

**SUNY Potsdam
Administrative Unit
Assessment Summary Form**

Administrative Unit: Undergraduate Admissions

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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

Goal #1: Provide accurate, timely, and useful information to prospective students and families.

Desired Outcomes/Objectives

1A. New/updated pubs (viewbook, postcard sequence, travel materials, etc.) will be designed, edited, and ready for production by June 15 each year.

1B. Admissions' SLATE email communication plan will be reviewed, updates and additions/deletions made, and ready prior to September 1 each year. There is always building being done, so this is a continual process, but the core of the COMM plan will be reviewed each summer.

1C. Targeted marketing campaigns will be reviewed by doing a three-year comparison of newly enrolled students from targeted geographic areas and in targeted academic program clusters by September 1. This annual review will continue as long as marketing funds are available.

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Related Targets/Measures

1A. In collaboration with College Communications, Admissions will complete a review of all publications (postcards, travel materials, viewbook...) to verify if updates are needed and to determine appropriate quantities needed. Completion and documentation of the review by June 15 of each year.

1B. In collaboration with College Communications, Admissions will complete a review of all SLATE COMM plans to verify if updates are needed and to make any modifications prior to the next recruitment cycle. Completion and documentation of an annual review and any modifications made by September 1 each year, with continual adjustments/upgrades being implemented throughout each cycle, if needed.

1C. In collaboration with College Communications and campus leadership, Admissions will participate in marketing strategy sessions led by the Vice President for Enrollment Management. Undergraduate Admissions will track marketing campaign effectiveness by using multiple measurables:

- Annual increased prospective student attendance numbers at on campus events that were supported by newspaper advertising and social media boosts. This review and comparison with the prior year will be completed and documented by September 1 each year.
- Annual increased undergraduate Admissions application numbers and enrolled students from geographic areas where physical and digital marketing campaigns are employed. This review and comparison with the prior year will be completed and documented by September 1 each year.
- Annual increased individual and group campus visits by prospective students from geographic areas where physical and digital marketing campaigns are employed. This review and comparison with the prior year will be completed and documented by September 1 each year.

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: Admissions Leadership and College Communications meet regularly, or as needed, since we communicate almost daily throughout the year, so formal meetings aren't always needed. Our summer planning meeting, in June 2023, went over Admissions inventory of the college viewbook, location pieces, bear heads, and road pieces. The viewbook is the most comprehensive college recruitment piece and that mailing is outsourced to a mail house. The other pieces referenced are the primary travel pieces Admissions staff take to high school visits, college fairs, transfer fairs, and other SUNY Potsdam recruitment activities. We also use some pieces in prospective student campus visit folders. Admissions and Communications decided small redesigns were needed for the college viewbook and bear head. We also decided to use the remaining supply of road pieces while a complete overhaul of it was done. The new road piece is a much more visually appealing and thorough representation of SUNY Potsdam than the prior piece, all while not being too much and cost prohibitive. Redesign and publication orders were completed on time, and everything was available for use when needed. The same is true for the post card mailer sequence, academic program displays, and swag items. Admissions and College Communications worked collaboratively to strategize, prepare, and implement all portions of the publication and swag plan on time. All pieces are high quality and are great marketing of the SUNY Potsdam college experience.

1B. Admissions and College Communications use the SLATE CRM to build, operate, and maintain SUNY Potsdam's new undergraduate and graduate student recruitment communication plans. August and September are SLATE Cycle Prep months, as this is when our teams go through and update all things SLATE for the upcoming recruitment cycle. One of the biggest components of cycle prep involves updating email communication drips for multiple student populations

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and groups, including but not limited to prospects, inquiries, applicants, admitted students, deposited students, parents/guardians and more. Those are not the only months that communications are built or modified, as there are things that pop up, such as new events, tailored messaging from the President, specific program updates/information, and so forth, that are built throughout each year. However, SLATE cycle prep of 2023 was successfully completed on time, meaning prior to fall recruitment travel and the beginning of spring and fall 2024 application review, which is October 1. Cycle prep can't begin until the new undergraduate application season begins on August 1 of each year.

1C. The Vice President for Enrollment Management (VPEM) left SUNY Potsdam during the 2023-2024 recruitment cycle. An Enrollment Management (EM) group, led by Mindy Thompson (College Communications), met regularly throughout the year. Group membership includes Mindy Thompson (Communications), Alan Hersker (Interim Provost), Jesstine Avadikian (Communications), Terry Francis (Admissions), Erica Kaiser (Admissions), and Nicole Zeledon (Graduate Admissions). The EM group strategizes how to utilize limited marketing funds to promote as much of the SUNY Potsdam experience as possible. The group comes up with a marketing proposal to pitch to President Smith and President's Council. Upon approval, College Communications builds multi-channel marketing campaigns highlighting the SUNY Potsdam college experience, academic programs, and more.

Data comparison:

- **Campus Event attendance:**
2022-2023: 730; 2023-2024: 692
- **Application numbers:**
First time college student applications, 2023: 3,888; 2024: 4,518
Transfer applications, 2023: 487; 2024: 527
- **Individual and group campus visits:**
2022-2023: 742; 2023-2024: 604

***There were many other student groups on campus in both years. Admissions supported those events but were not the primary organizers (ex: Careers in STEM Days, field trips, groups for Crane events, etc).**

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

1A. Admissions and College Communications are optimistic that the newly designed road piece will have a positive impact on recruitment travel. It is very visually appealing and more comprehensive than the prior piece. The hope is that it will bring students to the SUNY Potsdam website, and more importantly, to campus. The SUNY Potsdam viewbook is incredible! We are in a very good spot with our publications. Academic program specific handouts would be helpful, but costly and very time consuming to track down the information.

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1B. The Admissions SLATE Captain and Operations Manager retired in June 2024. Admissions is contracting with that person to facilitate a smooth cycle prep transition for their replacement, CTS, College Communications, and Admissions. Admissions is in the process of building out the Operations part of the team, by moving the Assistant Director to SLATE Captain and lead event person, as well as filling the former SLATE Captain's position with a CRM Operations Assistant. This will put EM in a better position for any future staffing changes and it's a much more effective approach to managing two instances of SLATE (undergraduate and graduate).

1C. Regardless of numbers (data comparisons), there are factors that impacted yield numbers for the new undergraduate class of 2024. Application numbers are up, but we were in year two of SUNY free application weeks, so SUNY campuses are still trying to figure out how much of a false bump will be the new "normal". Negative publicity at home, across New York State, and to a smaller extent, outside of New York, due to the cuts SUNY Potsdam announced in early fall 2023, seem to have had a negative impact on first-time college student numbers, as the current first-time undergraduate student number is 368 compared to a final number of 436 in fall 2023. Demographics, enrollment cliffs, and other factors are in play too. This assessment bullet doesn't necessarily read as a "Yield" item. However, ultimately that is all that matters, since increased applications and admits didn't lead to a bigger class. So, Admissions is hoping to garner support and funds to work with a vendor that specializes in converting admitted students to deposited students. SUNY System Administration is also working with SUNY Potsdam on multi-channel marketing campaigns focused on rebuilding trust and confidence in our home region, as well as digital campaigns for other areas outside Northern New York. Mindy Thompson and Terry Francis are working with Kyle Adams and his SUNY team. New SUNY Potsdam marketing campaigns will be launched soon.

Marketing efforts supporting the change to all online Graduate programs as well as the online undergraduate Political Science program seem to be effective, as Graduate continues to see tremendous growth and the online Political Science program has also produced significant increases for that department.

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.

SUNY System Administration selected SUNY Potsdam as one of 15 campuses to get enrollment management consulting assistance from Trellis Strategies. The best take-away from the experience was a dashboard they set up that is rooted in multiple years of campus data. We formed a group of campus stakeholders that meet biweekly to support new student onboarding efforts. We track new undergraduate student numbers as well as each of the critical required onboarding step metrics, such as FAFSAs completed, health record completion, housing requests made and rooms assigned, ID cards requested and produced, and more. We address any potential trouble spots in a data informed manner. We are also finding it is a great way to stagger and vet communications from each of the areas and to provide support for other areas in a timely and consistent way.

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