

At NMHU, co-curricular activities are defined as out-of-class experiences that complement and extend the formal learning experience of a course or academic program. Co-curricular activities develop a student's social, intellectual, cultural, democratic, civic, and aesthetic domains. They are supervised and/or financed by the institution and facilitate the attainment of NMHU's four essential traits (or student learning outcomes). These experiences are voluntary, ungraded, and non-credited, although they may be compensated through student employment.

Four identified traits/student learning outcomes that the NMHU community of faculty, students and staff identified that our graduates are expected to display:

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

**Program Name:** Academic Clubs

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**Program Mission:** To support the University mission: *New Mexico Highlands University is a public comprehensive university serving our local and global communities. Our mission is to provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to attain an exceptional education by fostering creativity, critical thinking and research in the liberal arts, sciences, and professions within a diverse community.*

Highlands offers a variety of academic clubs that allow students a chance to explore their academic and career interests outside of the classroom. Clubs are voluntary and many have a strong social element, although they do support our Four University traits. This co-curricular assessment will be of the club program as a whole, not individual clubs, and will gather some individual data on how clubs impact student learning outcomes.

**Intended Audience:** This report will be shared with the faculty advisors of those clubs, but the main audience for the report will be the Dean of Students and the other administrators who oversee the club program as a whole.

**Please include data on student utilization of the program over the past year (be sure to include online and Center students if part of your intended audience).**

Here is the list of clubs from 2016-2017 and involvement, including clubs at the Centers:

- Art Club (18 members)
- American Sign Language Club (11 members)
- Alpha (7 members)
- Delta Mu Delta (0 members)
- Highlands University Geology Society (20 members)
- Hispanic Culture and Language Association (7 members)
- Human Behavior and Social Environment Power (12 members)
- Leadership in Geospatial Technology (11 members)
- Media Arts Club (19 members)
- New Mexico Review (6 members)
- NMHU Chemistry Club (29 members)
- NMHU Computer Science Club (17 members)

- NMHU Forestry Club (22 members)
- NMHU Performing Art Club (6 members)
- Political Science Club (4 members)
- Psi Chi Club (4 members)
- Sigma Tau Delta (3 members)
- Undergraduate Social Work Association (8 members)
- Albuquerque/Rio Rancho Social Work Student Association (4 members)
- Alliance of Indigenous Social Work Students (33 members)

Total students participating in clubs: 237 members

### Summary of Student Satisfaction Results:

We used the SkyFactor Student Activities Assessment to measure student satisfaction with the Academic Clubs Co-Curricular program. The survey was distributed to all 237 students in May 2017 via e-mail, with multiple reminders to complete the assessment forwarded by SkyFactor. The Student Activities Assessment included 104 questions about demographic information, satisfaction about the activities, and information about the impact of those activities on student learning outcomes.

23 students completed the survey. While that participation rate is disappointing, we attribute that to one primary factor: the survey was done in May, as the semester is ending, and when many other surveys/polls were going out to students. For next year, we suggest that the survey be completed in February 2018, which will thus survey students at a time when they are not being over-surveyed. If we communicate with the leaders of the clubs as well, they can push students to complete the survey.

The survey still revealed a wealth of interesting information. 41% of respondents were Hispanic, and 59% indicated Not Hispanic or Latino on question 5. This closely matches our overall demographic. 47.8% of the respondents were 25 or younger, and 52.2% were over 25, indicating that many of those most invested in our academic clubs are our older and non-traditional students. Many of these students are working a substantial amount outside of school: 72.7% worked at least 11 hours a week. Given their studying load, it is impressive these students found the time to participate in clubs.

SkyFactor collects sensitive demographic information from students, including ethnicity, age, income, and, as such, it anonymizes that information, preventing us from collecting student-level data. This is appropriate for this kind of assessment because we want honest feedback on clubs and activities at the University, not one that can be traced back to students and potentially impact them. SkyFactor does break down the information quite closely, including by range (1-2, 3-5, and 6-7), so a wide variety of information can be gleaned from the data.

Question 42 is: “To what degree are there student activities and/or student organizations at this college/university that interest you?” The average score was 4.82 out of 7, indicating that we are doing well but not great. 52.9% of respondents answered in the 3, 4, or 5 range. Highlands needs to increase the visibility of its clubs and other student activities. 89.5% attended at least one activity during the year, so there is participation.

41.2% of our students were involved in one club, and 47.1% were involved in 2 clubs.

Question 64 asked if student activities were enjoyable: the mean here was a very strong 5.06 out of 7, with over 80% feeling the clubs were moderately or extremely enjoyable.

SkyFactor gives us an outstanding baseline to begin improving the clubs experience at Highlands. Now that we have a grasp on some of the basic statistics, the goals for next year will be working to improve response rates and to communicate with club/leader directors about how they can better push on some of intended learning outcomes in clubs.

Student Learning Outcome:	University Trait(s) linked to which it is linked Learning Outcomes	Assessment Measurement Results	Outcome Achieved? (0 = No, 1 = Yes)	Plan for Improvement
<p>1. Involvement in clubs improves academic performance.</p>	<p>Trait #1: Mastery of content knowledge and skills.</p>	<p>Question 46 of the SkyFactor was “What impact did involvement in student activities have on your GPA?”</p> <p>Out of 17 students, 16/17 did not feel clubs improved their GPA. (measured by answering more than 4 on a 7 point scale).</p>	<p>0 = No</p> <p>16/17 did not meet this outcome.</p>	<p>This was a striking result. Students did not feel that the clubs were improving their GPA. As disappointing as this result may be, it does give us a clear path forward for future years: the Dean of Students needs to speak with club advisors about making sure there are some activities that more explicitly link with the academic program. Most students (14/17) felt that the clubs had no impact on their GPA.</p> <p>Plan for improvement: Dean of Students should hold a meeting with Club advisors to discuss ways clubs can more directly support student learning in the classroom.</p>
<p>2. Involvement in clubs will help students improve their communication skills.</p>	<p>Trait #2: Effective communication skills.</p>	<p>Question 51 on SkyFactor asked “To what extent has attending student activities: enhanced your ability to interact socially?”</p> <p>Of 16 students, 11 out 16 answered that the clubs helped to improve their</p>	<p>1 = Yes</p> <p>11 out of 16 meet the outcome.</p> <p>5 out of 16 students did not meet the outcome.</p>	<p>Students did feel that clubs improved their ability to interact socially, with 37.6% answering that the clubs helped them at 6 or 7 (extremely). This is a positive result. More social activities should be integrated into the clubs, and we suggest that the</p>

		<p>ability to interact socially (measured by answering more than 4 on a 7 point scale).</p> <p>The mean was 4.31</p>		<p>Dean of Students, in her meeting with Club advisors, continue to emphasize communication.</p>
<p>3. Involvement in clubs will help students appreciate new and different ideas.</p>	<p>Trait #3: Critical and reflective thinking skills.</p>	<p>Question 52 of SkyFactor asked "To what extent has attending student activities: Exposed you to new and different ideas?"</p> <p>Of 16 students, 12 answered that the clubs exposed them to new ideas. The mean was 4.44</p>	<p>1 = Yes</p> <p>12 out of 16 students meet the outcome.</p> <p>4 out of 16 students did not meet the outcome.</p>	<p>Another successful area, with 75% of students feeling they were helped to appreciate new and different ideas. The same suggestion for improvement stands: at the Dean of Students meeting, this should be stressed as a goal for the clubs.</p>
<p>4. Students will feel positively involved in the club and thus the University.</p>	<p>Not a trait, but will provide a baseline measure of student satisfaction of academic clubs.</p>	<p>Question of 58 of SkyFactor asked "To what extent has attending student activities: Helped you feel a sense of belonging to your campus?"</p> <p>Of 16 students, 11 answered that the clubs helped them feel a sense of belonging. The mean was 4.5</p>	<p>1 = Yes</p> <p>11 out of 16 students met the outcome.</p> <p>5 out of 16 students it not meet the outcome.</p>	<p>Like the other measurements, this shows that clubs are successful for many of our students, but not for as many as there should be.</p>

**Summary of the Outcomes Assessment Data. [Did students achieve the outcomes? Which outcomes can be achieved? Briefly analyze the results].**

Since this is the first time we have explicitly gathered about clubs, the results were very revealing. While students expressed satisfaction with the clubs, and met the learning outcomes of learning to communicate better, exposure to new ideas, and connection to the University, students were not seeing a connection between academic clubs and performance in the classroom. We need to more explicitly make “mastery of content knowledge and skills” part of our academic clubs.

**How are you going to improve the program for next year? Which outcomes will you target, and what specific steps will you take for improvement?**

We suggest that the Dean of Students hold a meeting with the Club Advisors to discuss how academic clubs can better help students achieve their academic goals. As far as we know, no such meetings have taken place in recent years; by helping those club leaders to understand how academic clubs might positively impact student learning outcomes, we can do a better job of aligning the club experience with the academic curriculum.

**What were the results of the discussion with peer reviewers and the joint meeting between the Co-Curricular and Assessment Committees?**

The role that academic clubs play in increasing GPA was discussed. It was decided that participation in academic clubs could not be directly tied to a change in GPA, but rather likely supports student learning other skills such as leadership and communication skills.

**Do any improvements need to be made to your plan? How will those be implemented?**

The plan is sound, but response rate from students need to improve by changing the time of year the survey is given. By moving the survey to February, and better communicating with club leaders about the purposes of the survey, we can dramatically improve response rates.