1 Performance Outcome

Performance Outcome: An area of focus for improvement efforts:
Decrease the average time to degree completion.

1 Measure 1

How will the data be obtained?: Institutional Data
Is this measure direct or indirect?: Direct
Measure: Specific method used to collect evidence of the outcome:
Average time to degree completion (in number of years).

For graduates during a given academic year (December, May, and July), the percentage of students graduating in 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 years.

Note: For purposes of analyses and reporting, partial years are rounded down (i.e., 4.5 years is rounded down to 4 years).

1 Measure 2

How will the data be obtained?: Focus Group
Is this measure direct or indirect?: Indirect
Measure: Specific method used to collect evidence of the outcome:
List of obstacles to timely degree completion. This qualitative data will be collected through focus groups or interviews with students.

Focus group/interviews questions:
- Please tell me a little about your expectations in attending KSU.
- What were some of your goals academically and professionally?
- What is your timeframe for achieving these goals and for graduation?
- What is your understanding of the role of the advisor?
- What are the obstacles to graduating in 4 years?
- What are some ways you think we can improve the program?

1 Results

Results: Summary of analyses for each measure:
Of the 62 graduates in AY 2016-2017 (December, May, and July), the most frequent time to degree completion was 4 years (37%), with the average being 5.25 years.

![Time to Degree Completion for Program Graduates in AY 2016-2017](image)

In order to further investigate the issues with regard to timely degree completion, we held 3 focus groups with students (n=6, n=5, n=8) in Spring 2017.

Summary of themes from focus groups and interviews:
Students came in thinking they will graduate in 4 years, but find it takes longer because most have to balance with part-time or full-time work. There are still a few bottleneck courses with not enough sections or the times offered are not convenient to many working students. More online courses are needed. Some students felt more advisors or office hours were needed.

1 Interpretations and Trends / Strategy for Improvement

Interpretations and Trends: Interpretations of analyses and trends related to the outcome:

Previous Assessment Cycle: For graduates in AY 2015-2016, the most frequent time to degree completion was 5 years (31%), with the average being 5.60 years.

![Time to Degree Completion for Program Graduates in AY 2015-2016](image)

Improvements Implemented: Based on those results, we identified the bottleneck courses and added sections of most of those courses for AY 2016-2017.

Current Assessment Cycle: Of the 51 graduates in AY 2016-2017, the average time to degree completion decreased by .35 year to an average of 5.25 years. Also, higher numbers of students graduated in 4 years, which is a good improvement.

![Time to Degree Completion](image)

It appears adding sections of some of the bottleneck courses did have a positive effect. However, of the graduates in AY 2016-2017, more than half graduated in 5 or more years and the average time to degree completion is still over 5 years.

Strategy for Improvement: Specific strategy for improvement selected for implementation during the next 3-year assessment cycle:

During our August 2017 faculty meeting, we discussed this performance outcome and ways to further decrease the time to degree completion. The following ideas were discussed:

- Review current enrollment figures for each course and section to determine what bottleneck courses still exist.
- Add sections for those bottleneck courses if possible.
- Increase the availability of advisors (office hours) and communicate office hours to a greater decrease (using social media as well).
- Increase the number of advisors.
- Educate advisors about the bottleneck courses and how to most effectively advise students toward the goal of timely graduation.
- Offer more online sections of bottleneck courses.

At this time, we are not able to offer more sections of bottleneck courses due to resource constraints. However, we will work towards offering more online sections in coming years.
For AY 2017-2018, we will focus on advising and its effectiveness.

- We will ensure advisors are aware of bottleneck courses and how to best advise students with these in mind.
- Each advisor will add 1-2 office hours to their weekly schedule.
- We will encourage students to consult with their advisor as they determine schedules for the next semester. Faculty will discuss this with students during class near the end of each semester, before enrollment begins for the following semester.
- We will send out email reminders with the office hours and contact information for each advisor. This information will also be posted on social media sites and the website for the program.