**Northern Michigan University**

**OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PLAN/REPORT FORM**

**Administrative or Educational Support Unit**

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| Name of Department or Unit | Registrar’s Office |
| This document is the | 🞎 PLAN or ⌧ REPORT for July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012 | Date Submitted: | June 30, 2011 |
| Submitted by (Unit Representative) |  |

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| **Department or Unit Mission Statement: Was this mission statement revised this year? Yes \_x\_ No** |
| The Registrar’s Office ensures adherence to academic policy, preserves academic integrity, safeguards the security of academic records, and provides quality service to students, faculty, staff, and members of the community.  We oversee all aspects of student academic records including registration, classroom assignments, grading, transfer credit evaluations, issuance of transcripts, catalog publication, academic eligibility for athletes, degree audits and graduation in an ethical and professional manner. |

**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. **🞎** 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*?) |
| Requests from current and former students for degree and enrollment verifications and transcript orders will be processed by our office in a timely fashion in order to ensure good customer service. |  | The average turnaround time for pending degree verifications will be less than 24 hours and 95% of all transcript requests submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse will be fulfilled and/or appropriately responded to within two business days. We communicate to students that request for verifications will be filled within 48 hours and transcripts will be filled within three business days. We would like our actual turnaround time to be faster than the maximum time listed. This will help us to measure what our actual response time is. In the past, we have not collected that data.Current and former students submit their request/order thought the Clearinghouse. We pull the order up on-line and fulfill the request manually. Once the request is fulfilled, it is marked as “complete” through the Clearinghouse and a notice is sent to the student. Monthly reports will be run from the Clearinghouse website, showing our turn-around time on requests for that month.Beginning July 1, 2011, reports will be analyzed to determine what percentage of requests were met within the goal time period.Time periods and/or requests where we are not able to meet our goal will be identified on a monthly basis so problem-solving can occur for those areas. This will be accomplished by reviewing the monthly reports. If the average falls below our targets listed above, we will research what factors may have contributed to the increase in processing time and identify strategies to address those factors.Prior to orders being submitted on-line, no data was collected regarding turn-around for these services. The first year we will focus on tracking our turn-around time, determining if we are within our stated turn-around time goals, and creating baseline data for future comparison and goal setting.  |
| **Summary of Data Collected** *(Provide trend data and summarize)* |  | **Describe how results were used to improve services** |
| **DEGREE ENROLLMENT AND VERIFICATION:**Since this was a new service we were providing through the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC), we knew we would be able to do some reporting, but we did not have the details of how the reporting would work. Initially, NSC was sending us monthly reports on our response times for degree and enrollment verifications. In March they stopped doing that and put the reports on-line, allowing us to run them ourselves. The reports provided an average turn-around time for the month but, unfortunately, it did not consider only business hours – it includes weekends, holidays, and other times when the University is closed. Even with this being the case, the average response time for 8 of the 12 months studied was less than one day. The longest average response time recorded was one day and 23 hours in January, 2012. This included all of the requests received over the holiday break when the University was closed for a week and a half. With weekends and holidays removed, our average response time for degree verifications was consistently less than one day.Below is the monthly summary:July, 2011: Less than 1 dayAugust, 2011: Less than 1 daySeptember, 2011: Less than 1 dayOctober, 2011: Less than 1 dayNovember, 2011: Less than 1 dayDecember, 2011: Less than 1 dayJanuary, 2012: 1 day and 23 hoursFebruary, 2012: Less than 1 dayMarch, 2012: 33 hoursApril, 2012: 40 hoursMay, 2012: 27 hoursJune, 2012: 20 hoursOur response time increased in late March and April. This had to do with staff coverage and access to the NSC site. TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS:Transcript requests were responded to within two business days. We ran monthly reports, which show when the transcript orders were received and when the transcript was sent. Using June as a sample, on any order that was not sent within two business days, we researched what happened. The system shows that another type of communication was sent to the student within two working days – usually a request for the consent form or a notification of a pending financial hold. There were a total of 506 transcript orders received through the NSC and processed by our office. Of those, 37 were not process within the two business days. Here is the breakdown of why those 37 were not processed within two business days:15 – financial holds17 – waiting to received signed consent1 – both financial hold and signed consent4 – requested that we wait until after grades and/or graduation were postedCommunication went out to all the students above regarding their circumstances within two business days of receiving their request.  |  | We were able to meet our goal of keeping our average turnaround time for pending degree verifications to within 24 business hours and fulfilling 95% of all transcript requests submitted to the National Student Clearinghouse within two business days. By tracking this information, we were able to clearly recognize when the process slowed down and develop strategies to deal with that. As a result, we made the following changes:* Provided information on the Clearinghouse site and our “welcome” page regarding when the University is closed for holidays and when hours of operation change (e.g., not open on Fridays in the summer).
* Update the “welcome” and ordering pages regularly to ensure accurate and timely information is being displayed.
* Provided access and training to one additional staff to address enrollment and degree verification requests to accommodate times when those who hold that responsibility are not available or are out of the office.
* Provided access and training to two additional staff to address transcript requests to accommodate times when those who hold that responsibility are not available or are out of the office.
* Adapted our procedures for handling on-line transcripts to make them more efficient and help us get through the requests in a timely and efficient manner. The primary changes were to set up a time deadline for rush deliveries, download the addresses to be used for labels, and standardize how we deal with transcript requests with a financial hold.
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| **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* : Determine the feasibility and necessary steps involved in implementing a parent portal which would allow students to grant access to their parents to view information such as grades, class schedules, and financial aid.*Rationale (Why you are setting this objective; mark with “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*: ML-3 |  | *Describe timetable plans to achieve objective*.1. By August 31, 2011, provide AdIT (IT) with a basic outline of what we are considering and work with them to develop a strategy for researching the project.
2. By September 30, 2011, determine whether or not the project is feasible and, if so, develop a timeline for implementation.
3. If it is determined that the project is feasible, contact relevant departments by October 15, 2011, to determine who might potentially be interested in having their information included in this service.
4. If it is determined that the project is feasible, work with AdIT (IT) and other relevant departments to design and implement the service by June 1, 2012.
5. If the project is feasible and implementation is scheduled, we will develop an awareness campaign which will outline our plan for notifying current students, new students, and parents of the service.

*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*?This objective will be considered successful if we have something in place which allows students to grant access for their parents to view portions of their student record prior to the first summer orientation program. |
| **Summary of Data Collected** (*Summarize the evidence)* |  | **Use of Results to Improve Unit Services** |
| We spoke with AdIT staff in August of 2011 to discuss the project and try to determine the feasibility of it. At that time, they indicated they thought it would be a feasible and worthwhile project. Registrar staff and AdIT staff independently did some research on parent portals and met on September 28, 2011 to discuss our findings, whether or not we should move forward and, if so, how. Examples from other schools were explored and questions and issues were identified. The next identified step was to figure out the front end part of how to get the parent’s user account created on our system. The registrar’s staff did some additional research to determine how some other schools were handling this and passed that information on to AdIT staff on December 16, 2011. On January 25, 2011, it was discovered that SunGard (the parent company of our student information system) had implemented new functionality called Proxy Access which will allow us to accomplish what we are trying to do within the system already in place. At that point, it was determined that we should stop what we were doing and learn more about the SunGard program. AdIT staff attended a workshop on the program at SunGard’s annual conference in late March, 2012. It was determined that the implementation would occur mostly through the Registrar’s office. Registrar staff purchased viewing access to the conference session in late June, 2012. |  | We explored the feasibility of creating such a function and began the process of doing so. However, with the announcement coming from SunGard that they would implement the same functionality, it was determined that the best course of action was to hold off on our implementation and explore what SunGard was going to be offering. |
| **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*: Improve our ability to locate and access important student records by increasing the use of our imaging system to include select degree evaluation documents. This has been done in other functional areas of our office, but this would be the first step in implementing document imaging within the degree evaluation area of the office. It would involve different staff as well as different document types and is part of our effort toward continuous improvement of our document management.*Rationale (Why you are setting this objective? Mark with “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*: ML-3 |  | Describe timetable plans to achieve objective.1. By September 30, 2011, review all documents related to degree evaluation and identify which documents would be appropriate to keep as scanned documents.
2. By October 31, 2011, identify document type fields to be used for these documents and request the creation of new document types as needed.
3. Develop a plan to begin the scanning process with current documents and to address historical documents.
4. Provide necessary training, both in document preparation and the scanning process, to staff who are responsible for these documents and will be implementing the project.
5. Have the plan in place and the implementation started by March 30, 2012.

*Beyond completing the above steps, how will you judge whether the objective was a success*?1 The objective will be considered a success if we are able to create a document recovery system that allows us to locate inactive degree evaluation documents (especially those considered to be “did not graduate” files) more quickly and consistently. |
| **Summary of Data Collected (**Summarize the evidence) |  | **Use of Results to Improve Unit Services** |
| In July of 2011, staff in the degree evaluation area of our office reviewed the documents and determined that the most useful to have imaged are the graduate files and the prior candidate, but did not graduate files. We started with the May, 2011 graduation class and went back approximately 5 years for the did not graduate files. Staff identified the necessary document types, which were then created. Two full time staff and one student staff were trained on the scanning, indexing, and committing process. Implementation of the process began in September, 2011.  |  | All graduation files from May, August, and December, 2011 have been scanned and are now available on the imaging system (Xtender), as are all the prior candidates from the past five years who did not graduate. We will continue to add graduation records after every commencement. This will allow us to quickly (within 2-3 minutes) locate any graduation file, whether the student ultimately graduated or not, to answer questions from students and/or auditors. It also allows us to have a more complete student record all in one place on Xtender. In the past, files would have to be located in and pulled from the basement, which is not an efficient process. |

 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)