Tour, other efforts by the Athletic Department to have a presence in outside markets may have positively impacted higher interest from those areas in AC 2018-2019. Several football luncheons were held in the Shreveport-Bossier market during the season, the men's basketball team again participated in the "Holiday Classic" tournament in the Shreveport-Bossier market, and the football team's opener at Texas A&M engaged a number of alumni and former athletes from that area. The Athletic Department also reached out to alumni and former athletes in areas which host Southland Conference postseason tournaments (i.e. baseball in Sugar Land, TX).

Decision:

Generating revenue will be essential for the athletic program to raise its level of competitiveness on an ongoing basis. The initial focus must continue to be the Demons Unlimited Foundation annual fund

drive, as contributions from that effort help underwrite basic operating expenses that the department's university budget cannot. The challenge will also continue to be balancing the importance of generating dollars (i.e., annual fund, sponsorships, special events, licensing, etc.) to underwrite current expenses while also focusing on the need to raise funds for long-term benefit (i.e., endowment, facility enhancements). This will be a three-person effort–Athletic Director, Deputy Athletic Director, Assistant Athletic Director of Development and Donor Engagement–by individuals who also have a myriad of other responsibilities but must keep these initiatives top of mind.

Responsibility: Vice President External Affairs, Athletic Director, Associate Athletic Director for External Relations, Director of Marketing and Digital Media, Assistant Athletic Director for Ticketing and Special Events, Director of Development and Donor Engagement, Assistant Athletic Director for Media Relations, Assistant Sports Information Director

Objective 2:

Promote Campus/Community Service, Appreciation, and Engagement

Strategies:

- Establish a community service approach through heightened interaction between coaches/student-athletes and the NSU campus and the Natchitoches community.

- NSU Athletics will collaborate with youth organizations to offer special products and opportunities while looking for ways to provide low-income families scholarship-like offers to summer camps on a limited basis.

- To take the department's community service efforts to a new level, opportunities for campus and community organizations to partner with athletic teams for service projects will be explored and encouraged. Appreciation efforts will include the continued addition of strategic touches, giving student-athletes the chance to thank supporters, boosters, faculty, and students.

- Increase the transparency of budgets and spending will show increased appreciation and spur engagement.

Metrics:

1. Coach/Staff community service reports
2. Vic's Kids Club membership
3. Camps and clinics for area youth
4. *Establish transparent budget exposures (i.e., Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, Faculty Senate, and Demons Unlimited Foundation Board of Directors) and sustain/grow annually.*

Findings:

1. The Athletic Department developed a quarterly system for coaches and staff members to report community/campus service and engagement hours. For 2018-2019, coaches and staff dedicated 1,810 hours of service to the NSU campus, Natchitoches community, and beyond. To emphasize the importance of this strategy, the Athletic Director displayed an excel sheet of service hours completed by coaches and staff on the TV monitor in the Stroud Room. Plans are also in place, to recognize the top three individuals at the first fall semester department meeting.

2. In AC 2018-2019, Vic's Kids Club membership exceeded the 100-member mark, a slight increase over AC 2017-2018.

3. Twenty-three camps and clinics were held by NSU athletic teams during AC 2018-2019, including the baseball team's "Super 60" camp in August that drew a record 80 attendees from a four-state area.

4. Communication with donors that went beyond soliciting donations but also focused on increasing transparency and awareness of Athletic Department and Demons Unlimited Foundation budget numbers and mechanics–and how those dollars are spent–continued to be a focus and reflected increased engagement during the 2019-2020 year on several levels:

   • Athletic Director formally met with Faculty Senate President twice over breakfast, plus the Faculty Senate President follows the Athletic Director on Twitter and often "likes" posts about the athletic program

   • Athletic Director met with all head coaches and executive staff members for a total of three (the final two of the Spring semester were cancelled due to COVID-19) department meetings.

   • Athletic Director met with Student-Athlete Advisory Council on eight occasions

   • Athletic Director met with all teams at the beginning of each semester and his talk included information about the importance of the Demons Unlimited Foundation and N-Club as it relates to providing resources for the department

   • Athletic Director met regularly (every four to six weeks) with the CEO of the Natchitoches Regional Medical Center to discuss the department and, in particular, its sports medicine program

   • Athletic Director discussed budget mechanics with Demons Unlimited Foundation Board of Directors at three official meetings

   • Athletic Director and Athletic Business Manager discussed budget mechanics with the NSU Athletic Council at its fall semester meeting (spring meeting cancelled)

   • Athletic Director provided details about the department's financial profile and need for increased revenue via social media and media (i.e., newspaper, radio) interviews

   • During the COVID-19 "stay at home" time period, the Athletic Director held weekly WebEx meetings with all head coaches and several staff members that included ongoing discussion of both the current year and the upcoming year budgets

   • Athletic Director, Associate Athletic Director and Director of Development and Donor Engagement are averaging at least one point of contact (i.e., in-person meeting to solicit support or cultivate a donor; attendance at and involvement in community organizations and events; attendance at alumni functions) per business day. Unofficially, these three staff members had over 500 interactions with individuals or groups over the past year. Furthermore, and while it would be difficult to accurately calculate, the engagement by these three staff members plus other coaches and staff via phone calls, text messages, and social media interaction further strengthened the bond and confidence level of alumni and former athletes in the direction and operation of the athletic department.

   • A meeting with football alumni and supporters was held in January to assess ways in which the football program can be more successful. Participants completed surveys prior to the meeting, held overall group and sub-group discussions during the meeting, and were also presented with the athletic department budget.

Analysis:

The reporting system for campus/community service and engagement developed in AC 2018-2019 was much more effective and for the first time provided a concrete number of hours dedicated to service by the coaches and staff. As is always the case, there are those individuals whose level of commitment rises above others. Yet, it was very encouraging and inspiring to learn of the many various activities in which members of the Athletic Department are involved.

Through the efforts of a graduate assistant, who graduated in December 2018 and left at mid-year to take a full-time job opportunity, the membership and dollars generated through the Vic's Kids Club increased year over year in AC 2018-2019. Just as importantly, efforts were made to engage and include Vic's Kids Club members with events and games throughout the year. Examples included Super 1 Kids Day that involved a pre-game tailgate and making the tunnel for the football team pre-game runout; Easter Egg hunt; and being "Floor Kids" during basketball games.

As assessed in AC 2018-2019, NSU teams/student-athletes continued to find time in their busy schedules to engage supporters. Examples include the annual "Thank A Donor Day" in November, the annual "Etiquette Dinner"–which was expanded for the first time to be held once per semester to better accommodate student-athletes during their out-of-season schedule-and "Scholarship Banquet" and community service efforts.

The Athletic Director's efforts to provide transparency regarding the Athletic Department's direction, especially as it relates to finances, was again complemented by the time investment of the Deputy Athletic Director and the Director of Development and Engagement. The initiation of the "Victorious" facility campaign provided further opportunities to engage and inform investors about the inner workings of the athletic program.

Decision:

Engagement on all levels must continue to be a focus of the Athletic Department whether it be donors, community members, youth, on-campus faculty and staff, student-athlete alumni and more. Some of these outreach efforts will result in revenue generation while others will either serve as "friend raisers" which will provide opportunities for the athletic program to be seen in a positive light or as avenues through which transparency can attest to the integrity of the athletic department.

Responsibility: Athletic Director, Associate Athletic Director for External Relations, Director of Ticketing and Special Events, Director for Development and Donor Engagement, Head Coaches

Objective 3:   **Enhance University and Community Collaboration and Support.**

Strategies:

- Develop a more cohesive bond between the Athletic Department and the campus.
- Improve Athletics' participation in University initiatives and activities.
- Collaborate with University entities to conduct research for Athletics' projects and partnerships through academic programming to educate about Athletics' traditions.
- Create a presence on-campus and in the community by student-athletes, coaches, and staff.

Metrics:

1. Identify and sustain/grow annually student-athlete participation in campus activities, (SGA, SAB, Greek organizations, BCM, etc.).

2. Complete a minimum of 4,000 hours of community service (coaches, staff, and student-athletes) annually.

Finding:

1. Student-athletes participated in the following campus organizations, activities and initiatives during the 2018-2019 academic year– Alpha Epsilon Delta, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Alpha Phi Alpha, Baptist Collegiate Ministry (BCM), Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Kappa Alpha Order, Kappa Alpha Psi, Le Belle Femme, Lifted Voices, Louisiana Scholar's College, President's Leadership Program, Pride, Psychology Club, ROTC, Sigma Nu Fraternity, Social Work Club, Student Activities Board (SAB), Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), and Wesley Campus Ministries.

   Campus and community organizations/groups in which coaches and staff participated or engaged in AC 2018-2019 included civic clubs, community events and boards, church functions, elementary school events, and charity/non-profit events and functions.

   Campus engagement was also a focus of the department throughout AC 2018-2019. Examples include student-athletes participating in the Homecoming Lip Synch contest sponsored by the Student Activities Board; the Assistant Athletic Director for Student-Athlete Development meeting with several department heads to strengthen the bond with the department; a member of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee being a panel member at two "N-Side View" sessions for potential students and their parents; the Student-Athlete Development staff coordinating "Guest Coach" opportunities for faculty and staff during home football and basketball games; Student-Athlete Development staff met with NSU Office of Disability Support to discuss ways to better meet the needs of student-athletes; Student-Athlete Development staff and several student-athletes assisted in set-up for Fall Career Fair/GradFest; SAAC and the athletic staff participated in the NCAA's Diversity and Inclusion Week via social media; Student-Athlete Development staff and student-athletes participated in NSU's "Never Yield to Hazing" prevention week activities.

   Members of the Athletic Department also engaged with others on campus by attending an on-campus presentation regarding hazing, facilitating transportation to Baton Rouge so national long jump champion Jasmyn Steels could be recognized by the Louisiana Senate and House of Representatives, and by attending the University president's monthly Leadership Team meetings.

2. Student-athletes registered 4,458.5 hours of community service for AC 2018-2019 (Table 29), fourth in the Southland Conference "Southland Strong" community service award. NSU won the inaugural Southland Strong Award five years ago and has placed second twice in the past four years.

Analysis:

NSU student athletes and coaches/staff, while continuing to be challenged by the combination of regular workdays with night/weekend duties and travel, continue to be very active on our campus and in the community in AC 2018-2019. While the records indicate that some schools vacillate in terms of service hours from one year to the next, NSU student-athletes have consistently registered well over 4,000 hours of service for the past several years. Also noteworthy is the fact that the leadership for the Athletic Department's Student-Athlete Advisory Committee has taken more ownership and accountability for service activities.

Table 29

Community Service Hours Contributed by NSU Athletics by Team, 2016-2017 to 2017-2018.

NSU ATHLETICS COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS			
TEAM	Total Hours 2016-2017	Total Hours 2017-2018	Total Hours 2018-2019
Soccer	52.5	230.25	347
Men's Basketball	378	418.5	397
Women's Basketball	533	648	502
Football	237.5	211.5	1086.5
Baseball	92	239.25	193.5
Softball	487	1159.225	289.5
Tennis	253	53	74.5
Men's Track	31.5	699.5	306.5
Men's Cross Country	Included with Track	Included with Track	30.5
Women's Track	9	400.5	166
Women's Cross County	Included with Track	Included with Track	14
Volleyball	203.5	317	666.5
ALL TEAMS	N/A	N/A	385
Total Hours	**2277**	**4376.725**	**4458.5**

Decision:

The 2018-2019 Student-Athlete Advisory Committee officers are actively planning for a successful year that will ensure continued community service engagement. A significant step forward was taken with the establishment of a consistent reporting method, on a quarterly basis, for documenting service by coaches and staff.

Responsibility: Athletic Director, Senior Woman Administrator, Assistant Athletic Director for Student-Athlete Development and staff, Head and Assistant Coaches

Objective 4:

Enhance Success and Avenues to Recognize/Promoting It.

Strategies:

- Revise the plan for publicizing the Student-athlete of the Month as well as Dean's and President's List honors, drawing more attention to the academic success of student-athletes.

- New programming, which may include speeches or seminars and social media pieces, will help highlight the real-world success of former and current Student-athletes. Rewards and incentives will continue to be in place to reward success on the playing surface, in the classroom, and in the community (as allowed by NCAA, University, and UL System regulations), including for some staff and coaches.

- Athletics will place an increased emphasis on maintaining and upgrading existing facilities in any way possible. The discussion will be initiated regarding a facility campaign that will need to be underwritten through private support.

Metrics:

1. *Number of Dean's/President's List and Southland Conference Commissioner's Honor Roll honorees; increase spotlight on the academic success of Student-athletes*

2. Retain or improve student-athlete GPA to a minimum of 3.0

3. *Single year and multi-year NCAA Academic Progress Rate (APR) team scores (always above the 930 threshold).*

4. *Plan and execute facility improvement commensurate with funding availability*

5. *The eight teams that register win-loss records (football, volleyball, soccer, men's basketball, women's basketball, baseball, softball, women's tennis) will compile a winning percentage of .600 or better in Southland Conference play annually. The cross-country and indoor/outdoor track teams will finish in the top one-third of the standings at the conference championship meet.*

Finding:

1. The 2019-20 academic year produced several positive and improved year over year results, highlighted by the athletic department's 3.17 student-athlete cumulative grade point average for spring semester. The number of student-athletes was also higher year over year as it related to representation on the NSU President's and Dean's list, as well as the Southland Conference Commissioner's Honor Roll.

2. In AC 2018-2019, NSU student-athletes earned a cumulative grade point average of 3.009 for fall semester and 2.920 for the spring for an average yearly GPA of 2.965 (Table 31). Spring semester marked the first time in the last eight semesters that the cumulative department grade point average was below 3.0. There is still a strong level of confidence in the academic focus of the department, from student-athletes to coaches to support staff.

Table 30
Student-Athletes Receiving Academic Honors AC 2014-2015 to AC 2019-2020

Term	President's List	Dean's List	Total	Southland Commissioner's Honor Roll
Spring 2014	16	34	50	71
Fall 2014	27	76	103	71
Spring 2015	32	60	92	86
Fall 2015	34	72	106	99
Spring 2016	40	69	109	101
Fall 2016	49	67	116	101
Spring 2017	38	65	103	107
Fall 2017	47	82	129	111
Spring 2018	46	67	113	101
Fall 2018	41	77	118	93
Spring 2019	44	60	104	104
Fall 2019	44	67	111	95
Spring 2020	60	75	135	122

Table 31

Average Cumulative Grade Point Average for Student-Athletes, AC 2019-2020

2018-2019 (Fall/Spring GPA)			
	Total Quality Points	Total Quality Hours	GPA
Fall 2019	14743	5127	2.88
Spring 2020	14485	4575	3.17
Combined GPA	29228	9702	3.01

3. In the most recent NCAA Academic Progress Report (APR), all NSU teams' APR exceeded the 930 benchmark on both a single and multi-year level. As a department, NSU's 2018-19 APR was just one point (979) from the record set the previous year. (APR numbers are officially reported the spring following an academic year.) Furthermore, three NSU teams–men's cross country, volleyball, and women's tennis–received "Public Recognition" from the NCAA for having a perfect 1,000 APR score for four straight years (Table 32). This marked the second straight year that three NSU sports were so recognized.

The new NCAA Academic Performance Unit, funded by a 15-year multi-billion dollar NCAA television agreement for rights to air the NCAA men's basketball tournament and Final Four, was to be awarded for the first time to Division I athletic programs based on data from the 2018-2019 academic year. Division I institutions are eligible to earn the unit on a year by year basis and qualify for the academic unit disbursement by meeting one of three criteria (APR, GSR or Federal Graduation Rate). NSU was the only Southland Conference school to qualify for two of the three units (point of clarification–qualifying for more than one unit does not result in any additional funds received) and thus, was to receive approximately $38,000 for its 2019-20 budget. Unfortunately, the economic impact of the pandemic on the NCAA budget precluded the first-ever academic unit from being distributed. NSU will not know if it qualified to receive the award for the 2019-20 year until graduation rates are announced in the fall. The amount of the award will continue to increase (i.e., the 2020-21 disbursement will be approximately $75,000).

4. The NSU athletic program officially announced its "Victorious" facility campaign with the "crown jewel" of the initiative being a $6 million project that would provide for new and expanded areas for the strength and conditioning and sports medicine divisions of the athletic department. These two areas, which are located in an athletic fieldhouse that was constructed in 1977, are significantly undersized to accommodate the growth in number of teams and student-athletes. A major donor has been approached about the project and is interested in supporting the project if the athletic program can secure private donations to equal their gift. The "crown jewel" of the project will be an 11,600 square foot annex to the back of the fieldhouse. Once the annex is completed, the current weight room will be converted to a high-tech rehab center and the current athletic training room will be refurbished. The plan also outlined a track and field locker room, baseball operations building/locker room, and women's tennis locker room to be developed in the future.

The baseball program also renovated its locker room at a cost of $50,000 through privately funded gifts.

Table 32

Three Year NCAA Academic Progress Report (APR) by Sport, AC 2016-2017 to AC 2018-2019

Teams	Year	APR	
		Multi-Year	Single-Year
Baseball	2016-17	971	981
	2017-18	976	981
	2018-19	981	991
Men's Basketball	2016-17	948	941
	2017-18	958	981
	2018-19	967	945
Women's Basketball	2016-17	973	960
	2017-18	981	1,000
	2018-19	976	962
Football	2016-17	960	955
	2017-18	963	955
	2018-19	961	958
Soccer	2016-17	973	963
	2017-18	975	973
	2018-19	967	969
Softball	2016-17	986	990
	2017-18	986	1,000
	2018-19	987	982
Tennis	2016-17	992	1,000
	2017-18	1,000	1,000
	2018-19	983	935
Men's Cross Country	2016-17	977	1,000
	2017-18	1,000	1,000
	2018-19	1,000	1,000
Women's Cross Country	2016-17	991	1,000
	2017-18	1,000	1,000
	2018-19	988	950
-------------- 3Men's Track	2016-17	963	965
	2017-18	968	969
	2018-19	963	962
Women's Track	2016-17	964	976
	2017-18	980	986
	2018-19	991	1,000
Volleyball	2016-17	984	958
	2017-18	984	1,000
	2018-19	989	1,000
Institutional	2016-17	967	974
	2017-18	980	987
	2018-19	979	971

4. The Athletic Department is exploring the potential of a new video board in Prather Coliseum, as well as new video boards for the baseball and softball complexes. Prices have been obtained and the next step will be securing sponsors to underwrite the cost of the boards.

Other facility projects started, completed, or on the drawing board include:

- Baseball Locker Room Renovation-completed December 2019 ($50,000)
- Baseball Operations Building–on hold ($2.5M)
- Baseball Grandstand Project–completed March 2020 ($550,000)

- Tennis Locker Room-approximately $100,000 in funds committed for $350,000 project
- Track Complex Upgrades--Locker Room–future
- Volleyball Locker Room–near future
- Soccer dugouts–July 2019 (approximately $12,000)

a. Carpet (Fieldhouse 2nd Floor, MBB Locker Room, VB Locker Room)–Completed by Sept. 23, 2019 ($35,000)

b. Strength/Conditioning and Sports Medicine Annex/Renovation project -$6,000,000

Total of Projects Completed or Pending (including $3.5 strength and conditioning center) = $9,497,000

5. Three teams met our performance goals. The soccer team registered an 8-2-1 (.614) record in conference play while the volleyball team's conference record was 11-5 (.606). In track and field/cross country, the women's indoor team claimed the runner-up trophy at the Southland Conference Indoor Championships.

Analysis:

For the athletic department to register a record cumulative grade point average for spring semester–amidst the challenges presented by the pandemic–speaks to the leadership in the academic support area, as well as to the commitment by coaches and student-athletes along with faculty. The academic profile of the NSU Athletic Department remains strong, as is evidenced by data that includes grade point averages, NCAA Academic Progress Rate, and NSU academic honors (President's and Dean's List). The NCAA Academic Performance Unit "ups the ante" for making academic achievement a priority for Division I athletic programs. The main facility enhancement focus for the department is generating significant funding for the strength/conditioning and sports medicine upgrades; in light of a number of other enhancements made throughout the athletic facilities, this could be due to the fact that the project will benefit all 14 sports.

Decision:

The Athletic Department academic support staff (academic coordinators, compliance coordinators, and Faculty Athletic Representative) will continue to meet monthly to assess academic performance with the intention of monitoring success/problems and sustaining the high level of academic performance in place. Regular interaction with coaches, especially for program which traditionally have student-athletes who may need additional guidance, will also continue. The Demons Unlimited Foundation Board in collaboration with the NSU athletic administration must continue to secure resources, most notably for the strength and conditioning annex, to enhance current student-athlete experience as well as impact the recruiting process and ultimately, impact the program's level of competitiveness.

Responsibility: Athletic Director, Senior Woman Administrator/Associate Athletic Director of External Relations, Director for Development and Engagement, Athletic Business Manager, Assistant Athletic Director for Media Relations and staff.

Comprehensive Summary of findings and changes/decisions because of the above

An overview of the 2019-2020 year reflects the following–the revenue producing sports had limited competitive success which impacted revenue generation; several other sports have either sustained (i.e.

women's track) or emerged with (i.e. soccer) a strong level of competitive success; the cancellation of spring sports (baseball, softball women's tennis, men's/women's outdoor track) prevented the athletic program from finishing the year–based on preseason predictions–on a very high note. Being classified by the NCAA as a "Low Resource Institution (LRI)" illustrates the additional challenge NSU faces of attaining, and then sustaining, success. The unprecedented and draconian financial impact of COVID-19 on the NSU athletic budget (i.e. loss of $154,000 in NCAA funding for AC 2019-2020 and an additional $258,000 for AC 2020-2021) combined with significant losses in state revenue which, in turn, has negatively impacted higher education funding, will make the upcoming year perhaps the most challenging in the history of NSU Athletics. With that said, the NSU athletic program has for many years embraced a "find a way" mentality and will continue to do so in order to meet the expectations of the department's three core values–academic achievement, personal responsibility, and competitive success. Department morale–sustained by extensive communication, energy, activity, and positivity–has helped the department navigate through the final quarter of the 2019-20 year and will be imperative over the course of the ensuing academic year. The Demons Unlimited Foundation annual fund drive, monies from which have always underwritten basic operating expenses for the department, will be required to cover the cost of even more essential operating costs during AC 2020-2021. At the same time, fund raising efforts for the athletic fieldhouse project must remain an ongoing focus. Through a combination of campus/community engagement and service by all members of the Athletic Department (i.e., student-athletes, coaches, staff), along with creative social media efforts and promotional concepts, the athletic program must continue to expand its profile, brand and fan base. Finally, the department must continue to make academic achievement its number one priority.

Section III.

College Performance and Assessment Cycle AC 2019-2020

The College of Arts and Sciences (COAS)

The College of Arts and Sciences is a diverse community of scholars, educators, artists, and students working collaboratively to connect varied ideas and themes across a wide range of academic disciplines grounded in the liberal arts and natural and applied sciences. The College uses transformational, high-impact, experiential learning practices, research, and service to equip students with the skills needed to reason and analyze as well as express their creativity and thoughts. Our graduates progress through an education that builds on itself throughout life and serves to promote economic and social development while improving the overall quality of life in the region. The College provides an unequaled undergraduate education in the social and behavioral sciences, English, communication, journalism, media arts, biological and physical sciences, engineering technology, and the creative and performing arts, and at the graduate level in the creative and performing arts, English, TESOL, and Homeland Security. Uniquely, the College houses the Louisiana Scholars' College (the State's designated Honors College), the Louisiana Folklife Center, and the Creole Center, demonstrating its commitment to community service, research, and preservation of Louisiana's precious resources.

As the largest of the Colleges at the university, it is also one of the most diverse from several perspectives. Bookended by two large Schools (Creative and Performing Arts and Biological and Physical Sciences), the state's designated Honor's College, and Departments that complete the Liberal Arts and Sciences experience, we span a diversity of degrees and concentrations offered, activities presented, outreach completed, and courses offered/taken.

COAS Degree Programs

The COAS enrolls over 2700 undergraduate and graduate students in twenty-five (25) Degree programs and fifty-nine (59) concentration areas within those degrees. The Louisiana Scholars' College, housed within the COAS, has joint degree programs with all other Colleges, Departments, and Schools at Northwestern State University. In addition, the vast majority (40/43 or 93%) of the University's general education CORE classes are nested within the COAS, thus serving the entire academic population of the University and reaching all students at some point in their academic career.

More than 160 full-time faculty and 40 part-time faculty teach courses throughout the College. The Faculty and Degree Programs offered by the COAS spans two (2) Schools, nine (9) Departments, and the Louisiana Scholars' College, and includes the following:

- **Associate Degree**: Veterinary Technology
- **Associate of Science**: Engineering Technology
- **Associate of General Studies**
- **Bachelor of Arts**: Communication, Criminal Justice, English, History, and Liberal Arts
- **Bachelor of Fine Arts**: Fine and Graphic Arts; Dance
- **Bachelor of General Studies**

- **Bachelor of Science**: Applied Microbiology, Biology, Electronics Engineering Technology, Industrial Engineering Technology, Mathematics, Physical Sciences, Theatre, and Unified Public Safety Administration

- **Bachelor of Music**

- **Bachelor of Music Education** *(offered in conjunction with the School of Education)*

- **Master of Arts**: Art, and English

- **Master of Science**: Homeland Security

- **Master of Music**: Performance and Music Education

In AC 2016-2017 (Summer, Fall, Spring), the COAS awarded 585 Degrees; in AC 2017-2018, the COAS awarded 606 Degrees; and in AC 2018-2019, the COAS awarded 612 Degrees. During AC 2019-2020, the COAS awarded 682 Degrees.

Alumni and Student Success

Alumni of the College have been very successful in professional engagements, and state that the hands-on involvement of faculty, linked with the outstanding field-experiences and internships while at NSU, have allowed them to make professional connections, take auditions, transition from intern to full-time employee, and enroll in graduate/professional school. A few recent alumni successes are highlighted here:

Alumni:

- Tyler Barnes (2008, BFA in Fine and Graphic Arts) is an Assistant Professor of Art | Graphic Design at The University of Mississippi earned a Gold Addy Award (American Advertising Federation) February 2020 for the logo and packaging design work he did for River Basin Distillery.
- Holli Conway (2016, BS in Theatre) starred in the Tina Turner Musical on Broadway beginning in November 2019.
- Elisabeth Pierite Mora (2016, BGS with a concentration in Social Science) is the Assistant Director of the Cultural Revitalization Program with the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe in Marksville, LA.
- Three recent BA in Communications have recently been employed by KALB (Alexandria, LA).
  - Christian Boudreaux (2019) as a technical director
  - Cinnamon Player (2019) as a news producer
  - Javonti Thomas (2017) as a morning anchor
- Eighteen graduates of the School of Biological and Physical Sciences were accepted into their professional school of choice for dental school, graduate school, medical school, pharmacy school, physical therapy school, physician assistant school, and veterinary medicine school.

Current Students:

- Phyllis Allison, an English major, wrote a screenplay, "Breakfast Belles", which was chosen as an official selection for the 2020 Houston Comedy Film Festival. Her script was entered for the Best Comedy Feature Length Screenplay Award.
- Myjoycia Cezar, a Theatre major, has started a campaign called the Children's Diversity Education Fund which raises money to buy children's books written by and for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color). This partnership, which includes Sarah Lord Holoubek (Liberal Arts major), Bethany Lee (Theatre alumnae, 2019), Madalyn Mullins (Theatre alumnae, 2019), partners with

schools and libraries to read books to children and teach lessons on the books and their connection to race, diversity, unity, and identity. Myjoycia has been invited to join the Natchitoches Parish School Board's Cultural Diversity Committee.

- Aura Hernandez Canedo, an Engineering Technology and a Music major, received the best poster award at the American Society for Engineering Education Conference for Industry and Education Collaboration meeting. This award was based on the originality of her work and the quality of her presentation.

- Emily Adams, Music major, was chosen through an application process to sing in the Lisette Oropesa's Masterclass. Ms. Oropesa is one of the leading sopranos of the Metropolitan Opera.

- Students in COMM3430 (News Producing), COMM4420 (Advanced Video Journalism), and COMM4470 (TV Producing and Reporting) collaborated under the direction of Professor Dominique Taylor and Professor Melody Gilbert to produce a student newscast "NSU-TV March 19th, 2020" have been awarded a Bronze Telly Award in the category of Non-Broadcast Educational Institution.

- Student participants in NSU's Speech and Debate Team under the direction of Professor Dorian Eaton, Instructor of New Media, Journalism, and Communication Arts, won top honors at the University of Texas at Tyler's Tournament of Roses in February 2020. They were also awarded the Excellent Patriot Award.

Academic Engagement

National Rankings:

- The online Bachelor of General Studies program has been ranked the number two program in the country by onlineschoolsreport.com. This website ranks programs in 10 areas based on student satisfaction, admission rate, online presence, popularity at school, department size and median debt by program. Data sources include the National Center for Education Statistics and the US Department of Education's College Scorecard.

- The online Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice and Master's in Science in Homeland Security programs are ranked as the Best Bachelor's and Graduate Programs in Intelligent.com's ranking of the nation's Best Online Criminal Justice and Homeland Security Degree Programs. This ranking is based on program flexibility, cost, course strength, reputation, and faculty.

- The online Bachelor of Arts in History program has been ranked by Best Schools.org in the top 25 online history programs in the nation. This website ranks degree programs based on academic excellence, return on investment, and indirect and secondary benefits to the student.

- The Master of Arts in English with a TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) has been ranked as fifth best online English Language Learning graduate programs in the country by Intelligent.com. This ranking is based on program flexibility, cost, course strength, reputation, and faculty. This program was also ranked sixteenth in the nation by Affordable College Online.

The COAS participates in several current and future activities and initiatives to ensure student success, maintain rigor, emphasize integrity, encourage student responsibility, and promote recruitment, retention, graduation, employment, and professional/Graduate School. Included in our efforts is a continued emphasis on and promotion of academic advising throughout the semester, assessing our general education CORE classes, early interventions for students struggling in classes, and promotion of the Academic Success Center.

In addition, several specific strategies have taken place to bring increased visibility and impactful meaning to our programs. These include:

New Programs/Initiatives:

- In October 2019, the Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts completed an articulation agreement with the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA) which enables NOCCA graduates to matriculate with close to a year's college credit on admission to NSU. This agreement, which takes effect Fall 2020, will help the state of LA retain its most talented students of classical voice, classical instrumental, jazz, visual arts, theatre design, musical theatre, drama, and dance.
- Several faculty members in English (Dr. Rebecca Macijeski, Shea Montgomery, and Oona Zbitkovskis) and a faculty member in Art (Leslie Gruesbeck) collaborated to co-teach a new course ENGL3030 (Words and Pictures). This new course brought together visual artists and writers to create interdisciplinary creative works. Their poetry was highlighted during a reception in December 2019.
- Dr. Tommy Hailey, Associate Professor of Anthropology, and Dr. Chris Lyles, Assistant Professor of Biology, are collaborating to develop a Remote Systems Undergraduate Certificate program. In February 2020, they were awarded a student technology fee grant to begin the drone initiative aspect of the program.

Community Engagement/Recognitions

- Loletta Jones Wynder, director of the Creole Heritage Center at Northwestern State University, was among the recipients of the "North Louisiana's Finest" Award presented by the Chatham Community Support Group.
- Dr. Benjamin Forkner and Christine Ferrell, foreign language members, worked with local government officials to help translate COVID-19 safety directives into Spanish and broadcast them to the public. They also worked with Dr. Telba Espinoza-Contreras, director of NSU's International Student Resource Center, who appeared in a Spanish-language video created by the Natchitoches Parish Sheriff's Department to announce a city and parish curfew that began April 7, 2020.

Program Successes

- The School of Biological and Physical Sciences was awarded three important grants during the 2019-2020 academic year:
    - Professor Anna Dugas, Assistant Professor of Physics, received a grant from LaSPACE to create a DemonStats program that allows students to create a cubesat for launch into space. This grant also provided funding for Professor Dugas and two participating students to attend the national RockOn conference.
    - Dr. Christopher Lyles, Assistant Professor of Biology, received a LA Board of Regents Program Enhancement grant to purchase a gas chromatography mass spectrometer to enhance the analytical instrumentation available for undergraduate student research projects.
    - Dr. Daniel Rivera, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, with collaborators in Biology, Mathematics, Education, and Curriculum Design, received a LA Board of Regents eLearning Innovation grant to create an eLearning platform to improve the basic and applied mathematics skills of students entering into STEM fields.
- The Mathematics Department is leading the state in successful education of the co-requisite curriculum program designed to assist under-prepared students be successful in their first college-level mathematics course. Of the 301 students who completed one of two co-requisite mathematics programs, 258 (85.7%) successfully passed the course with a final grade of C or better.

In addition, departments and schools host several events, annually, that strengthen our recruiting and retention efforts. To highlight a few:

- *Classic on the Cane Marching Contest:* annual Marching Band Contest that attracts more than 35 HS Bands to campus/Turpin Stadium, and more than 10,000 spectators
- *Science Showcase*: annual showcase sponsored by the School of Biological and Physical Sciences that attracts nearly 300 young scientists to campus to explore the Sciences, participate in research activities, and to gain potential direction for careers in the Sciences
- *Demon Math Classic:* annual event that attracts area high school math students to campus for competitions in Math.
- *JaM Day:* annual event that attracts over 150 high school students to participate in various journalism, communication, and new media contests.
- *Scholars' Day*: an event that is held once each semester to showcase the Scholars' College. Potential students sit in Scholars' classes taught by faculty and gain insight into what daily life is like as a Scholars' student.
- *Louisiana Thespians Conference*: annual event that is hosted by NSU and the School of Creative and Performing Arts each year. It attracts over 600 thespians from the state and offers adjudication and performances for students.
- *LitCon:* brings together members of the Natchitoches and NSU literary community to showcase their work, foster collaboration and educate the community on the importance of the humanities. LitCon creates a relaxed environment allowing students, faculty, and community members to talk about their craft, educational opportunities, working across disciplines and how to make a living in the humanities.

In addition to these annual events, our Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts hosted, for the first time, the College Band Directors National Association Southern Division Regional Conference in February 2020.

College of Arts and Sciences Strategic Planning

Responsiveness and Future Innovations

As we continue to work collaboratively as scientists and artists, we strive to transform the human experience while blurring the lines between liberal arts and applied and natural science education. To do this, we must continue to evaluate our students' learning, in both the traditional and experiential senses, to maximize its impact on our students as they prepare themselves for lives in the Arts and Sciences professions. It will be imperative that we analyze our Math and English co-requisite program to ensure student success; it is essential that we continue to encourage faculty and students to work collaboratively on research that has the potential to bring greater meaning to our work in the Arts and Sciences; and we will strive to have deeper conversations with our alumni and advisory committees who serve as valuable resources as we continue to evolve as a College.

We will continue to engage in crucial conversations, in which we realize that the work of the between liberal arts and applied and natural science—though difficult and demanding—is critical to our lives as we create graduates who are responsive and respectful, and stellar contributors to their chosen professions. As we continue to look at best practices for delivery of instruction, we will constantly evaluate how residential and online education can best serve the students, programs, and departments within the COAS, and how we can continue to evolve in the scope of our influence.

The Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development (GCEHD)

The Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development (GCEHD) is a community of eclectic students, faculty, and staff, working to increase knowledge, skills and dispositions through teaching, research, and service. The GCEHD offers a wide variety of exemplary undergraduate and graduate programs that prepare candidates for career success across the spectrum of professional roles and settings. These programs include teacher education, child and family studies, adult learning and development, educational technology leadership, educational leadership, special education, student affairs in higher education, counseling, health and exercise science, health promotion, psychology, addiction studies, social work, and military science. GCEHD consists of nine academic and support units (School of Education, Department of Health and Human Performance, Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center, Military Science, NSU Child and Family Network, NSU Elementary Laboratory School, NSU Middle Laboratory School, Department of Psychology, and Department of Social Work).

The Mission of the college states the GCEHD is committed to working collaboratively to acquire, create, and disseminate knowledge to Northwestern students through transformational, high impact experiential learning practices, research, and service. Through the academic and support units within GCEHD, the College produces knowledgeable, innovative, and inspired graduates ready for lifelong learning and endeavors that contribute to the communities in which they reside.

Additionally, the GCEHD is dedicated to the communities served by the Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center, NSU Elementary Laboratory School, NSU Middle Laboratory School, and the NSU Child and Family Network to assist children and their parents related to learning and development.

During AC 2019-2020, the GCEHD responded to a global pandemic, impacting every aspect of university life. From the immediate pivot to 100% online instruction to the deconstruction of internships, residency placements, and field work. GCEHD faculty and students were resilient and flexible to complete the Spring 2020 semester. In the metric comparison from AC 2018-2019 to AC 2019-2020, GCEHD students and faculty are persistent in their pursuit of educational attainment.

Degree Programs

In fall 2019, the GCEHD enrolled 2413 undergraduate and graduate students in 32 programs (BA, BS, BME, BSW, MAT, MA, M.Ed., Ed.S, Ed.D) and thirteen certificate programs. A total of 502 students (ages 3-14) were enrolled in the NSU Elementary and Middle Laboratory schools and Marie Shaw Dunn Child Development Center (CDC). In addition, University core and support courses are offered in the social/behavioral sciences (Psychology, Educational Psychology), Nutrition, First Aid, Child and Family Studies, Human Performance, and Social Work. Students in GCEHD maintained an average GPA of 3.05 in fall 2019 and 3.11 in Spring 2020 with an overall average GPA of 3.04 for AC 2019-2020. Within departments, average GPA ranged from 2.75 in Social Work to 3.28 in Education. GPA metrics were within 0.1 of AC 2018-2019.

Within the GCEHD, academic success is measured through multiple metrics including overall grade point average, being in good standing with the University (GPA of 2.0 or higher), progress towards graduation, average number of credit hours earned and student retention (persistence).

For AC 2019-2020, 88.4% of GCEHD students (fall and spring) achieved a GPA of 2.0 or higher (Table 33).

For a second year, this is an increase from AC 2019-2020 with 87.86% of GCEHD students achieving a GPA of 2.0 or higher.

Table 33

GCEHD Students Obtaining 2.0 Cumulative Grade Point Average or Better, AC 2019-2020

Department	Fall 2018		Spring 2019	
	% students obtaining 2.0 or higher	Number of students within the department	% students obtaining 2.0 or higher	Number of students within the department
Education	93.22%	1219	93.82%	1109
Health & Human Performance	83.71%	308	91.94%	250
Psychology	88.01%	550	88.21%	506
Social Work	85.29%	336	90.61%	301
GCEHD (overall)	89.72%	2413	91.81%	2166

Another measurement of student academic success is academic progress, moving towards earning a degree. In AC 2019-2020 (summer, fall, spring), 509 GCEHD students earned degrees as compared to 502 students in AC 2018-2019.

Additionally, academic success can be measured by the percentage of full-time students completing an undergraduate degree within a 6-year window. For those full-time students beginning college in fall 2012, the GCEHD boasted a graduation rate of 51.15% for AC 2019-2020. This is a decrease from AC 2018-2019 of among NSU colleges with 51.7%. A total of 509 graduates completed their program of study during AC 2019-2020.

Academic progress is also determined by the number of credit hours earned by our students per semester. In Fall 2019, the average number of credit hours earned by GCEHD undergraduate students was 11.98 hours with 11.88 earned credit hours in spring 2020. This metric was 0.2 credit hours less than spring 2019, an encouraging metric considering the pivot of NSU in March 2020 due to COVID 19.

More than 50 full-time faculty and 65 part-time faculty teach courses throughout GCEHD. In fall 2019, GCEHD generated 24,601 Student Credit Hours (SCH) of a total of 122,510 generated for NSU. Of this total, Psychology (9,528) and Education (8,832) generated most of these hours for GCEHD.

Alumni and Student Success

Alumni:

Alumni of the GCEHD have been very successful in their chosen professions. A few recent alumni successes are highlighted below:

- A total of 13 Health and Human Performance graduates (2019-2020) have successfully entered professional graduate programs (PT, PTA, OT, MBA, MS) to continue their education in fall 2020.
- Dr. Cade Brumley (BS, 02) has been named Louisiana State Superintendent, May 2020.
- Nakia Graham (MAT, 16) is a 2020 semi-finalist for Louisiana Teacher of the Year.
- Jeff Powell, (BGS, 93) has been named Rapides Parish School Superintendent, fall, 2019.
- Jena Nelson (BA, 01) has been named as Oklahoma Teacher of the Year 2020.
- Kimberly Eckert (BSW, 04; M.Ed., 13) was a finalist for the $1 million Varkey Foundation Global Teacher Award.
- Dr. Rogers Loche (BA, 09; MS, 12) recently received his PhD from Oklahoma State University.
- Dr. Latrice Ponton Loche (MS, 12) is the Assistant Director of Counseling at Cristo Rey.

- Dr. David Cosio (MS, 00) was recently published in <u>Practical Pain Management</u> with the article *"Behavioral Pain Medicine: Managing the Affective Components of Pain"*.
- Jennifer Burch (BA, 01) is currently the Director of Graduate Medical Education at Baton Rouge Medical Center. Ms. Burch currently serves on the Louisiana Board of Social Work Examiners.
- Skylar Anthony (BSW, 14) has been hired into the NSU Social Work Department as a Research Associate in the Title IV-E Child Welfare Scholars Program.

Current Students:

- Jasmyn Steels (M.S., Health and Human Performance) was named to the Southland Conference Indoor All-Academic team and the SLC Indoor Field Events Performer of the Year.
- Kyle Swanson (M.S., Health and Human Performance) earned national recognition as CoSIDA 3rd Team Academic All American and Southland Conference Baseball Student Athlete of the Year.
- Five Psi Chi undergraduate and graduate students spent 2019-2020 preparing for a trip to Nepal in March 2020 to work with Empower Nepali Girls, a nonprofit organization providing educational opportunities for the most neglected children from Nepal who would otherwise by unable to attend school. Due to COVID 19, this trip was cancelled.
- Stephanie Weber (B.S., Secondary Education) received the 2020 National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Prospective Teacher Annual Conference Attendance Award.
- Tiffany Howard (Ed.D, Adult Learning) wrote a proposal for $8 million aid to Career and Technical Colleges that passed the LA House and Senate Education Committees and slated for consideration by full legislature.
- Members of the Psychology Club and Vet Tech Club worked collaboratively to raise money for the Natchitoches Parish Animal Shelter during December 2019. They sponsored *Santa, Pictures, and Pets* where fur babies' pictures were taken with Santa.
- Four SOWK students were awarded the Child Welfare Scholars Program with a stipend of $7500 to intern and enter the career path of Child Welfare.

Academic Engagement

National Rankings:

The Bachelor of Science in Addition Studies at NSU has been named among the top online programs for both quality and affordability according to guidetoonlineschools.com.

The Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education has earned a grade of A in Early Reading Standards set by National Council of Teacher Quality (NCTQ), one of four given nationally. Programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels were recognized as exemplary in early reading instruction.

Northwestern State University of Louisiana was named one of the Best Online Bachelor's in Social Work programs for 2019.

The EdD program in Adult Learning and Development is recognized as number 1 by Great Value Colleges. NSU was selected not only for the program's affordability but also for the institution's overall outstanding reputation, its faculty's excellence, and the unerring commitment to providing non-traditional students a high-quality education and in doing so, giving them all the tools they need to achieve their future career goals.

Human Services EDU.org recognized the BSW in Social Work as one of the most affordable in the nation for the 2019-2020 academic year.

Best Colleges recognized the NSU BSW program as the 5th best accredited online social work program for 2019.

New Initiatives:

Under the leadership of Ramona Wynder (Education), the Call Me MISTER program will begin at Northwestern in fall 2020. This mission of this project is to recruit and support African American males in becoming highly effective elementary school teachers. MISTER is an acronym for Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models. National Executive Director Dr. Roy Jones stated, "Clemson University is proud to add Northwestern State University to its expanding national network of impressive institutions committed to this mission and shared vision toward diversifying the teacher force in support of all children".

Flat rate pricing and heavy recruiting for the alternative certification program PREP has increased enrollment from 5 to 61 for summer 2020. A second cohort will begin fall 2020 with Natchitoches Parish Schools.

The GCEHD hosted its first *Voices of Influence* event to highlight the research of the college's endowed professors in February 2020.

The Social Work department in conjunction with the Center for Inclusion and Diversity sponsored a "Voices of Diversity" series in spring 2020. The first community and university-wide event was held in March 2020, focusing on the diversity of ability/disability. The April 2020 event was delayed due to COVID19.

The Department of Social Work held its first departmental convocation during fall 2019 to increase engagement in the department and the profession.

The School of Education has been approved to deliver state mentor training beginning fall 2020.

In Summer 2020, Mrs. Neeru Deep founded the NSU Center for Positivity, Well-being, and Hope to promote positive thinking, enhance well-being, and instill resilience to NSU family so they can enhance their lives, transform communities, and positively impact the world.

Faculty and Staff Awards/Recognition:

- Dr. John Dollar earned the Experiential Education Academy Certificate of Achievement from the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE).
- Dr. Billie Myers (Psychology), Dr. Keicia Hawkins (Education), Dr. Terrie Poehl (Education), Dr. Erik Braun (Education), Dr. Michelle Morris (Education), and Dr. Michael Moulton (HHP) have formed a GCEHD cross discipline research team. To date, the research team have presented at ULS 2019 For Our Future Conference and submitted articles for publication on multiple initiatives.
- Dr. Charles King (Psychology) served as the moderator for a series on Opioids across Louisiana.
- Dr. Patrice Moulton (Psychology) has been named as President for LA Fulbright Chapter.
- Steven Gruesbeck (Psychology) is serving as Executive Director of La Gear Up projects at Northwestern, administering a multi-year, $3.2 million grant for programming across NSU departments for first generation students.
- The Social Work Department submitted a 3-year renewal of the Title IVE Child Welfare Scholar's program grant during 2019-2020. NSU's role in this statewide initiative continues to grow and includes 4 faculty/staff positions who contribute both to the statewide program and Northwestern's program of study. The program completed its third year of a 3-year grant cycle and submitted grant for July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023. For the last three-year cycle, July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2020, the grant amount was $4,640,250.00, with a yearly average of $1,546,750.00.

- NSU Child and Family Network provided respite care for dependents of healthcare workers when COVID19 closed area day care facilities in March 2020. Funding for grants and scholarships rose for 2019-2020, providing funding for scholarships and professional development to Early Learning Centers in 15 north Louisiana parishes (regions 7 and 8).
- Andrew Fultz, Title IV-E Child Welfare Scholar Program Manager has joined the National Title IV-E Roundtable Steering Committee.
- Dr. Ruth Weinzettle was reaffirmed by Governor John Bel Edwards for another 3-year term on the Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners, the Social Work Regulatory Board.

College of Nursing & School of Allied Health

Northwestern State University's College of Nursing and School of Allied Health's (CONSAH's) mission combined two separate missions, one for CON and one for SAH, into one CONSAH mission statement that was congruent with the University's newly revised mission. The revised CONSAH mission becomes effective July 1, 2020 and is:

Northwestern State University College of Nursing and School of Allied Health serves an increasingly diverse student population while advancing the mission of the University by offering excellent and innovative undergraduate, graduate, certificate, and continuing education programs that are designed to assist individuals in achieving their goals to become responsible and contributing members of an interprofessional global community that improves the health of our region, state, and nation.

Congruency between the revised missions of the University and CONSAH are presented in Attachment A. CONSAH's vision remains "to be an innovator and pacesetter in the educational preparation of individuals in nursing and allied health professions" aligns with the University's vision. CONSAH's values, which were updated last academic year were reviewed for congruency with the University's values and minor edits made. Congruency between the University and CONSAH values are shown in Attachment B. At the Summer 2020 retreat CONSAH administrative council members will outline specific plans to meet all CONSAH goals and strategic plan initiatives outlined in the strategic plan document.

The Spring 2020 semester demonstrated that no matter what challenges the CONSAH faces, if we embrace our core values of *Respect, Caring, Innovation, Excellence, Professionalism* and *Teamwork* we will not only survive, but thrive! This past semester faculty and staff rallied to transform quality learning from the in-class to online learning environments-within a few days! The result of this rapid transformation was nothing short of remarkable, as the COVID crisis created a period of controlled chaos followed by the development of the most creative active-teaching and learning the CON has ever experienced.

During the upcoming 2020-2021 Academic year, the CON will continue to produce healthcare heroes who are empathetic, value diversity, treat people fairly, embrace free-expression, communicate effectively, challenge ideas with respect, promote inclusion, empathize, exhibit openness and sensitivity, are future-thinkers who exceed challenging goals, demonstrate integrity in professional behaviors, act ethically, maintain professional expertise, persevere when challenged and see themselves as integral members of an interprofessional healthcare team. In essence, we will continue to produce nurses, healthcare heroes, who exhibit the CON's core values!

Degree Programs

The CONSAH offers 8 degree-programs spanning from the associate degree to the practice doctorate, 3 post masters certificates in nursing and 3 post baccalaureate certificates in radiologic science. The CONSAH

currently enrolls over 2,800 undergraduate and graduate students in these degree programs. Many of these programs on off-campus learning sites in Alexandria, Leesville, Natchitoches and Shreveport.

CONSAH has 73 full-time faculty members and 40 adjunct faculty members teach courses throughout CONSAH. Degrees offered through the College of Nursing include:

1. Associate of Science Degree in Nursing (ASN)
    a) Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) to ASN
    b) Paramedic/Military Medic to ASN
2. Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
    a) LPN to BSN
    b) RN (ASN) to BSN
    c) BS to BSN *began Summer 2020
3. Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
    a) Nurse Educator
    b) Nurse Administrator
    c) Nurse Practitioner
        1. Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner
        2. Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner
        3. Family Nurse Practitioner
        4. Primary Care Pediatric Nurse Practitioner
        5. Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
        6. Women's Health Nurse Practitioner
4. Post-Masters Certificate Programs
    a) PMC Family Nurse Practitioner
    b) PMC Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
    c) PMC Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner * began Fall 2019
5. Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)
    a) MSN to DNP: Organizational Systems Leadership DNP with two routes (non-APRN to DNP and APRN to DNP)
    b) BSN to DNP: Nurse Anesthesia *will begin Spring 2021

Degrees offered through the School of Allied Health include:

1. Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Science (BSRS)
2. Bachelor of Applied Science in Allied Health (BASAH)
3. Post Baccalaureate Certificate Programs
    a) PBC Cardiac Radiology Intervention
    b) PBC Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Therapy
    c) PBC Computed Tomography (CT)
4. Master of Science in Radiologic Science (MSRS)

The Louisiana State Board of Nursing (LSBN) has approved all four nursing degree programs and all concentrations of each degree program. The *Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing* (ACEN) nationally accredits the ASN program through 2022. The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) nationally accredits the BSN and MSN degree programs through 2023. The DNP degree program received initial national accreditation by the CCNE on November 4, 2015 and is accredited through June 30, 2021. The CON is also accredited as a provider of Continuing Education in nursing by the American Nurses' Credentialing Center on Accreditation (ANCC) and was recently re-accredited in 2018. Required

mid-accreditation cycle reports (CIPRs) were submitted to CCNE for the BSN, MSN, and DNP programs in 2018.

A substantive change notification was sent to ACEN regarding the addition of the Paramedic/Military Medic to RN program in the summer 2019. A substantive change notification was sent to CCNE for the BS to BSN program in Summer 2020 and a substantive change notification was sent to CCNE for the post-master's certificate concentration in Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner in Fall 2019. Further, an "explanation" report justifying the 200% increase in post-master's certificate in nursing student enrollment was requested and a reply report sent to CCNE in June 2020. The addition of the BSN to DNP-NA concentration to the existing DNP program was previously approved by both the ULS and BOR when the DNP program was developed. However, establishment of a fee structure specially for the BSN to DNP-NA required ULS approval, which was obtained. LSBN approval for the addition of a DNP concentration/route was obtained on June 18, 2020. The intent to offer a BSN to DNP-NA program was accepted by the national NA program accrediting organization (COA) on June 19, 2020.

The BSRS degree program is nationally accredited through the Joint Review Commission on Education in Radiologic Technology (JCERT) through 2025.

In the Academic Year 2016-2017 (Summer, Fall, Spring) the CONSAH awarded 466 Degrees; in AC 2017-2018 (Summer, Fall, Spring), the CONSAH awarded 427 Degrees; and in AC 2018-2019 the CON awarded 482 degrees; 411 undergraduate and 71 graduates and the SAH awarded 92; total CONSAH awarded 503 degrees in 2018. In AC 2019-2020 the CON awarded 504 degrees of which 412 were undergraduate and 92 were graduate. The SAH awarded 83 degrees of which 74 were undergraduate and 9 were graduate.

Program Growth

In Fall 2019 CONSAH enrolled 28.7% of NSU's total enrollment, or over 27.7% of NSU's total enrollment; and increase of 1% from Fall 2018. Even more impressive is the fact that since 2014 CONSAH's enrollment has increased by over 900 students. The CONSAH remains committed to providing accessible, quality educational opportunities that develops future healthcare professionals. The commitment to provide *quality accessible education* was exemplified in 2019-2020 in several ways:

- CON began admitting students into BS to BSN program in summer 2020.
- CON admitted first students into Adult Gerontology Post Masters Certificate in Nursing in Fall 2019
- SAH received admitted first students in a post-baccalaureate certificate in Computed tomography (CT).
- CON upgraded 5 distance learning rooms on two off campus learning sites to service the increased enrollment on those campuses.
- CONSAH held three annual advisory council board meetings (two in northern LA and one in central LA) to discuss workforce needs, quality of CONSAH graduates, and potential education-workforce partnerships.
- Signed articulation agreement with Centenary College for our BS to BSN program

Alumni, Faculty, and Student Success

Alumni:

CONSAH alumni are successful professionals who bring regional and national imminence to NSU through their achievements. CONSAH alumni are involved in professional organizations, inpatient and outpatient healthcare management, and are engaged with current NSU students as mentors. Examples of recent alumni successes include:

- *Dr. Pamela Simmons*, Elected Vice Chair of CCNE's Board of Commissioners.
- *Aaron Stigers,* NSU MSN Graduate Named NSU Nurse of the Year, 2020.
- *Dr. Stephen Hernandez* BSN and MSN NSu graduate promoted to Colonel in USAF Reserve

Faculty:

CONSAH faculty members are interprofessional collaborators committed to the development of graduates who demonstrate the characteristics of resilient critical thinkers, compassionate and empathetic caregivers, and healthcare professionals who demonstrated this year, that their capability and flexibility of handling healthcare challenges. CONSAH's commitment to excellence continues to be exemplified through faculty members who constantly strive to promote students' success in their pursuit of academic and professional career goals. To maintain the mandated faculty to student ratios within the CONSAH, each year external funding for faculty positions must be obtained. Currently the CONSAH has 14 fully externally funded faculty/staff positions.

Examples of CONSAH Faculty achievements for 2019-2020 include
- *Dianne Webb* inducted into the Louisiana State Nurses Association's Hall of Fame.
- *Dr. Kathy Tate,* selected as member of Governor's COVID-19 Health Equity Task Force Subcommittee.
- 4 Faculty earned doctorates
- 1 Faculty is secretary for Board of Trustees for LA Nurses Foundation
- 2 Faculty serve as President of Beta Chi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing
- 2 Faculty serve as Vice Chair of the CCNE Board of Commissioners
- 2 Faculty serve as a member of the Substantive Change Review Committee for CCNE
- 2 Faculty are CCNE on-site reviewers
- 1 Faculty elected to Chair of the Board for AEIRS (Radiology Education)
- 1 Faculty received academic rank promotion
- 9 Faculty received tenure
- 7 Faculty published articles
- 1 Faculty published textbook
- 2 Faculty completed doctorates
- 1 Faculty served as Louisiana Society of Radiologic Technologists (LSRT) Annual Meeting Chairperson
- 18 Endowed Professors

Students:

CONSAH Student achievements for 2018-2019 include:
- Participated in over 25 community-engagement events
- Recognized by Department of Public Health for assistance with emergency preparedness initiatives
- Three students selected as Outstanding Undergraduate Nursing Student Awards from Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing
- One student received CLECO Community Foundation Scholarship
- Two undergraduate students received Rotary Club Scholarship
- Produced over 10 scholarly project practice change projects (DNP capstone projects)
- Six doctorate scholarly projects published/presented on state/regional/national level
- Two undergraduate students inducted into Lambda Nu National Honor Society for Radiologic Science
- 5-year economic impact of CONSAH graduates on Caddo and Bossier Parishes estimated at $69.5 million.

Program Success

Measures of program success include passage rates on licensure and certification examinations, national program rankings, progression from admission to graduation data and employment data. Additionally, alumni and employer ratings of program and graduates are used to evaluate program success. The following are indicators of program success:

Licensure, Certification Examination Passage Rates Trended and AC 2019-2020:

Licensure as a registered nurse occurs when students successfully complete their national council licensure examinations. Licensure as a radiologic technologist occurs when students successfully complete their registry examinations. Licensure as advance practice registered nurses occurs when master's degree students successfully complete certification exams specific to a patient population. CONSAH's licensure, certification, and registry passage rates for 2015-2018 are:

- **ASN national council licensure examination pass rates**:
  2015=88.5%; 2016=93.26%; 2017=97.47%; 2018=95.92%; 2019= (132/140)=94.29%.
- **BSN national council licensure examination pass rates**:
  2015=91.36%; 2016=96.32%; 2017=95.65%; 2018= = 95.1%; 2019= (157/165)=95.15%
- **Total Undergraduate Nursing National Council Licensure Examination Pass Rate:**
  2018=95.4% (n=241); 2019= 94.75% (n=289/305)
- **MSN national certification examination pass rates:**
  2015=98%; 2016=93%; 2017=95.52%; 2018=96.22%; 2019 (60/64) = 93.75%
- **BSRS registry examination pass rates**:
  2015=83%; 2016=91%; 2017=97%; 2018=96%; 2019= 83%

National Program Rankings and Recognition:

- #4 Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Program in the US.
- #1 Producer of licensed registered nurses in Louisiana in 2019 (2019 NCLEX report)
- #1 Producer of Nurse Practitioners in Louisiana (2019 LSBN Report)
- #21 ranking of Best Nursing Schools in the US by Study.com (2020)
- #1 Nurse Practitioner program ranking by Intelligent.com (2020)
- #9 ranked RN to BSN program in Louisiana by TopRNtoBSN.com (2020)
- 2019 Best of Shreveport Nursing School Awards by townranking decision.com
- US News and World Report top 100 "best masters in nursing online program" 2020

Enrollment, Graduation, Employment Rates:

CONSAH

- CONSAH Fall 2019 total student enrollment has increased 44% or 949 students since Fall 2014.
- CONSAH total student enrollment for Fall 2019 was 3130; a 7% (198 student) increase from Fall 2018.
- CONSAH employment rates maintained above 95% for past six years.
- CONSAH alumni satisfaction rates above 90% for the past four years
- CONSAH employer satisfaction rates above 90% for the past four years

CON

- CON undergraduate nursing student enrollment (ASN, BSN) for Fall 2019 was 2435 students. That is an increase from Fall 2018 of 120 students.

- ASN Program Enrollment for Fall 2019 was 854; a 10 % increase from 2018.
- BSN Program Enrollment for 2019 was 1582; a 3% increase from 2018.
- MSN Program Enrollment for 2019 was 236; a 4% increase from 2018.
- PMC Program Enrollment is now being counted separate from MSN due to accreditation standards and thus had a 100% increase (because not counted separate last year) or 12 student increase. Will now trend separately.
- DNP Program Enrollment for 2019 was 39; an 8% increase from 2018.
- ASN Program Completion Rates for 2019 were 82%.
- ASN Program Employment Rates: 2015-2019= 100%
- BSN Program Employment Rates: 2015-2019=100%
- BSN Program Completion Rates (based on time students enter clinical courses): 2019 =77%.

SAH

- SAH total student enrollment for 2019 was 408; a 15% increase from 2018.
- SAH total undergraduate student enrollment for 2019 was 373; an 11% increase from 2018.
- SAH total graduate student enrollment for 2019 was 35, a 52% increase from 2018.
- BSRS Program Completion Rates for 2019 75%
- BSRS Program Employment Rates: 2015-2019=100%

Lastly, to answer CONSAH advisory councils' requests for graduates to fill specific workforce needs, in addition to students' requests for more degree offerings, CONSAH developed and received all required approvals, for the following degree route and concentration of the DNP program in 2019-2020:

  BSN to DNP-Nurse Anesthesia

On site capability review is planned for September 30-October 2, 2020. Admission into this concentration of the DNP program will begin in the 2020-2021 academic year.

The Future

Each year, the University sets a goal to increase enrollment by 6%. CONSAH has exceeded this goal each year for the past six years. Our future plans are to maintain current traditional undergraduate enrollment, focus on increasing online non-traditional undergraduate enrollment and graduate enrollment in addition to evaluating available physical and fiscal resources to meet our current and future needs.

Last year, CONSAH's strategic plan included the following short-term goals: (1) Initiating BSN to DNP program, (2) Developing a CRNA program, (3) ensuring re-structuring of CONSAH organizational chart was visionary enough to allow for future program growth; (4) incorporate innovative teaching learning strategies into curriculum.

In the 2019-2020 academic year goals 1 and 2 were combined into the BSN to DNP-NA (nurse anesthetist) program. Achievement of this goal did not fully occur in 2019-2020, but initial discussions with the national certifying agency (COA) began, a program coordinator/Doctorate program Director was hired, and a program assistant coordinator was hired. Over $500,000 in needed funding for BSN to DNP-NA program fiscal needs and student stipends was obtained. Goal 3 was achieved as the CONSAH organizational chart was restructured to allow for development of "non-traditional" and "traditional" ASN and BSN programs.

Last year, CONSAH's strategic plan included the following long-term goals: (1) procuring funding for a new building on the Shreveport campus, (2) developing a doctor of osteopathy program housed within the school of allied health, and (3) developing a PhD in nursing degree. In the 2019-2020 academic year, funding

for the new building was not actively pursued due to the need to procure funding for the BSN to DNP-NA program The doctor of osteopathy program was delayed until the BSN to DNP-NA program is implemented and the PhD in nursing degree was delayed until SACSCOC level change can occur.

The second administrative council retreat was held in July 2019 in Portland Oregon, where faculty learned about disruptive creative innovative learning strategies. The 2019-2023 Strategic Plan was updated at that retreat and revision of goals or initiatives to achieve the strategic plan goals were discussed. Information from the administrative council retreat was shared with the entire CONSAH faculty at the initial Fall 2019 faculty meeting and a guest speaker from Washington DC will presented on Innovation and the Education System at the Fall 2019 faculty meeting.

The third edition of nursing columns is in production with plans to be mailed to CON alumni summer 2020. Due to the pandemic and the altruistic heroic actions of many of our CON faculty, students and alumni, plans for the columns to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the CON was changed. Instead of celebrating the 70th anniversary, the third edition will celebrate the Heroes the CON has produced over the past 70 years!

Short term goals for 2020-2021 academic year: 1) Have a successful accreditation virtual site visit with CCNE for all CON programs except for ASN and receive full 10 year accreditation status; 2) Have a successful accreditation site visit with COA and receive full initial accreditation status for the BSN to DNP-NA concentration of the DNP program; 3) Admit first full cohort of 20 students into the BSN to DNP-NA program; 4) Submit a substantive change document to CCNE which adds the BSN to DNP-NA concentration to the DNP program; 5) Submit the BS to BSN substantive change document to CCNE; 6) Have a first BS to BSN cohort retain 90% of students and have successful NCLEX first time passage rates; 7) Find next CONSAH Dean; 8) Retain clinical students safely in clinical learning environments/settings during COVID crisis; 9) Retain faculty safely in clinical learning environments/settings during COVID crisis; 10) work on increasing student retention in undergraduate CONSAH programs; and, 11) heavily market RN to BSN program's flat rate tuition to increase enrollment.

Long term goals: 1) Plan for a successful transition as senior director and assessment director and a campus coordinator plan retirement within the next 2-3 years; 2) Dean transition into doctorate faculty member role; 3)Ensure first cohorts in BS to BSN and BSN to DNP-NA programs retain students; have completion rates > 90% and that students complete licensure/certification examinations successfully on first attempt; 4) Post all program outcomes to web page; 5) Continue fund-raising for CONSAH building on Shreveport off-campus learning site.

Innovation

In AC 2019-2020, CONSAH expanded the use of iPad technology in the undergraduate nursing classroom to facilitate online testing and by the end of the academic year iPad technology was being used by ALL five-baccalaureate nursing clinical levels and all four associate nursing clinical levels. Additionally, the SAH began use of iPad technology for testing in the BSRS program.

In AC 2019-2020 a distance learning equipment was updated in 5 of the 9 distance education rooms across the CONSAH's four off-campus learning sites. Renovation of two additional distance learning rooms is planned for Leesville and a new network fiber is being installed with funding from the CONSAH in Summer 2020 which will increase the reliability and speed of our current distance learning system.

Funding for the building campaign came to a halt during the pandemic and because of the need to acquire funds for the BSN to DNP-NA program. However, it is our hope that by Fall 2020 fundraising can resume for the building campaign.

Use of exam soft testing software has been fully implemented in the ASN and BSN programs. This software is a testing platform that provides secured testing for many professional healthcare programs across the US and in Louisiana. The need for secured testing platforms to use with iPad technology have grown exponentially. The CONSAH created and filled an educational technology position for a CONSAH faculty member to help facilitate use of educational technology in the classroom. The person hired in this position has done a tremendous job at implementing iPad testing and exam soft testing for undergraduate nursing programs. Further, this person. Has facilitated the uploading of DNP projects into proquest data bases, and use of a meditrax technology system to track students' clinical hours, health-form data, etc.

The university and CONSAH must continue to look for ways to have most secured testing possible in online learning environments and provide faculty with the tools necessary to engage students in active learning in the online environments.

College of Business and Technology

The College of Business and Technology (CoBT) employs 1 dean, 29 full-time faculty members, 1 part-time faculty member, 3 coordinators/administrators with teaching release time, and 3 administrative support staff members. The CoBT serves 1,252 (14-day count Fall 2019) undergraduates enrolled in the following degrees:

The School of Business:

Accounting; business administration with concentrations in business analytics, entrepreneurship, finance, international business, management, and marketing; computer information systems with concentrations in application development, cyber security, networking and system management, and web development; hospitality management and tourism with concentrations in culinary arts, hospitality services, and travel and tourism. Also, have minors in accounting, business administration, computer information systems, hospitality management and tourism, and culinary arts. Have a post baccalaureate certificate in business analytics. Have a master's in computer information systems.

The CoBT faculty are providing an engaging, applied learning environment for our students.

Academic Success

At the College, academic success means our students are meeting university, college, and school expectations. One measure of student academic success is being in good standing [GPA of 2.0 overall and in major]. For the overall AC 2019-2020 academic year, 86.11 percent (86.11%) of students achieved a GPA of 2.0 and above. In Spring 2020, 90.05 percent (90.05%) of students achieved a GPA of 2.0 and above.

Another measure of student academic success is academic progress, moving towards earning a degree. In AC 2019-2020, 208 CoBT students (without ET) earned degrees as compared to 222 CoBT students (with ET) earning their degrees in AC 2018-2019. Academic progress is also determined by the number of credit hours earned by our students per semester. In fall 2019, the average number of credit hours earned for CoBT students was 10.90 with 10.59 earned credit hours in spring 2020.

To assist with ensuring academic success, we provide our students with access to the following:

1. Proper prerequisites for course success.
2. Supplemental instruction. Instructors provide supplemental instruction, video captured lectures, and students can also access tutors in our 24-hour Lab.

3. Relevant connections between what our students are learning in college and their current or future life by providing reality-based learning experiences such as guest speakers, business cases, problem-based or project-based learning, role plays, and simulations. For example, guest presenters discussed topic areas such as the importance of being able to communicate in writing and speaking, motivational techniques, and professional success. Other presenters discussed topic areas specific to their industry and other course subjects and relevant information.
4. Experiential learning opportunities such as internships and service-learning programs. (NSU Coding Club, NSU Demon Tech Clinic, Mentor Protégé Program, and Capstone Community Projects).
5. Relevant course lectures and assignments enhance our students' knowledge and skills.
6. Connecting students with key academic support and student development through involvement with the Student Advisory and Outreach Board activities and guest speakers.
7. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Please see SACSCOC document for more information.

Student Success

The College also defines student success as:

1. student retention (persistence). In AC 2019-2020 the School of Business retention rate for all students was 69.40% and persistence rate for our full-time entering freshman (1st to 2nd year) was 59.39%.
2. graduation rates. In AC 2019-2020, 208 CoBT students (without ET) earned degrees, compared to 222 students (with ET) in AC 2018-2019.

The College and faculty participate in the following events and activities that also contribute to student success:(1) first-year convocation ceremonies; (2) enhanced advisor/instructor/student relationships (Registration Round-up Event); (3) student recognition (Phi Beta Lambda and Association of Information Technology Professionals, EDP, Honor Societies, competitive events, PBL and AITP winners, and leadership award ceremonies); and (4) student engagement with and participation in J. Walter Porter Forum, College of Business and Technology Advisory Board meeting, and College of Business and Technology Homecoming Activities, including the Hall of Distinction. HMT hosts several social events such as the Columns Cafe dinner events and lunch events, and special luncheon demonstrations each semester.

Research and Innovation:

The CoBT faculty continue to incorporate experiential simulation projects (ESP) and community service project and activities as innovative and engaging assignments within the course curricula.

In fall of 2019, we held our 2nd Inferno Pitch competition–Hottest Idea Wins!! This competition provides real-world education in entrepreneurship and boosts awareness and innovation commercialization in our region to our business students. Forty participants submitted their ideas, and the top 5 pitched their hot ideas to a panel of judges. The Entrepreneurial Accelerator Program [EAP] has adopted our model and is encouraging other schools to use this model. In fall 2019, the College of Business and Technology offered its QuickBooks seminar and its CLEs to the local business community. In the fall of 2019, Hospitality Management and Tourism continued its Columns Café. HMT students and faculty members offered a monthly lunch and dinner to the NSU community and the Natchitoches and surrounding communities. As part of this experiential learning component, students planned, prepared, and served the meals.

HMT continued its Student Advisory and Outreach Board to provide feedback about program improvements as well as serve as ambassadors for the HMT program. Some of the members participate and are members of the College of Business and Technology's Student Advisory and Outreach Board.

Initiated in fall 2016, our CoBT Industry Showcase, which strengthens our business and industry partnerships and provides our faculty members and students with the opportunity to showcase special projects and initiatives, was cancelled in spring 2020 due to COVID-19. We hope to resume these activities spring 2021.

We continue to innovate in the classroom through technological and pedagogical changes (statistics knowledge summary notebook and implementation of CISCO teleconferencing equipment). Our faculty members continue to incorporate real-world business scenarios into classroom assignments and projects, and bring guest speakers into classes. NSU-School of Business Start the Spark Series was launched with Dr. Nita Landry-co-host from the Emmy Award winning show 'The Doctor'. Due to COVID-19, the 2nd Start the Spark Series was canceled. This event will be held in spring 2021.

With the renovation of the David Morgan room completed with a video presentation wall as well CISCO teleconferencing equipment, in fall 2019 we partnered and hosted at least three business and industry community events. The CIS faculty and the College of Education faculty continued to provide STEM training to middle-school math and science teachers in high-need schools within the Central Louisiana School Districts-CLIP initiative. The CIS area participated in the LA GearUp initiative for summer 2019.

In AC 2019-2020 the School of Business faculty members partnered and collaborated with two international scholars and we continually monitor our intellectual endeavors that strengthen the level of academic rigor in the College. Due to COVID-19, five faculty members virtually presented their research at International Conference.

Outlook-Action Plan

Supporting innovation and educational success, we continually seek feedback from our stakeholders and make appropriate changes to our curriculum. We will continue to advise and promote the ***15 to Finish*** during advising sessions with our students. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to write notes about advising and scheduling recommendations on each student's degree audit.

Moving forward we will continue to develop additional programs identified as needed by the workforce and that link and support our business and industry partners. These include areas such as data analytics, customer service, and video game development. CoBT is exploring the creation and implementation of undergraduate certificate programs that will enhance our students' skillsets and are highly sought after by business and industry. We will encourage other disciplines to create and implement the CIS Mentor Protégé Program. Hospitality Management and Tourism is seeking to align with a different accrediting body. Also, HMT is exploring summer initiatives like the Purple Apron – a culinary camp for elementary students. Another initiative would be adult cooking classes. HMT is seeking accreditation, as well as adding a four-year degree in Culinary Arts to provide for needs in the industry.

It is the goal of the College of Business and Technology to reach a student enrollment of 2,000 by Fall 2022.

Notes: The number of students earning degrees appears lower compared to last year because ET is no longer included. If ET students are removed from last year's number, 180 students earned degrees in AC 2018-2019. The retention/persistence rates are for students retained within the CoBT. For students retained within NSU, it is 74.07% for all students and 66.67% for entering freshmen.

Moving Forward

AC 2019-2020 completes the University's fourth iteration of holistic assessment. The University can move forward into AC 2020-2021 with confidence knowing our commitment to continuous improvement is reflected in the progress made toward our vision. Organizationally, we have learned a tremendous amount about ourselves these past four two years. Two key events have occurred in summer 2020 that will impact the University as it moves forward into AC 2020-2021.

First, the appointment of Dr. Michael Snowden as Northwestern's new Vice-President for Diversity and Inclusion was approved by the Board of Supervisors of the University of Louisiana System. Dr. Snowden will be at the forefront of Northwestern's efforts to expand and enhance the atmosphere of fairness, diversity, and inclusion on all its campuses and in all the programs and activities in which the University is engaged.

Second, as a testament to our assessment efforts, Northwestern was selected by the National Institute of Learning Outcome Assessment (NIOLA) as a 2020 Excellence in Assessment Designee. The Excellence in Assessment (EIA) designation recognizes colleges and universities that successfully integrate assessment practices throughout the institution, provide evidence of student learning outcomes to stakeholders, and utilize assessment results to guide institutional decision-making and improve student performance. Twelve institutions working to implement and sustain comprehensive use of assessment of student learning outcomes have been selected to receive the designation in 2020 and we are happy to count Northwestern State University among their number. We now have a total of 39 designees since 2016!

The annual assessment process is not complete until the recommendations and proposed decisions are mediated and agreed upon, the final report is written, and the briefing presented. While we have a transparent, standardized, and integrated process, we still have work to do in convincing faculty and students of the power of assessment.

Based on our analysis of assessment activities, we have identified four strategic goals/challenges for the next five years:

- **Improving analysis of assessment results as they apply to improve critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and writing skills**. Determining how best to pilot a methodology that would apply to all degree and certificate programs regardless of discipline.

- **Expansion of External Stakeholders' participation and knowledge** of SLO assessment so they have a better understanding of the process and can offer more relevant and timely feedback. The initiative would require a mix of surveys and evaluation rubrics.

- **Assessment of High-Impact Practices – Lessons Learned** requires a collaborative effort between academic and student affairs focused on service-experiential learning. The QEP assessment results are critical in the evaluation of these co-curricular student experiences.

- **Increasing all aspects of diversity and inclusion.** Being a leader in understanding, accepting, and valuing differences between people while removing all barriers, discrimination, and intolerance so that everyone feels included and supported.

As a road map to the future we have also identified immediate (3 x months), near term (6 x months), and short term (12 x months) activities to guide our efforts.

Immediate:
- Capture the 2019-2020 lessons learned and implement decisions
- Update AC 2020-2021 Assessment Plans as necessary
- Initiate–continue AC 2020-2021 assessments–data collection
- Continue to assess recommendations–build consensus and establish predictability

Near Term:
- October–Receive President's guidance on 2020-2021 Budget Enhancement Process
- December–Annual SACSCOC Conference
    - Azimuth check on AC 2020-2021 assessment process (SFA/Program/Unit)
    - Gain intelligence on 5th Year Report Standards
- Maintain continuity in data collection
- Determine and integrate the Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion into Strategic Planning and assessment activities.

Short Term:
- October and beyond – thinking about the way forward – reshaping the strategic plan.
- May 7th – Commencement ends assessment cycle
- June 18th – AY 2020-2021 Assessments complete and submitted to DIE
    - SFA updated assessments complete and submitted to DIE
- July 1 – First Draft of Fifth Year Report Requirements
- August - Draft–Assessment Cycle AC 2020–2021 Report– *The Way Forward*
- September – Brief to President

It is the caliber and character of our faculty, staff, administrators, students, and community that ensures Northwestern fulfills its mission. It is through the commitment of our entire University community that we will realize our vision of becoming the nation's premier regional university.