**Northern Michigan University**

**OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PLAN/REPORT FORM**

**Administrative or Educational Support Unit**

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| Name of Department or Unit | | Communications and Marketing | | | |
| This document is the | PLAN or X REPORT for July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012 | | | Date Submitted: | Oct. 31, 2012 |
| Submitted by (Unit Representative) | | | Cindy Paavola | | |

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| Department or Unit Mission Statement: Was this mission statement revised this year? Yes \_X\_ No |
| NMU Communications and Marketing will bolster Northern Michigan University’s reputation and accountability by raising awareness of academic and student support programs, regional services and accomplishments of NMU community members to future, current and past students, as well as the internal NMU community and external NMU stakeholders. |

**Functions within the University:**

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| In addition to being part of NMU’s continuous improvement process, outcomes assessment plays a direct role with the AQIP Systems Portfolio (100-page document submitted every four years). To increase awareness and help gather Portfolio information, **please type “X” for all AQIP categories directly related to your unit’s core mission**. Some functions appear in more than one category. This is a first round collection of this information so do the best you can with the selection; if you want help, ask S. Poindexter. (Note: this section of the form is short-term; it will be deleted once functions have been mapped between units and the Systems Portfolio.)  **🞎** AQIP Category 1: Helping Students Learn documents the curricular and co-curricular processes and student learning support.  **🞎** AQIP Category 2: Accomplishing Other Distinctive Objectives documents the key non-curricular functions by which NMU serves the region, e.g. community engagement initiatives of students and employees, and department outreach.  **🞎** AQIP Category 3: Understanding Students’ and Other Stakeholders’ Needs documents how NMU builds relationships with students, alumni and employers and identifies, targets and meets their needs.  **🞎** AQIP Category 4: Valuing People documents NMU personnel recruitment, training, satisfaction, services and programs.  **X** AQIP Category 5: Leading and Communicating documents processes that guide NMU in setting directions, making decisions, seeking future opportunities, and communicating decisions and actions.  **🞎** AQIP Category 6: Supporting Institutional Operations documents student and administrative support services, safety, and facilities.  **🞎** AQIP Category 7: Measuring Effectiveness documents IT systems and institutional research NMU employs to collect, analyze, and distribute, and how departments use them to manage improvement, e.g. use of charts, “cubes,” dashboards.  **🞎** AQIP Category 8: Planning Continuous Improvement documents NMU’s strategic and administrative planning processes.  **🞎** AQIP Category 9: Building Collaborative Relationships documents how NMU works with external organizations from which we receive students (school systems) or goods and services (vendors and utilities), send our graduates (schools and employers), and support or regulate our programs (agencies).  (A full description of the Portfolio’s categories and its detailed topics are available at [www.nmu.edu/aqip](http://www.nmu.edu/aqip) under the Current Document tab.) |

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| **Administrative Objective #1** *(State an ongoing goal by which the unit gauges its overall performance in a key role year after year, i.e. your “bottom line” measure.)* |  | **Means/Evidence of Assessment for Objective** *(Describe the statistic or criteria that measures success in achieving this goal. What is the desired and/or minimum target you expect*? *What method is used to collect the data for the statistic*?) |
| Continual increased outreach of the NMU website, primarily for the recruitment of new students through information that attracts their readership and then impacts their decision-making (ie. Scheduling a visit to campus, contacting the Admissions office, talking to their guidance counselor about NMU). A 3% increase is the goal in three critical web measurements: overall page views, pages per visit and unique visitors. This goal is not being set because we have a subpar use of the NMU website, but because increased use is the goal of ANY web effort. |  | 1. Average number of page views per month (3% goal: 198,818) 2. Average number of pages viewed per visit (6.15) 3. Average unique visitors (1.01 million)   Will try to impact the and increase the following, but setting a percentage goal is not realistic:   1. Average time of a web visit (3:55) 2. Average number of countries from which pages views come per month (166) |
| **Summary of Data Collected** *(Provide trend data and summarize)* |  | **Describe how results were used to improve services** |
| (Fill in only for the REPORT at the end of the year.)   1. Average number of page views per month -- 3% goal: 198,818; 2011-12 result 223,900 2. Average number of pages viewed per visit – 3% goal: 6.15; 2011-12 result 5.61 3. Average unique visitors – 3% goal: 1.01 million; 2011-12 result 1.12 million 4. Average time of a web visit – goal 3:55; result 3:25 5. Average number of countries from which pages views come per month – goal 166; result 163 |  | (Fill in only for the REPORT at the end of the year.)  The data is being used in meetings with academic department heads to demonstrate the importance of web traffic in the recruitment process and the subsequent importance of department’s regularly updating their sites, in particular home pages.  We are in the process of trying to get national averages for universities our size to see if our measurements are comparable to our peers. Some informal materials indicate we may be on the high end in number of pages visited (even though we didn’t meet a 3% increase goal) and number of countries from which views come each month (again, although we did not see an increase but stayed flat). |
| **Administrative Objective #2** *(State a 1-2 year objective intended to improve a unit process, service, or output.)* |  | **Means/Evidence of Assessment for Objective** |

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| *Objective* :  Construction and implementation of a new online platform for annual Foundation scholarship applications in collaboration with the NMU Foundation, NMU Financial aid Office and Information Technology Services. Moving this process online will be less confusing for students and require less work during the student application process. Additionally, it will significantly decrease the amount of manual checking being currently done by Financial Aid Office staff and also drastically increase the efficiency of the selection committee process. Lastly, it enhances NMU’s sustainability efforts as it will remove the bulk of paper use involved in the current procedure.  *Rationale (Why you are setting this objective; mark with “X”)*:  Effectiveness/quality action X Efficiency/cost action  Compliance issue Satisfaction measure Create baseline  Other (explain):  *Does this objective relate to a Road Map goal? (Refer to last page for the Road Map goals). If yes, type the related Road Map codes here*: **ML 2** |  | *Describe timetable plans to achieve objective*.  a. October 15, 2011 – code all scholarship sand their donor preferences in a new database, then program an online application process that can draw from the database. By Oct. 15, begin testing of new application program to see if data to see if data is compatible or if there are coding issues.  b. December 1, 2011 – make changes as necessary in database and do final test.  c. January 15, 2012 – implementation of new process  *Beyond completing the above steps, how will you judge whether the objective was a success?[[1]](#endnote-1) Examples: If the rationale was Efficiency/cost, what is the desired and/or minimum target criteria for savings in time or cost? If the rationale was Satisfaction, what is the measure and what increase is desired*?  The implementation of the new online Foundation scholarship application will determine if the objective was successful. The expected result is a streamlined process to reduce the manual processing of 5,300+ applications for 200+ scholarships. We anticipate saving about 100 hours of (combined Financial Aid and Foundation) staff time per year from the point of preparing to announce the start of the application process to the point of documenting thanks completed to donors from scholarship recipients. Another measurement may end up being how many fewer ineligible scholarship applications are completed. There also may be a way to measure the number of sheets of paper saved from not having to print applications for selection committee members (although we’re not sure we can estimate what has been used in the past). |
| **Summary of Data Collected** (*Summarize the evidence)* |  | **Use of Results to Improve Unit Services** |
| (Fill in only for the REPORT at the end of the year.)  Financial aid and Foundation became the keepers of the data. C&M did not end up playing a role in data collection. |  | (Fill in only for the REPORT at the end of the year.)  NMU Communications and Marketing played a role in the initial stages of this project, helping to set up the information flow component aspects of the procedure needed to build the database that would allow online processing of scholarship applications. However, after the initial discussions it was decided to move nearly all of the development to the Information Technology Services unit rather than to split up the project. In fall 2012, C&M will take the completed online scholarship program and merge it with the already existing online scholarship search (built by C&M years ago). By merging these two programs, personnel in the NMU Foundation will only have to update one database related to scholarship information rather than the current two. The upcoming merge will still allow each unit to meet its specific goals, which for the Foundation and Financial Aid is significantly improved processing of the scholarship application and awarding process, and for C&M is being able to provide quick, easy and customized online scholarship information as a recruitment tool to prospective students and parents. |
| **Administrative Objective #3** *(State a 1-2 year objective intended to improve a unit process, service, or output.)* |  | **Means/Evidence of Assessment for Objective** |
| *Objective*: Enhancing the NMU social media plan in order to increase outreach to university stakeholders via an informal type of formal communication regarding event promotions, non-scientific opinion and perspective data collection and for increased effectiveness of emergency messaging.  *Rationale (Why you are setting this objective? Mark with “X”)*:  X Effectiveness/quality action Efficiency/cost action  Compliance issue Satisfaction measure Create baseline  Other (explain):  *Does this objective relate to a Road Map goal? (Refer to last page for the Road Map goals). If yes, type the related Road Map codes here*: **I3** |  | *Describe timetable plans to achieve objective.*  People will not go to a Facebook site that is not providing compelling content. To make sure the fan/friend/like numbers continue to go up, C&M will:   1. Increase posts per day for sites its responsible for (goal is 3 per day during regular university business days) 2. Teach other administrators of NMU “official” sites how to create a production plan for posting and teach what’s compelling content (Goal: gold 5 workshops per semester) 3. Work to interconnect the NMU sites more efficiently and effectively. (done at the workshops and through additional online instruction) 4. Promote the various sites in more NMU communication tools (find ways to highlight in NMU print and electronic newsletters and publications)   *Examples: If the rationale was Efficiency/cost, what is the desired and/or minimum target criteria for savings in time or cost? If the rationale was Satisfaction, what is the measure and what increase is desired*?   1. 10,000 fans to the official NMU Facebook page by June 1, 2012 (Jun 1, 2011 – 7, 000) 2. 5,000 fans to the official NMU Athletics Facebook page by June 1, 2012 (June 1, 2011 – 1,200) 3. 2,000 fans to the official NMU Alumni Facebook page by June 1, 2012. (June 1, 2011 – 500) 4. 2,000 fans to the official Norman the Northern Gnome Facebook page by June 1, 2012. (June 1, 2011 – 500) 5. 2,000 fans to the official NMU Wildcat Willy Facebook page by June 1, 2012. (June 1, 2011 – 500) 6. 5,000 combined fans of all other official NMU Facebook sites (no way to measure at time of this writing) |
| **Summary of Data Collected (**Summarize the evidence) |  | **Use of Results to Improve Unit Services** |
| (Fill in only for the REPORT at the end of the year.)  Describe timetable plans to achieve objective.  a. 10,000 fans to the official NMU Facebook page by June 1, 2012. – Result: 11,100 as of June 1; 12, 400 as of Oct. 31.  b. 5,000 fans to the official NMU Athletics Facebook page by June 1, 2012. – Result 2,000 as of June 1; 2,800 as of Oct. 31.  c. 2,000 fans to the official NMU Alumni Facebook page by June 1, 2012 – Result 1,00 as of June 1; 1,225 as of Oct. 31 d. 2,000 fans to the official Norman the Northern Gnome Facebook page by June 1, 2012 – 1,200 fans as of June 1; 1,445 as of Oct. 31.  e. 2,000 fans to the official NMU Wildcat Willy Facebook page by June 1, 2012 – Created new Wildcat Willy page – 200 fans as of June 1; 365 as of Oct. 31. [Originally measured likes – 500 – on an unofficial Wildcat Willy site]  f. 5,000 combined fans of all other official NMU Facebook site- still have not established a good way to measure this; many of these sites are not posted to on a regular basis.  *Beyond completing the above steps, how will you judge whether the objective was a success*?1  People will not go to a Facebook site that is not providing compelling content. To make sure the fan/friend/like numbers continue to go up, C&M will:   1. Increase posts per day for sites its responsible for (goal is 3 per day during regular university business days) – Result: C&M now schedules posts by the month with a minimum of one post per day throughout the year and 2-3 posts during the academic year. 2. Teach other administrators of NMU “official” sites how to create a production plan for posting and teach what’s compelling content (Goal: gold 5 workshops per semester) – Result: C&M held five social media workshops during the 2011-12 academic year and one Skill Builder. 3. Work to interconnect the NMU sites more efficiently and effectively. (done at the workshops and through additional online instruction) Result: Have met with most departments that have bigger/official social media sites and have been working with them to develop a way to integrate content. This is now fully in place with Alumni Assoc. 4. Promote the various sites in more NMU communication tools (find ways to highlight in NMU print and electronic newsletters and publications) – Result: ongoing project. C&M has increased mentions of the social media sites in various print and electronic publications, but in an organized, formal way yet. |  | (Fill in only for the REPORT at the end of the year.)  Used the social media data to determine what content compels social media users to come to NMU sites and return on a regular basis. In particular, likes increased as did general traffic (you can view a page without liking it) on days when we posted at least one photograph. So, we developed a plan to have photographs posted most Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays on the main NMU site; Tuesdays and Thursdays on Norman’s site; Wednesdays on Willy’s site; Thursdays on the Alumni Association site; and have encouraged the Athletics Department to post photos at least twice a week, depending on sports schedule for the week.  We also used the data to analyze where there is the most potential for user growth, which as of June 1 we felt was Athletics. We then met with the Sports Information manager to demonstrate what would grow their social media user base. Since this summer and their increased posting of non-release materials, the site has grown by 1,600 likes. We were also given access to take over the official Wildcat Willy site, revamp it and will attempt to grow its user base through more regular postings, special features and more photos of Willy with NMU students.  We believe our significant growth in site visits on these official NMU social media sites have been achieved because we have been intently strategic in our messaging, working together to get out targeted messages to target audiences (ie. Messages on alumni site that are of most interest to alumni) and not running into each other by repeating and competing messages. |

Many service units already use an evaluative measure and this approach is now more common in assessment theory– not everything we try works out the way as hoped and creating a target and/or success/bail out threshold is appropriate. In cases where this is a new approach for a unit, in the 2011-12 Plan consider how you *might* measure the added value of an objective; however, it is not yet a requirement. The OA committee will provide suggestions in its feedback for this year. During the year, dialogues, additional resources, one-on-one meetings and/or seminars will be held to evolve our OA process.

**Road Map Codes to Tie to Unit Objectives**

Some unit objectives may address specific operational issues. Other unit objectives are strategic initiatives that align with goals in the University strategic plan - Road Map to 2015. These latter unit objectives are potential AQIP Action Projects – giving a little more recognition to unit efforts. Listed below are Road Map categories and goals, preceded with a code. Use these codes when describing Objectives #2 and #3. (Note: Even if your objective is not an exactly itemized as a Road Map priority, still use the code if it applies to that goal.) The full Road Map is at [www.nmu.edu/roadmap2015](http://www.nmu.edu/roadmap2015).

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| ***Road Map to 2015 Goals*** | |
| ***Code*** | ***Innovation Goals*** |
| **I-1** | Balance successful programs with new offerings |
| **I-2** | Professional development program that rewards innovation and collaboration |
| **I-3** | A growing portfolio of corporate collaborations that exploit NMU’s technical expertise, enhance academic programs and facilitate global engagement for students and faculty both on campus and abroad |
| **I-4** | Develop the financial resources to support innovation and student success |
|  | ***Meaningful Lives Goals*** |
| **ML-1** | A Liberal Studies Program that provides students with the abilities and knowledge necessary for lifelong learning and effective citizenship in a challenging and rapidly changing world |
| **ML-2** | Develop a new academic advising system that integrates the advising assets of academic departments and student services to contribute to a new, effective retention management network—similar to our enrollment management network |
| **ML-3** | Integrate the highest possible level of information technology skills and competencies throughout the university |
|  | ***Campus Attributes Goals*** |
| **CA-1** | Utilize the Campus Master Plan and related initiatives to continue to build and develop a greener and more learner-centered campus |
| **CA-2** | Enhance processes throughout campus operations to guide the use of resources and inform resource allocation |
| **CA-3** | Enhance the portfolio of academic programs, research and other activities that leverage the university’s location |
| **CA-4** | Be a model community for sustainable education and practices |
|  | ***Community Engagement Goals*** |
| **CE-1** | Include all units of the campus in the process of community engagement for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. |
| **CE-2** | Increase faculty, staff and student involvement in the Superior Edge program, academic service learning and other community engagement and leadership development initiatives. |
| **CE-3** | Put into action a commitment to be an inclusive community where differences are recognized as assets of the institution, respected attributes of the person and a valuable part of the university experience |
| **CE-4** | Increase collaboration with local communities, schools, governments, development groups and other partners to enhance community and economic development in the Upper Peninsula. |

1. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)