

**SUNY Potsdam
Administrative Unit
Assessment Summary Form**

Administrative Unit: *Educational Opportunity Program*

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Assessment Year: *2023-2024*

PURPOSE

This annual assessment summary form provides the opportunity for units to follow-up on their assessment plans, track progress toward goals, and to highlight actions taken to improve processes and/or efficiencies in functioning that lead to outcomes that benefits students, staff, or the college. These could be process changes or improvements in efficiency, skill level of staff, opportunities for the college, or other aspects over which the unit has a certain amount of control.

SECTION 1: ASSESSMENT PLAN FOLLOW-UP

A key component of the continuous improvement assessment process is regularly following up on [your assessment plan](#). Please review your plan and select one-third of your unit goals, along with related desired outcomes and objectives to report on the progress made. Units should select a goal that has not yet been reported on during the '22-'26 cycle.

Selected Goal

Copy/Paste or enter the goal(s) from your unit plan that you wish to highlight and summarize.

Goal: Provide support and services that will help students succeed and progress toward degree completion.

Desired Outcomes/Objectives

Copy/Paste or enter the desired outcomes and objectives connected to your selected goal that you will be reporting on.

1A. Improve retention rates for first and second year student (Freshmen and Sophomores).

1B. Enhance support for EOP students through increased use of tutoring and mentoring services.

Related Targets/Measures

Copy/Paste or enter the target desired outcomes and objectives connected to your selected goal that you will be reporting on.

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1A. Method – Review first time student records to confirm enrollment from fall to spring, up from 2021 rate of 78%.

1A. Target – Retention rate of 90%.

1A. Method – Review student records of sophomores to determine retention rates from freshman to sophomore year.

1A. Target – Retention rate of 85% up from an average of 71% over the past five years.

1B. Method – Review of tutoring and mentoring hours from fall/fall and spring/spring will show an increase in usage. Will also review payroll as a secondary source of measurement.

1B. Target- 100% of first year students will utilize tutoring and 50% of returning students will use either tutoring or mentoring services.

Describe the progress made toward the selected goal and the related desired outcomes and objectives. Be sure to include steps taken and any information/data collected and results.

1A. Data Collected:

Since Fall 2021, we have steadily increased our first-time student retention rate over the years, with notable improvements in 2022 and 2023. We have achieved a 12% increase in retention since Fall 2021, reaching the assessment target of 90%.

Fall to Spring Retention (First-Time Students)

Fall 2021 – Spring 2022

- 13 Initial Cohort, 11 retained – 84.6%

Fall 2022 – Spring 2023

- 13 Initial Cohort, 13 retained – 100%

Fall 2023 – Spring 2024

- 20 Initial Cohort, 18 retained – 90%

Target: Met target of 90% retention rate.

Important actions:

Implemented 4 credit bearing courses in Statistics and Metaskills before the start of the first semester, enabling students to earn credits and establish a strong GPA before fall, which positively impacts their first-semester grades. Conducted regular follow-ups and outreach to address students' academic and personal needs. The EOP Counselor meets with first-year students on a weekly or as-needed basis. Enhanced advising services provided tailored guidance and support throughout the semester. Hired a full-time EOP Counselor to manage the remaining students, allowing the Director to focus full time on programming and student engagement.

Success/Challenges:

Successes – Achieved a 12% increase in the retention rate since Fall 2021, meeting the assessment target of 90%. Successfully hired a full-time EOP Counselor, which allowed the Director to concentrate on programming and student engagement. Introduced 4-credit bearing courses in Statistics and Metaskills before the fall semester, helping students earn credits early and establish a solid GPA.

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Challenges – Managing the distribution of remaining students with the new EOP Counselor while ensuring that all students receive sufficient support. The onboarding process for the new counselor also caused some delays, but the balance was eventually achieved. Continuously adapting support strategies to meet the evolving needs of first-year students. This new incoming group of students had experienced two years of in-person learning in high school, so it was crucial to understand and analyze them both as a group and as individuals to better assess their needs throughout the academic year.

1A: Data Collected:

Retention of first-year students moving into their second year (from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023) decreased by 23% falling short of our assessment target of 85%.

EOP Retention Fall to Fall

Fall 2022: 13 | 61.5%

Fall 2023: 5 | 38.5%

Target: Target was not met.

Important Actions:

Maintained regular contact with students throughout the summer to support their transition and address any concerns. Released EOP book vouchers early to enable students to order textbooks and ensure they were registered for classes. Assisted students who were home sick and provided support with transfer options as necessary to meet their needs. Created future outline with students and communicated with parents to discuss the students' college future and ensure a smooth transition into the second year.

Successes/Challenges:

Successes – Effective early release of book vouchers helped students be prepared for their classes. Provided support to students with health issues and transfer needs, demonstrating the commitment to individualized care. Engaged with parents and students to develop future plans, facilitating a more informed and supportive transition into their second year while also remaining as a possible college option for them.

Challenges - Students in this cohort faced increased risk as they were the first group to arrive on campus after only a year of in-person high school due to the global pandemic, resulting in significant learning loss. These students required additional support throughout the program, which was challenging due to short staffing.

1B. Data Collected:

Data cross-checked with payroll using U-Wide Program Academic Support/Tutoring account.

Tutoring Usage Expense

- **Fall 2021:** \$1,840.36
- **Fall 2022:** \$885.43
- **Fall 2023** \$1,538.15
- **Spring 22:** \$781.50
- **Spring 23:** \$493.40
- **Spring 24:** \$429.35

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Data extracted from payroll serves as a secondary source to assess tutoring usage from fall to fall and spring to spring. This data shows a general decline in tutoring usage over the years. Specifically, there was a decrease from Fall 2021 to Fall 2022 and increased again in Fall 2023. The decrease in tutoring usage from spring to spring highlights the need for the department to explore alternative strategies to encourage more consistent tutoring usage throughout the spring semester as well to better support students' academic progress.

Target: Did not meet target showing increase of tutoring usage.

Ensured that all first-year students, 100%, utilized tutoring services through campus Writers Block tutoring, which significantly contributed to their academic development, success, and confidence.

Writers Block Tutoring Usage

2022-2023 | Fall 2022

13 out of 13 students received at least 6 tutoring sessions lasting one hour per session.

2023-2024 | Fall 2023

20 out of 20 students received at least 2 tutoring sessions lasting one hour per session.

By using the Writers Block Tutoring Center, our department encouraged first-year students to take advantage of this resource during the fall semester, with tutor expenses covered by our U-Wide budget account. This support was crucial for our students in the fall, and we plan to continue implementing this resource during the spring semester as well.

Target: Target Met.

Tutoring or Mentoring Service used by Returning Students

10 out of 30 returning students

30 returning students utilized mentoring

Target

Important Actions: Invited the tutoring coordinator to speak with students during the mandatory EOP meeting early in the year to highlight the importance of tutoring. Maintained regular contact with the tutoring coordinator to facilitate the provision of necessary signatures for budget accounts. Received an updated roster of student tutors and implemented mandatory Writers Block tutoring sessions for first year students to expose them to these services and provide targeted support for their writing skills. Encouraged EOP counselors to closely monitor students struggling in their courses and recommend applying for tutoring as early as possible to address academic challenges promptly.

Successes/Challenges:

Successes – Shifted tutoring support to a centralized service model. Invited the tutoring coordinator to speak during the mandatory EOP meeting early in the year to emphasize the importance of tutoring. Maintained regular contact with the tutoring coordinator to ensure smooth budget processing and updated

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tutor rosters. Implemented mandatory Writers Block tutoring sessions for first-year students, effectively exposing them to these services and providing targeted support for their writing skills. Encouraged EOP counselors to monitor struggling students closely and recommend tutoring early to address academic challenges proactively.

Challenges - In mid-Fall 2022, EOP tutoring services were transitioned to a centralized tutoring model due to short staffing, including the search for a new director and clerical staff changes. Tutoring expenses varied significantly, with costs in Fall 2023 rising to \$1,538.15 compared to Fall 2022's \$885.43, and Spring 2024 expenses remaining high at \$429.35. This fluctuation indicates the need for ongoing monitoring and adjustment. This shift impacted the ability to sustain program-specific tutoring. In Spring 2024, responsibility for overseeing tutoring was moved to a new office, leading to a reduction on tutoring as the new office adjusted to the process. This transition impacted the effectiveness and outreach of tutoring services.

Based on the assessment data and information shared above, what planned actions were or will be taken as a result?

1A.

- Continue to offer 4-credit bearing courses in Statistics and Metaskills to incoming students to help them build a strong academic foundation and GPA before the fall semester as a way to enhance support for transitioning students.
- Maintain and possibly expand the frequency of follow ups and outreach to better support students' academic and personal needs throughout the year.
- Continue the practice of weekly or as needed meetings with the EOP Counselor and ensure that advising services remain tailored and responsive to students' needs.
- Adjust support strategies based on detailed analysis of incoming student cohorts, especially those affected by pandemic-related disruptions in their high school education.
- Strengthen collaboration with new tutoring services to encourage greater student engagement, particularly in areas of academic weakness. Increase the frequency of mandatory Writers Block tutoring sessions, starting early in the semester and extending them through to the end of the semester to enhance their effectiveness and usage.
- Continue issuing book vouchers early and stay in regular contact with students over the summer to ensure a smooth transition. This involves keeping a social presence on social media updating current students with highlights from our EOP Summer Institute and any new initiatives. This will boost engagement and community support from current students for incoming students.
- Partner with the Office of Admissions to reach out to prospective EOP students and discuss the EOP program at SUNY Potsdam, including the EOP Summer Institute. This collaboration will enhance student engagement with the college and better prepare eligible and prospective students by providing them with a clear understanding of student expectations and their future at the college.
- Collaborate with EOP staff to create an EOP Peer Mentoring program to be implemented for the 2025-2026 academic year. This program will offer current students the opportunity to serve as mentors, assisting with issues such as imposter syndrome, homesickness, campus navigation, and effective academic practices.
- Implement additional programming design to enhance community building and create a more supportive environment.

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1B.

- Continue to adapt to the centralized tutoring model and monitor its effectiveness in supporting student needs.
- Ensure regular communication with the tutoring coordinator to manage budgets, update tutor rosters, and sustain effective tutoring services.
- Address any gaps in tutoring services due to transitions between offices or changes in oversight to enhance the effectiveness and outreach of tutoring support.
- Enhance collaboration with the Writers Block coordinator to boost and manage first year student engagement with tutoring services, extending this initiative throughout the entire academic year rather than limiting it to the first semester.

SECTION 2: DATA INFORMED DECISIONS & UNPLANNED ASSESSMENT (OPTIONAL, BUT VALUABLE)

The experiences of every administrative unit contribute to our collective narrative as a campus. We encourage you to share an example from this past year where you leveraged data or assessment type activities. This could involve planning, taking action, and/or solving a problem. Unlike section 1, there's no need for a formal reporting structure for this section. Instead, focus on a narrative that highlights what was done, the results and the impact of your efforts. Please include any related data and information when available and appropriate.

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