Northern Kentucky University
Learning Assistance Program
Assessment Overview

Learning Assistance Programs regularly assesses all of its programs. The Writing Center and Math Center are certified by the College Reading and Learning Association. For both of these centers along with Academic Tutorial Services data on number of students served, number of tutoring sessions conducted, and number of contact hours is collected each semester. Also a student satisfaction survey is sent out twice a semester. Student learning outcomes were written in 2006-07 for each service and comparison of success rates of tutored students with non-tutored students began in the fall of 2007. The data shows that students are very satisfied with the services and tutored students are passing at rates comparable to non-tutored students. The usage information fluctuates; however, the number of students using Academic Tutorial Services is lower than we would like. That has prompted a change for this year. In the past, students who desired tutoring in specific subjects not covered by the Math or Writing Centers were given the contact information of a tutor and the student had to initiate the contact with the tutor to set up an appointment. This year each academic tutor must schedule at least one hour per week and a student can sign up for a tutoring appointment directly through Tutor Trac, thus eliminating the need to contact a tutor prior to the first session. Additional tutoring sessions can then be arranged between the student and tutor for other times. We will compare usage of academic tutors this year with previous years to determine if prescheduling of tutoring times is effective at increasing the usage.

Each semester data is collected on the courses with Supplemental Instruction. This data includes, but is not limited to, the percentage of students enrolled in an SI section who attend at least one SI session, the mean number of sessions attended by SI participants, and the mean size of SI sessions. The mean final course grade of SI participants is compared to mean final course grade of non-SI participants for each course. SI participants are also asked to rate the helpfulness of the SI sessions. This data is used to measure the effectiveness of SI in the various courses and determine in which courses SI should be offered. The data has consistently shown that the mean final course grade of SI participants is greater than the mean final course grade of non-participants in virtually all courses. When it is determined that SI is not effective in a specific course, that course is eliminated from the SI course list and another course is selected in which to offer SI. Several years ago SI was dropped from MAH 099: Intermediate Algebra because the number of participants was low and the final grade of participants was not greater than non-participants. Supplemental Instruction was replaced with Structured Learning Assistance in the developmental mathematics classes. Data in recent years has shown that SI is very effective with nursing students so over 60% of the Fall 2008 courses with Supplemental Instruction are courses required of nursing students. The SI participants’ evaluations of the sessions are used to measure the student learning outcomes and improve SI leader training.

The LAP faculty have been assessing the developmental literacy and mathematics programs for many years. In 2003 both programs were certified by the National Association for Developmental Education. Student learning outcomes (SLO’s) for the developmental program and its courses were revised in 2006-07. Data collected includes overall pass rates in the developmental classes, pass rates in special sections, number of times students enroll in a course,
part-time/full-time faculty ratios, comparison of developmental faculty evaluations to NKU faculty evaluations, attendance versus grade in the courses, grades in follow-up courses, assessments of student learning outcomes, and six-year graduation rates. The grades in follow-up mathematics courses showed that in some years students who completed the developmental mathematics courses passed statistics at a lower rate than non-developmental students. The assessment of the developmental mathematics course SLO’s indicated that some outcomes were not met or were only partially met. As a result the assessments faculty in the developmental mathematics program are working on designing new courses to address these concerns. In particular, a new Essential Algebra course scheduled to be offered in Fall 2009 will have added emphasis on writing, applications, and interpretations of answers to better prepare students for statistics and other general education mathematics and science courses. The SLO’s that have not been met will be reviewed and either removed if there are no longer important to the course or kept with more attention given to them in the course design. The Intermediate Algebra course will have more emphasis on preparing students for Algebra for College Students. Assessment of the new courses will determine their effectiveness.