

## **Assessment Cycle 2025-2026**

### **Student Experience & Student Affairs**

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#### **Northwestern State Mission**

Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

#### **The Student Experience Mission**

The Student Experience provides the University community with programs and services to support the academic mission of creating, disseminating, and acquiring knowledge through teaching, research and service while empowering a diverse student population to achieve their highest educational potential. The Student Experience creates a stimulating and inclusive educational environment that is conducive to holistic personal growth. The commitment to students initiates prior to entrance, sustains throughout the college experience, and continues beyond graduation. Enrollment Services provide equal access for education to potential students throughout the state and region and promote economic stability and financial access to citizens. Student Affairs enhances student development and broadens intellectual, social, cultural, ethical, and occupational growth. The Student Experience works closely with faculty, staff, students, and the community to ensure graduates have the capability to promote economic development and improvements in the region.

#### **Student Affairs Mission**

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

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### Methodology:

1. The Student Experience Division is both service-oriented and focused on student learning. Therefore, both service and learning outcomes will be utilized. Assessment methods will be qualitative and quantitative, direct, indirect, and summative.
2. The Vice President for the Student Experience and the Director of Student Affairs are responsible for the assessment process.
3. The Vice President for the Student Experience will share assessment results with both University and external stakeholders, and community agents.
4. Based on the sharing of data, revisions and recommendations for improvements will be made for the next assessment period.

### Student Experience & Student Affairs Service Learning Outcomes

**SLO 1.** Students who participate in the President's Leadership Program will be able to apply foundational leadership concepts, develop a personal leadership philosophy, become self-aware, understand the dynamics of decision-making, become involved in the community, and engage in a positive - inclusive learning experience.

**Measure 1.1.** Ninety-five percent (95%) of students will respond that they "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" that their expectations of the President's Leadership Program were met. *DATA: President's Leadership Program Evaluations #8*

**Finding:** Target was met.

### Analysis.

In AC 2024-2025 the target was met. Staff made improvements in the recruitment and interview process for first-year students interested in the program with outreach during the Freshmen Connection programs as well as N-Side View Day programs. Past PLP members helped implement new initiatives and develop new programming to address all areas of the expected outcomes. The staff, along with PLP mentors, used the program evaluations to craft a curriculum that met the PLP students' needs. All ten categories totaled 97.6% of program satisfaction with participants selecting either strongly agreed or agreed on the survey. All 47 students responded that their overall expectation was met.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the staff made the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. A review of the course curriculum occurred based on 2024-2025 student feedback. Staff hosted a Peer Leader

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feedback session mid-semester, where small groups of students reflected on their growth, share experiences, and offered feedback on program components in a supportive, student-led setting.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was met. Staff reviewed the course curriculum and hosted a Peer Leader feedback session mid-semester which offered feedback on program components in a supportive, student-led setting. 100% of students who took the survey indicated they strongly agree (89%) and agree (11%) that their expectation of the President's Leadership Program was met.

### **Decision:**

In AC 2025-2026 the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the 2025-2026 results, the staff will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. Staff will review the curriculum and survey results to ensure student needs are met. The Presidents Leadership Program Peer Mentors will host a midsemester feedback session to evaluate the students' experience and determine if spring programming needs to change. A smaller-scale pilot of the President's Leadership Program is being developed for the Shreveport campus, launching Fall 2026. As this is a pilot, Shreveport data will not be included in AC 2026–2027.

These changes will improve the students' ability to understand their expectations of the President's Leadership Program, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**Measure 1.2.** Sixty percent (60%) are engaged in campus activities in a leadership role by the end of their first year. *DATA: President's Leadership Program Evaluations #3*

**Finding:** Target was met.

### **Analysis.**

In AC 2024-2025 the target was met. The staff invited PLP alumni, student leaders, organization presidents, staff members, and faculty to educate PLP students of the leadership opportunities within the NSU and Natchitoches community. With out-of-classroom events and programs offered at NSU throughout the year, PLP students researched what roles and responsibilities will be valuable to them as they look to their second-year experience based on their co-curricular goals. The survey indicated that 98% of students (46 of 47) reported engagement in campus life programs and student organizations and 60% of students indicated that they also assumed leadership roles in at least one student organization, or program by the end of the spring semester. Some leadership roles included members of student organization executive councils, becoming a Freshman Connector, BCM worship leader, Greek executive board members, Student Government, Alpha Lambda Delta, and athletics.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the staff made the following

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changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Students took part in the Leadership Development Series (Student Experience Success Series) featuring monthly workshops co-led by campus leaders, PLP alumni, and community partners. These sessions will focus on leadership skills such as team management, public speaking, conflict resolution, and goal setting. PLP mentors implemented a Leadership Goal Mapping Activity during the fall to help students intentionally align their involvement with long-term leadership aspirations. Students identified leadership roles of interest toward end of fall term and created a co-curricular engagement plan with check-in milestones for the spring.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was met. The survey indicated that 60% of students (22 of 37) assumed leadership roles in at least one student organization or program by the end of the spring semester. Some leadership roles included members of student organization executive councils, becoming a Freshman Connector, Baptist Collegiate Ministry worship leader, Greek executive board members, Resident Assistants, Student Government Senator at Large, Alpha Lambda Delta Academic Honor Society Treasurer, and The Pantry leadership.

### **Decision:**

In AC 2025-2026 the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the 2025-2026 results, the staff will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. Students indicated they wanted more opportunities for community service and to learn more about campus leadership opportunities. Staff will incorporate structured community service opportunities and expand leadership development experiences by implementing a student experience success series.

These changes will improve the student's ability to participate in campus activities, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**SLO 2.** Each student will complete a Community Impact Project incorporating the lessons learned in the program.

**Measure 2.1.** Students will attain a minimum score of 80% on their Community Impact Project per a multi-component grading scale. *DATA: President's Leadership Program student reflections, course grades, class presentations, and mentor reflections on the Community Impact Projects.*

**Finding:** Target was met.

### **Analysis.**

In AC 2024-2025 the target was met. For the past several years, the community impact projects have been duplicated within the President's Leadership Program, which indicated the programs are sustainable. For AC 2024-2025, the PLP students researched what new projects could be added to this program based on the needs

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assessment of our NSU and Natchitoches community. All 49 students earned 100% on their Community Impact Projects. The multi-component scale used for students assessing their project indicated that the evaluation topic percentage average was 98% in areas of meeting community needs (98%), partnerships (96%), learning (94%), insights and understanding (100%), and leadership development (100%).

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the staff made the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. A new Peer Review Component was introduced, where students presented their project proposals at the end of the Fall semester to classmates and mentors for feedback prior to implementation.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was met. For AC 2025-2026, the PLP students researched what new projects could be added to this program based on the needs assessment of our NSU and Natchitoches community. All 38 students earned 100% on their Community Impact Projects. The multi-component scale used for students assessing their project indicated that the evaluation topic in areas of meeting community needs (94%), partnerships (86%), learning (94%), insights and understanding (100%), and leadership development (97%).

### **Decision:**

In AC 2025-2026 the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the 2025-2026 results, the staff will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. While most areas remained strong, the decline in partnerships (from 96% to 86%) highlighted an opportunity for growth. To address this, staff will introduce students to community partners earlier in the semester to strengthen awareness and collaboration.

These changes will improve the student's ability to obtain at least 80% on the community impact project, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**Measure 2.2.** Ninety percent (90%) of projects will be sustainable through infrastructure and community commitment as judged by a focus group of faculty members, peer mentors, and community representatives. *DATA: President's Leadership Program Experience Community Impact Projects and Class Presentation and evaluation.*

**Finding:** Target was met.

### **Analysis.**

In AC 2024-2025 the target was met. The program director discussed the importance of servant leadership at the N-side View Day program and the PLP Emerging Leaders Day programs for prospective students. The President's Leadership Program website and publications were revised to incorporate major components of the program including community impact projects. This process encouraged a service mindset early in their PLP program and set a foundation of service initiatives for AC 2024-

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2025. Mentors, site representatives, collaborative community partners, and staff members agreed that the projects provided added value to the community. Utilizing the community impact project evaluation results under “Progress and Leadership Development” section, 91% (43/47) indicated significant growth or personal development and 8% (4/47) increased sensitivity or change of attitude due to their involvement with these projects.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the staff made the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. Community Impact Project Showcases were held during the spring, allowing students to present outcomes, future, and reflect on the project’s impact in front of peers, community partners, and university leaders. To encourage ongoing collaboration with external organizations, PLP staff will create a Community Partner Feedback Loop, which included structured post-project surveys with each community partner to assess project sustainability, areas for improvement, and recommendations for future engagement.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was met. Feedback with Special Olympics Louisiana staff and coaches, with program donors, as well as staff members from the Natchitoches Community Care Center occurred during the spring semester. Utilizing the community impact project evaluation results under “Progress and Leadership Development” section, 89% (32/36) indicated significant growth or personal development and 8% (3/36) increased sensitivity or change of attitude due to their involvement with these projects, and 2%(1/36) indicated limited understanding the importance of service.

### **Decision:**

In AC 2025-2026 the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the 2025-2026 results, the staff will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. To encourage ongoing collaboration with external organizations, PLP staff will establish a Community Partner feedback loop, introducing structured post-project surveys with each community partner to assess project sustainability, identify areas for improvement, and inform recommendations for future engagement.

These changes will improve the student's ability to identify community impact projects that are sustainable for the NSU and Natchitoches community, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**SO 1.** Enhance quality of campus life through educational, social, and cultural programs, and services.

**Measure 1.1.** Food insecurity is a major burden among college students. To help reduce food insecurity NSU created The Food Pantry. The Food Pantry provides free food, goods, and resources to students with food insecurities. Success will be defined as those using goods and services provided by The Pantry with an overall satisfaction

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rate of at least 80% which will include satisfied and very satisfied responses. *Data from volunteers and patrons.*

**Finding:** Target was met.

### **Analysis.**

In AC 2024-2025 the target was met. The Pantry staff posted The Pantry Guest Feedback Survey at the onsite location, to their bio on their social media platforms, and sent it out at the conclusion of each semester to guests and volunteers with the intent to increase the response rate. The staff utilized an online platform that will help with data collection and assessment of patron and volunteer satisfaction with The Pantry. The Pantry had a total of 48 volunteers including 2 coordinators that logged over 504 volunteer hours in The Pantry and an additional 127 volunteer hours for events and projects held outside of The Pantry. There was a total 945 visits to The Pantry with a total of 393 unique attendees. Although The Pantry met the target for AC 2023-2024, with an overall satisfaction rate of at 100% which includes satisfied and very satisfied responses, the response rate was low.

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the staff made the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. To address the low response rate on satisfaction surveys, the staff provided a real-time digital survey accessed onsite and simplified the survey format. To enhance visibility and outreach, The Pantry hosted monthly events in collaboration with student organizations and integrated awareness into first-year student programming (Demon Days - The Pantry Training days). The staff pursued partnerships with faculty/staff, local businesses, and community organizations to increase resources and funding opportunities.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was met. NSU was awarded the Board of Regents Hunger Free Campus Grant, which provided additional funding to expand The Pantry's resources, programming, and outreach efforts to better serve students experiencing food insecurity. The Pantry had a total of 75 volunteers including 3 coordinators that logged 503 hours for the fall and 540 spring; totaling 1043 volunteer hours in The Pantry and an additional 116 volunteer hours for events and projects held outside of The Pantry. There was a total of 2,043 visits to The Pantry with a total of 409 unique attendees. Although The Pantry met the target for AC 2025-2026 with an overall satisfaction rate of 94% (which includes satisfied and very satisfied responses) and the response rate increased from last year's report, more can be done to increase the completion rate.

### **Decision:**

In AC 2025-2026 the target was met.

Based on the analysis of the 2025-2026 results, the staff will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. To address data collection and capacity needs, The Pantry will host an intern for AC 2026-2027 who will assist with events, programs, and the day-to-day operations of The Pantry. The intern

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will pull access reports weekly and send out surveys monthly, allowing staff to capture and assess data more efficiently and consistently.

These changes will improve the students' ability to identify the resources offered by NSU to help with food insecurity among our students, thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**Measure 1.2** Foster diverse participation in campus activities and programs. Initiatives and programs are inclusive and embrace community members with diverse backgrounds and life experiences and support the free and open exchange of ideas and civil discourse. University officials from a myriad of areas on campus collaborate to provide inclusive and diverse programming. With the exchange of ideas, the accountability of fostering diversity within our programs is an ongoing initiative. Evidence of the adoptions of or the interaction with diversity-related programs and departments will be a strategic indicator of success and will be documented in the minutes. The goal is to meet regularly and provide professional development opportunities at 50% of the meetings for the academic year.

**Finding:** Target was not met.

### Analysis.

In AC 2024-2025 the target was met. Before the start of the academic year, the request to present departmental resources was sent out to the campus and NSU community using a specific sign-up portal system to collect this information as opposed to sending out the request internally. Furthermore, the selection of the meeting dates was evaluated to ensure important university dates, holidays, etc. were considered before booking the meetings. The committee hosted nine professional development sessions across 14 meetings, achieving a 64% rate that exceeded our 50% target. Additionally, attendance showed dramatic improvement with peak attendance reaching 96% (compared to only 35% in the previous year).

Based on the analysis of the AC 2024-2025 results, the staff made the following changes in AC 2025-2026 to drive the cycle of improvement. The Director of Student Affairs utilized the sign-up portal system for professional development presenters, which successfully increased participation from 6 sessions in 2023-2024 to 9 sessions in 2024-2025 and implemented targeted outreach strategies to other departments to ensure diverse representation and education of resources. The committee revised its attendance tracking methodology, shifting from individual-based to department-based representation metrics, which will more accurately reflect consistent departmental engagement regardless of which specific staff member attends from week to week.

As a result of these changes, in AC 2025-2026 the target was not met. Participation declined significantly throughout the year, beginning at 75% (15/20) in September before dropping sharply to 35% (7/20) in October and 45% (9/20) in November. Spring semester saw a modest recovery with 55% (11/20) in January and 60% (12/20) in February, suggesting some renewed engagement but still indicating a need for a more

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intentional approach to sustaining consistent attendance.

### **Decision:**

In AC 2025-2026 the target was not met.

Based on the analysis of the 2025-2026 results, the staff will implement the following changes in AC 2026-2027 to drive the cycle of improvement. To build a stronger and more reliable foundation for this initiative, the committee will be restructured at the start of 2026-2027 to include members who have demonstrated a consistent commitment to attendance and participation. Members who did not actively engage during 2025-2026 will be transitioned off the committee, and replacements will be recruited with a clear understanding of attendance expectations from the outset. This rightsizing of the committee is expected to produce more consistent participation data, stronger collaboration, and a more productive group dynamic. Professional development opportunities will also be incorporated as a value-added component of meetings to further incentivize engagement and enrich the group's collective work throughout the year. For AC 2026-2027, the measure will also be updated to "Northwestern State University fosters broad participation in campus activities and programs. Initiatives are welcoming, embracing community members with varied backgrounds and life experiences, and support the free exchange of ideas and civil discourse. University officials across campus collaborate to provide representative programming. Evidence of engagement with community-focused programs and departments will serve as a strategic indicator of success and will be documented in the meeting minutes. The goal is to meet regularly and provide professional development opportunities at 50% of meetings for the academic year."

These changes will create a more committed and engaged committee built around demonstrated participation and shared purpose thereby continuing to push the cycle of improvement forward.

**Comprehensive summary of key evidence of improvements based on analysis of results.** The following reflects all the changes implemented to drive the continuous process of seeking improvement in AC 2025-2026. These changes are based on the knowledge gained through the AC 2024-2025 results analysis.

### **SLO. 1:**

1.1: A review of the course curriculum occurred based on 2024-2025 student feedback. Staff hosted a Peer Leader feedback session mid-semester, where small groups of students reflected on their growth, share experiences, and offered feedback on program components in a supportive, student-led setting.

1.2: Students took part in the Leadership Development Series (Student Experience Success Series) featuring monthly workshops co-led by campus leaders, PLP alumni, and community partners. These sessions will focus on leadership skills such as team management, public speaking, conflict resolution, and goal setting. PLP mentors

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implemented a Leadership Goal Mapping Activity during the fall to help students intentionally align their involvement with long-term leadership aspirations. Students identified leadership roles of interest toward end of fall term and created a co-curricular engagement plan with check-in milestones for the spring.

### **SLO. 2:**

2.1: New Peer Review Component was introduced, where students presented their project proposals at the end of the Fall semester to classmates and mentors for feedback prior to implementation.

2.2: Community Impact Project Showcases were held during the spring, allowing students to present outcomes, future, and reflect on the project's impact in front of peers, community partners, and university leaders. To encourage ongoing collaboration with external organizations, PLP staff will create a Community Partner Feedback Loop, which included structured post-project surveys with each community partner to assess project sustainability, areas for improvement, and recommendations for future engagement.

### **SO. 1:**

1.1: To address the low response rate on satisfaction surveys, the staff provided a real-time digital survey accessed onsite and simplified the survey format. To enhance visibility and outreach, The Pantry hosted monthly events in collaboration with student organizations and integrate awareness into first-year student programming (Demon Days The Pantry Training days). The staff pursued partnerships with faculty/staff, local businesses, and community organizations to increase resources and funding opportunities.

1.2: The Director of Student Affairs utilized the sign-up portal system for professional development presenters, which successfully increased participation from 6 sessions in 2023-2024 to 9 sessions in 2024-2025 and implemented targeted outreach strategies to other departments to ensure diverse representation and education of resources. The committee revised its attendance tracking methodology, shifting from individual-based to department-based representation metrics, which will more accurately reflect consistent departmental engagement regardless of which specific staff member attends from week to week.

## **Plan of action moving forward.**

### **SLO. 1:**

1.1: Staff will review the curriculum and survey results to ensure student needs are met. The Presidents Leadership Program Peer Mentors will host a midsemester feedback session to evaluate the students' experience and determine if spring programming needs to change. A smaller-scale pilot of the President's Leadership Program is being developed for the Shreveport campus, launching Fall 2026. As this is a pilot, Shreveport data will not be included in AC 2026–2027.

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1.2: Students indicated they wanted more opportunities for community service and to learn more about campus leadership opportunities. Staff will incorporate structured community service opportunities and expand leadership development experiences by implementing a student experience success series.

### **SLO. 2:**

2.1: While most areas remained strong, the decline in partnerships (from 96% to 86%) highlighted an opportunity for growth. To address this, staff will introduce students to community partners earlier in the semester to strengthen awareness and collaboration.

2.2: To encourage ongoing collaboration with external organizations, PLP staff will establish a Community Partner feedback loop, introducing structured post-project surveys with each community partner to assess project sustainability, identify areas for improvement, and inform recommendations for future engagement.

### **SO. 1:**

1.1: To address data collection and capacity needs, The Pantry will host an intern for AC 2026-2027 who will assist with events, programs, and the day-to-day operations of The Pantry. The intern will pull access reports weekly and send out surveys monthly, allowing staff to capture and assess data more efficiently and consistently.

1.2: To build a stronger and more reliable foundation for this initiative, the committee will be restructured at the start of 2026-2027 to include members who have demonstrated a consistent commitment to attendance and participation. Members who did not actively engage during 2025-2026 will be transitioned off the committee, and replacements will be recruited with a clear understanding of attendance expectations from the outset. This rightsizing of the committee is expected to produce more consistent participation data, stronger collaboration, and a more productive group dynamic. Professional development opportunities will also be incorporated as a value-added component of meetings to further incentivize engagement and enrich the group's collective work throughout the year. For AC 2026-2027, the measure will also be updated to "Northwestern State University fosters broad participation in campus activities and programs. Initiatives are welcoming, embracing community members with varied backgrounds and life experiences, and support the free exchange of ideas and civil discourse. University officials across campus collaborate to provide representative programming. Evidence of engagement with community-focused programs and departments will serve as a strategic indicator of success and will be documented in the meeting minutes. The goal is to meet regularly and provide professional development opportunities at 50% of meetings for the academic year.