



AQIP Category Seven: MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Context for Analysis (C)

7C1 Collection and Dissemination of Information

Centralized collection of information is the role of the Institutional Research Office. The implementation of PeopleSoft has created a centralized database of the majority of campus student, personnel, and financial data. Security of information is a key component of PeopleSoft (guided by FERPA regulations) and only those with a need to access specific data are able to do so and to run queries. Departments also have databases pertinent to their operation, such as Aceware used by the College Outreach Division, FAMUS used by Physical Plant, and Housing Director used by Residence Life. Data is also collected from surveys, national licensure and certification results, campus crime statistics, IT servers, and facilities management software. This data is fed into appropriate divisional analysis from which spreadsheets and forecasts are developed. The information is disseminated to departments, committees, the state system, state legislature, and national organizations as appropriate as well as the NDSCS web site and as an open records state, by specific request. Information is also relayed by The Transmitter, Alumni News, e-mail, annual reports, such as budget, assessment, strategic planning, and accreditation reports.

7C2 Key Measures for Tracking Effectiveness

NDSCS measures its key effectiveness in the success of its students: of students that are recruited how many are retained, how many need developmental courses and what is their subsequent success, how many graduate within three years, how many pass their licensure or certification exams on the first attempt, how many job openings are there per student graduate? Annual department assessment reports provide valuable information regarding student learning. Indirect data relating to student success is feedback from employers, alumni, and Advisory Committees. Other key measures are in the areas of revenue generation. For instance, adds and drops in housing and meal plans, revenue in auxiliary enterprises and other profit centers, number of business and industries served, and number of workforce training participants are carefully tracked and benchmarked from year to year. This data is also compared to students at other two-year colleges when national data is available and within the NDUS.

Processes (P)

7P1 Select, Manage and Use Information and Data

NDSCS is guided by the NDUS goals and SBHE initiatives that establish priorities and result in the development of the NDSCS AQIP Goals and NDSCS Alignment Plan. Student learning data is compiled and summarized into three annual reports: Entry-Level, General Education, and Assessment. These reports contain recommendations and targets for improvements and also guide planning and budgeting. A number of instruments are used to collect data as well as meetings with students to identify issues. The data is analyzed and areas for improvement identified. Infrastructure data is analyzed to determine and prioritize future projects. External agencies regarding health, safety, fire, etc. often establish priorities for us.



7P2 Determining Needs and Priorities

All departments are expected to annually provide the administration information regarding their budget, equipment, and renovation needs. Survey data is analyzed to determine if it is providing the information those departments need to make good decisions and prioritize needs.

7P3 Criteria and Priorities for Selecting Comparative Data

How NDSCS determines the needs and priorities for comparative information depends to some degree on what needs to be compared. Benchmarking takes place in a number of areas on a continuous basis with two-year colleges within the NDUS; scores on nationally normed tests, especially those required for certification or licensure; food service and bookstore survey data is compared to nationally normed data; and nearly all surveys have national comparison data. Formal program accreditation reports also provide comparison data. When a new initiative is undertaken or new information is sought, the college typically searches for “best practice” and conducts research or identifies other institutions that have experience with the subject.

7P4 Analysis of Data at the Institutional Level

The Director of Institutional Research analyzes and summarizes data from a variety of sources. This information is shared with all appropriate areas, depending on the context of the data: Administrative Team, Management Team, Faculty Senate, Department Chairs, Support Staff Senate, Student Senate, Advisory Committees, and the President’s Advisory Committee. Comparison of national averages are discussed and shared with all employees in the areas that are affected. Selected data is fed into the annual NDUS accountability reports that are shared with state legislators.

7P5 Alignment of Data with Institutional Goals and Sharing of Data

Every department on campus is responsible for providing action plans that support the key action plans of the college. As described above, these key action plans are driven by SBHE initiatives and AQIP goals. They are written or updated every year and results on progress or achievement are gathered once a year into a report distributed campus-wide as well as to the system office, called the Campus Accomplishment Report.

7P6 Effectiveness of Information Systems and Related Processes

A system-wide upgrade in financial, student, and human resources software for the entire NDUS and state government was enacted July 1, 2004. PeopleSoft connects the entire state resources under one database. Under PeopleSoft, security is highly regulated and only those with appropriate password protected access can use the data. The campus servers are tied into the NDUS security system. They control and monitor all movement over the world-wide web or internet. PeopleSoft upgrades are determined at the system level and are continuous. All campus employees have passwords to access e-mail, voice mail and the web. North Dakota is an open records state, and officially, all public documents are available to the public.

7P7 Determining Effectiveness of Measures

Downtime of the internet system is monitored. The NDUS IT Security Officer supplies NDSCS with reports that identify security attempts or breaches and viruses that attack the system. New measures have been developed that allow the IT department to immediately identify the source



of the virus and take action. The PeopleSoft system supplies weekly reports of the effectiveness of the software and staff in supplying needed information.

NDSCS regularly changes or updates the process to collect information; if it is not meeting our needs, a new method is found to collect the appropriate information. It is done continually as data is examined.

RESULTS (R)

7R1 Evidence the System for Measuring Effectiveness Meets our Needs

Auditors' findings consistently endorse the accuracy and reliability of NDSCS financial records following state law, procedures, Century Code, and NDUS SBHE policies and procedures (with few or no compliance issues). NDUS accountability measures have timelines for data collection that are met. NDSCS consistently meets timelines of the state for reporting requirements. Employee satisfaction with research and planning services as documented in the Campus Quality Survey 2004 rated this area the highest and in 2002 among the top five.

7R2 Results Comparison with Other Higher Education Institutions

- NDSCS consistently rate higher than sister institutions with state auditors
- NDSCS exceeds national norms in bookstore and dining service benchmarks
- NDSCS health occupations consistently exceed national norms in licensure and certification pass rates
- NDSCS NOCTI test results are consistently higher than national norms
- Students may take exams that are also taken by industry personnel. For instance, NDSCS Dental Assisting DANB scores are consistently higher than scores attained by those trained in the industry.

IMPROVEMENT (I)

7I1 Improve current process and systems for measuring effectiveness

Currently, data is collected by a number of departments and it is often time-consuming to collect it and synthesize it. Efforts are being made to avoid duplication of data collection by centralizing data storage in a common area (Research Office). If a current source of data is not working, we immediately seek another method that will provide the data we need. NDSCS continuously adds new areas with which to benchmark or institutions that have a "best practice" in a certain area.

7I2 Targets for Improvement and Priorities

Individual departments are responsible for reacting to data and making appropriate changes for improvement. These changes are incorporated into department action plans and individual performance appraisals. Communication occurs in the process described in category #5, Leading and Communicating.



Specific targets for improvement include:

- Using the data that is already being collected as effectively as possible
- Screening all survey instruments through the Office of Institutional Research to avoid duplication and unnecessary surveying of students especially
- Keeping an active voice in the state accountability team to help guide appropriate data collection measures
- HECN is constantly in touch with PeopleSoft to make improvements in the software as necessary