

2016-2017 Annual Co-Curricular Report (DRAFT) October 2017

The university revised the Outcomes Assessment Handbook during the 2016-2017 academic year to include a procedure for assessment of co-curricular activities. The Faculty Senate formed an ad-hoc co-curricular group in fall 2016 and charged it with formalizing our co-curricular assessment process for inclusion in the Assessment Handbook. The committee included the following members:

- Buddy Rivera, MS, Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (Staff)
- Dr. Kim Blea, Dean of Students (Administration)
- Dr. Brandon Kempner, Director of HLC Compliance (Administration)
- Dr. Jennifer Lindline, Chair of the Faculty Senate Outcomes Assessment Committee (Faculty)
- Dr. Kathy Jenkins, Department of Exercise Science (Faculty)
- Elizabeth Ratzlaff, MS, ARMAS Director (Staff)

The first step was to adopt a formal, campus-wide definition for co-curricular program at Highlands. The definition adopted is as follows:

Co-curricular activities are non-credit bearing experiences that complement and extend the formal learning experience of a course or academic program. Co-curricular activities are supervised and/or financed by the institution and facilitate the attainment of Highlands' four essential traits (student learning outcomes). These experiences are ungraded and non-credited, although they may be compensated through student employment.

Co-curricular activities develop a student's social, intellectual, cultural, democratic, civic, and aesthetic domains which are integrated into our four student traits (designated as university-level student learning outcomes), these are:

- **Mastery of content knowledge and skills**
- **Effective communication skills**
- **Critical and reflective thinking skills**
- **Effective use of technology.**

The assessment of our co-curricular programs, specifically tying them to the way they support our four university traits, demonstrates the relationship to the Highlands' mission and supports the role these programs play in contributing to the educational experience of our students.

The committee identified 13 co-curricular programs to annually participate in outcomes assessment. Any additional unit that feels the primary goal of its program or activity is co-curricular (supporting the four traits) rather than extracurricular* is welcome to participate in co-curricular outcomes assessment. Participation in the co-curricular assessment process allows programs to evaluate their effectiveness, demonstrate their contribution to the university's strategic plan and mission, and make a stronger argument regarding budget requests.

*Definition of Extracurricular: University-funded out of class experiences that primarily contribute to a vibrant campus rather than supporting the four academic traits.

The following programs were considered to be co-curricular and were divided into two main areas:

Academic Support Activities:

Academic Clubs: The university supports more than 20 chartered academic clubs and organizations, several of which are at the Highlands centers. The clubs and organizations offer students a means of building community, developing leadership skills, and engaging with different subjects. In 2016-2017, 237 students participated in these clubs.

Academic Support has a mission of “providing opportunities for undergraduate students to attain an exceptional education by fostering orientation, advisement, and support services to persist towards achieving their educational goals.” In 2016-2017, academic support provided 2913 advising sessions.

First-Year Experience Learning Communities (FYE, LC) program contains both curricular and co-curricular elements. From a curricular standpoint, the LCs have freshmen enroll in three linked classes; the broader FYE program creates a number of social and academic out-of classroom experiences for our students to achieve integration into the university community. In fall 2016, nearly half (n = 154) FYE students attended at least one peer-mentor led study session.

The Language Learning Center, Net Tutor, and the Writing Center all provide tutoring services to all students. In 2016-2017, students visited the Language Learning Center 1,493 times, and visited the Writing Center 584 times.

The **Library** provides a variety of co-curricular support for research and information resources, as described in 3.D.5. and 3.D.6. In 2016-2017, the library gave 70 instructional sections to 1,007 students, including 30 instructional sections for center or online students.

ARMAS: While open to all students, the primary mission of the center is to provide support to students majoring in the STEM disciplines through the innovative delivery of proven best practices such as internships with local areas agencies (note: local internships are important as some Highlands students have family obligations which make it difficult to leave the area); undergraduate research fellowships which allow STEM students to work with a faculty member in their laboratories; math tutoring; meaningful student employment which engages students further in their academic work; supplemental instruction (SI), peer-facilitated group study, in STEM gateway courses; and the creation of a community focused on their studies. While originally funded by grants, Highlands now assumes the responsibility for funding the majority of the programs housed at ARMAS. During the 2016-2017 academic year, 742 students registered to use the center (248 or 33 percent of center users were STEM majors which represents 79 percent of total STEM majors). In the 2016-2017 academic year, there were more than 16,000 uses of the services at the ARMAS center as tracked via our Labtracker system.

Career Support Activities:

Career Services and the Internships Office supports the university’s mission, goals, and core values by empowering students to make career-planning decisions, to connect them with regional and global employers, and to provide skills in successfully obtaining employment in a rapidly changing and competitive job market. Four hundred seventy-one students attended the Career and Internship Fair, and there were 71 career service workshops and presentations.

The **Department of Exercise and Sports Sciences** offers a number of career preparation cocurricular opportunities in its **fitness center** and **swimming pool**.

Student Employment has a mission to “provide on-campus job opportunities for students to gain work experience and develop their workplace skills.” Five hundred six students were on-campus employees in some capacity during spring 2017.

The **Student Professional Development** program offers a variety of opportunities for students to attend professional development opportunities through professional associations, campus club affiliations, and academic department initiative. Eighty two students took advantage of these opportunities in 2016-2017.

The goal of the co-curricular outcomes assessment process developed is to regularly evaluate the various co-curricular programs at Highlands, gathering data on student participation, student satisfaction, relation to the four Highlands traits, and areas for improvement. The co-curricular assessment process deliberately mirrors the academic assessment process, placing those two activities on the same level of importance with the co-curricular outcomes assessment, and the reports provide in-depth information on services, usages, and outcome as well as the statement of the unit's mission, a description of three to five student learning outcomes that relate to the program mission and university traits, a description of data to be collected to demonstrate each outcome, and the criteria used to evaluate whether the outcomes are met. The changes to the Assessment Handbook have been approved by the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and the Board of Regents.

Highlands uses a peer review system to provide feedback to academic and co-curricular programs. This feedback includes information regarding the clarity of the program's mission, the outcomes assessment data indicators, and the program's use of data. By closing the loop and providing feedback, this process helps the co-curricular activities better serve our students through improved programs and activities.

To facilitate the collection of meaningful data for the co-curricular programs, Highlands has contracted with SkyFactor, a third-party data collection company that gives surveys to students and allows comparisons of our results with peer institutions and national benchmarks. By utilizing SkyFactor's Student Services Assessment Suite, we have been able to collect information on the student experience with our co-curricular programs. These surveys also keep students' responses anonymous, thus protecting the data and privacy of students. Academic clubs, career services, academic advising, and other programs utilized SkyFactor data in 2016-2017. The SkyFactor surveys (example here) provide data about student satisfaction, learning outcomes, and overall impact on their academic experience.

Over the 2016-2017 year, the identified programs developed plans using the plan template and reported on their data, outcomes, plans for improvement, and results of peer review using the report template. To ensure outcomes assessment results in data-driven program improvement, a co-curricular outcomes assessment in-service was facilitated by Dr. Kim Blea and Elizabeth Ratzlaff during the fall 2017 Professional Development Week.

Following this year of development and initial implementation, a standing committee was charged with providing on-going support and continued momentum of co-curricular program assessment and program improvement. The members of the committee include:

- Casey Applegate-Aguilar, Director of the FYE/LC Program (Academic Affairs)
- Benito Pacheco, Director of Academic Support (Strategic Enrollment Management)
- Ron Garcia, Director of Career Services (Student Support)
- Margaret Gonzales, Director of Campus Life (Student Support)
- Buddy Rivera, Director of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (OIER)
- Dr. Kim Blea, Dean of Students (Administration)
- Elizabeth Ratzlaff, Director of the ARMAS Center (Academic Affairs)
- Julia Geffroy, Native American Recruitment and Orientation (Strategic Enrollment Management)

**NMHU Co-Curricular Outcomes Assessment
Plans for Improvements for 2017-2018**

Summary of Relevant Data [Areas to focus on in 2017-2018]	Action Steps/Plans	Disciplinary SMART Goals [Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-focused, and Time-bound]
Academic Support Activities		
Academic Clubs		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> This was the first year assessing Academic Clubs. The results indicated that students expressed satisfaction with the clubs. More specific positive results include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> learning to communicate better exposure to new ideas connection to the University Students were not seeing a connection between academic clubs and performance in the classroom. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dean of Students hold a meeting with the Club Advisors to discuss how academic clubs can better help students achieve their academic goals. Academic clubs could not be directly tied to a change in GPA as initially expected. Focus more on other skills such as leadership and communication. Move the survey to February and better communicate with club leaders about the purposes of the survey. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Better aligning the club experience with the academic curriculum. Improve response rate.
Academic Support		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Dual credit students entering their freshman year were inadvertently excluded from enrollment in a Learning Community. It was determined that students with more than 15 college credits prior to starting their freshman year were not detected with the typical query parameters. There are, typically 5-10 students per fall that have 15+ college credits prior to entering college as freshmen. Neither the 50% first time freshman outcome nor 20% undergraduate outcome of workshop attendance was attained. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade Lab Tracker software. Additional Degree Audit reporting. Track data that will indicate if at least 6 face-to-face advisement sessions (3 per semester) correlates to at least a 2.0 GPA for the academic year. Implement a new communication plan for first time freshmen to improve advisement sessions and workshop participation. Collaborate with other student service offices to minimize duplication of services. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improved data collecting Better monitor of advisement sessions Improved GPA (2.0+) for 80% of FTF Improved communication with goal of a minimum of three scheduled face-to-face advisement sessions per semester

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ARMAS (STEM) Support		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Three of the five learning outcomes were met. These included: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Supplemental Instruction Leaders (SIL) will translate course content into session plans implemented three times a week. b. SIL will be able to facilitate collaborative learning. c. ARMAS interns will connect course content to real world experiences. 2. The following outcome was partially achieved: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Supplemental Instruction (SI) participants will demonstrate content mastery. 3. The following had the least success: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students attending math tutoring will demonstrate content mastery. 4. We conducted too many surveys and asked some questions that did not provide meaningful data. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop marketing / awareness campaign for ARMAS. 2. Train Math tutors. 3. Improve partnership with Math faculty and STEMfast grant program to align tutoring with curriculum redesign. 4. Update CCOA Plan. 5. Improve communication between co-curricular and academic programs. 6. Review each of the assessment instruments (surveys and rubrics) and work on improving for next year as well as review targets for adjustment. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve attendance/participation in Math, Biology, and Forestry tutoring 2. Increased number of Math tutors 3. Increased collaboration between ARMAS and STEM programs 4. Updated surveys and rubrics
First Year Experience		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academic Integration survey scores remained consistent from fall 2015 to fall 2016, but student participation in study sessions greatly increased. 2. The data demonstrated program effectiveness at getting students to a study 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create new participation structure through the Integrative Seminar course to improve Academic Integration. 2. Study sessions will be scheduled so that sessions run throughout the day. 3. Peer Mentors will be trained in LabTracker before the semester begins. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased participation in social activities 2. Increased participation in tutoring 3. Improved GPAs 4. Higher retention rates 5. More training events for PMs

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<p>session but not as effective at keeping them coming.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The spring pilot in which students had far less structure than their fall LCs provide was not as successful as anticipated, with few students attending study sessions. Social Integration survey scores remained relatively stable. Goals were greatly exceeded for student grades. Peer Mentor growth goals were met or exceeded. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The FYE LC Advisory Committee will review the possibility of enrolling spring starters in fall LCs. PMs will plan the year's activities in advance, in collaboration with the Office of Campus Life, Housing, and other offices. Work with ITS to ensure LabTracker can be used with portable devices (laptop and ID scanner) and create a process for setup and scanning and train Peer Mentors to collect this data. PMs will receive more targeted training on note taking. PMs will communicate with all LC faculty instead of only the Integrative Seminar instructor in order to be more helpful to students. PMs and a PM leader will plan trainings and create materials for PMs that will occur throughout the year. Consider adding additional goals to Plan. 	
Language Learning Center		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The LLC had 1493 visits during the school year (993 during the fall and 500 during the spring). Satisfactory results were obtained using Labtracker. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Create and use surveys to collect qualitative and quantitative data from the students. Modify outcomes to obtain more meaningful results. Modify / improve Assessment Plan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improve data fidelity Increase LLC visits Improved student performance

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Library		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We would like to gather better data to determine if students are locating appropriate information sources after attending an instructional session. We reworded the question several times in the past year to get a more specific response from students. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> We plan to have students work on the question in the middle of the instructional session, rather than wait until the end. We will promote some of the lesser known collections and services by having links more prominent on the library web pages and posting to the NMHU Facebook page. We would like to reach more academic departments through individual instruction sessions with classes. We will be attending departmental meetings again early in the fall semester. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improved student performance Greater collaboration with departments More diversified use of library resources
NET Tutor		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> According to Net tutor, student tutoring data and end of semester GPA, the following results were found: 90% of Fall 2016 students that accessed at least one Net tutor session had at least a 2.0 GPA at the end of the semester. 82% of Spring 2017 students that accessed at least one Net tutor session had at least a 2.0 GPA at the end of the semester. Data indicates undergraduate and graduate students that utilized the tutoring service had the following average GPA: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Fall 2016 Average GPA Undergraduate 3.01 Graduate 2. The Spring 2017 Average GPA Undergraduate 3.03 Graduate 3.5. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Increase use of the service: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Information will be dispersed to centers for use during orientation. Net tutor review and training is part of freshman and transfer orientation. Tutoring service information was provided to Academic Affairs Committee during the Spring 17 semester. Information on the tutoring system now included on the faculty resource page. Follow up with Academic Affairs Committee to present program data. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of students accessing NET Tutor Increased number of repeat students accessing NET Tutor Higher student performance (GPA) Higher retention rates

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	4. Review academic success within an academic content area rather than for a specific course. 5. Review graduation with an undergraduate or graduate degree as a measure of success.	
Writing Center		
1. The WC employed an informal method for collecting student drafts. This method proved insufficient for collecting an adequate number of essays for evaluation. The evaluation of student reflections also proved to be more complicated than expected. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Unable to collect student papers to conduct analysis. b. The interpretation of data proved to be complicated because of the varying reasons student sought writing support. 2. Each of the students whose records we reviewed passed the course for which they sought writing support. 3. The WC determined a goal of 30% for repeat visits and achieved a 17% rate. 4. Although the Writing Center collects data about students who attend the WC, we do not have a history of outcomes data that can be used to determine appropriate thresholds.	1. Training and policy tie directly into outcomes assessment. With a plan in place before the school year begins, training and policy can be shaped so that it corresponds with our outcomes. 2. Continue developing outcomes based on reflection and process-based writing. 3. Continue to assess efforts to encourage students to attend other sessions. 4. Develop consistent methods for collecting data.	1. Improved processes 2. Modified / Improved Assessment Plan 3. Implement in student writing