

STRATEGIC PRIORITY PROPOSAL

Designing DePaul Strategic Plan

Fill out the template as appropriate for your subcommittee's initiatives. Please complete by January 19, 2026.

Initiative Title:	AI Strategy
Subcommittee:	Academic Distinction Subcommittee
Date Submitted:	January 19, 2026

1. INITIATIVE OVERVIEW

Key Institutional Challenges:

What are the key current or future institutional challenges that your committee is tasked with addressing?

Artificial Intelligence (AI), and particularly generative AI, is a set of tools and methods that now challenge policies and activities at all universities and not only at DePaul. For example, AI has changed the pace, scope, and expectations of research, especially in STEM and professional fields; it has changed writing and reading expectations inside and outside of classrooms; it has upended tutoring as universities have known it for decades; it has shaken academic integrity norms and rules; its expanding use makes future employment and work environments uncertain for students; it has complex negative environmental impacts that concern many students, staff, and faculty.

At the same time, AI has enabled notable research achievements in multiple fields (particularly in STEM) and has become an expected tool in the toolbox of students graduating recently in business, communication, and some parts of the performing and fine arts. AI forms part of the suite of skills the DePaul community uses to some degree throughout their average workday and some employers say they prefer employees to be fluent with AI and adaptable to work in hybrid teams that increasingly include AI agents/tools as a 'member.'

To be innovative, distinctive, and aligned with our Vincentian Mission, DePaul's AI Strategy should prioritize ethical, principled, use of the technology. Among questions that a "mission approach" to AI would include are:

- for students, what special skills, courses, and requirements, AI research opportunities, and roles for new AI creativity should be provided? What are appropriate uses of AI by students in curricular and co-curricular contexts?
- for staff, what are the expectations about use of AI for university business and how to grow professionally with AI tools and methods? What are operational risks from AI and how can DePaul most effectively prepare for them and respond to them? What, if any, are appropriate uses of AI for high-touch student-facing services on and off-campus?
- for faculty, what AI use-level is appropriate (if at all) for particular fields and projects? What training and research opportunities are supported? How is use of AI (by students, by faculty) changing goals and expectations of fundamental skills to be attained by our students?

Challenge 1. What AI Profile would make DePaul stand out as innovative? We must note that virtually every college and university has some form of “AI Statement” and varying degrees of curricular AI presence in different fields. There will be no distinction for DPU to say “We do AI (too)” and simply note some courses.

1a. Curriculum: develop a wider narrative of Creative Intelligence or Multiple Intelligences (AI is one among them). While there is scattered coverage and use of AI in programs across DePaul, there is no AI course requirement or AI experience/assignment expectation (for instance as a graduation requirement checkbox) in the Core Curriculum. This might be an area for expanded and distinctive required coursework on Intelligence(s) broadly construed (AI as well as analog) in Liberal Studies and University Honors. A broader category that includes instruction in AI tools use but also AI as an object of critical analysis could be one part of a wider revision of the Core. In addition, AI used in coursework and projects with community impact can be highlighted and expanded - there are initial steps in this direction.

1b. Research and Teaching: AI is already a topic of faculty and staff exploration in Driehaus, but there has been attention to AI and writing pedagogy in the Department of WRD, and the recent “Teaching and Learning with Generative AI” online self-paced workshop developed by the Center for Teaching and Learning had more than 400 faculty enroll and (as of Jan 2026) 85 complete all modules. AI has a presence at DePaul in multiple places: for example, AI software development is taught in Jarvis CDM and AI is used in courses in Driehaus, Communication, and CSH, and to a lesser extent in LAS.

Challenge 2. The appetite for and adoption of AI is very uneven across the university. There are enthusiasts, but also a notable number of AI skeptics and opponents among staff, students, and faculty. Creation of the Provost’s Advisory Committee on Artificial Intelligence (ACAI) in fall 2025 launched a process for informed strategic planning about AI. ACAI, chaired by John Shanahan, has been gathering feedback from faculty, staff, and students since October, and those findings inform this subcommittee’s input in this document.

2a. A notable challenge for us is the uncertain future of Gen AI in the broader culture. There is growing concern among economists and in the media about an “AI bubble” and the economic pain that will result if it bursts. The profit potential for Gen AI is still largely speculative, and the build out of data centers is already having negative financial impacts on the average person’s electricity bill. We should be aware of the potential for significant public backlash against AI if it is seen as causing a financial crisis. DePaul should also consider the implications of any appearance of endorsing a technology that is designed to replace the labor of our students in many of the jobs to which they aspire. (This latter sentiment was delivered to ACAI by a Film & Television student in a prepared statement at a fall listening session). We need to take into account students’ perceptions of how any potential “AI requirement” would relate to DePaul’s Vincentian mission as well as the broader economy.

Challenge 3. AI tools and platforms change rapidly and many do not have much real-campus public assessment record to date. DePaul currently has some AI tool use options via existing contracts with Microsoft (i.e. Copilot Chat) and Zoom, and new possibilities with Salesforce and Civitas and some of our Library content vendors. At the same time, new AI tools are of interest to particular fields/units: e.g. Boodlebox (an AI aggregator with academic ‘guardrails’) has been requested specifically by Driehaus College of Business, Adobe license expansion in e.g. Jarvis CDM, and expanded AI tool use in some staff offices. It is unclear which platforms and tools will be most beneficial for which students and at what pace in courses and projects. The ACAI will be one mechanism, in addition to regular course assessments, to monitor success and struggle. Finally, it is also unclear how effective new AI options will be in coursework or how consistently adopted and used. Driehaus tested Boodlebox in fall 2025 and gathered limited user feedback data. The subcommittee requests more data about actual use at other institutions and at DePaul.

Initiative Description:

Describe this initiative and explain how it could potentially address the challenges described above.

Initiative 1: Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

- Building on its successful (elective) online faculty workshop “Teaching and Learning with Generative AI,” the Center for Teaching and Learning will expand opportunities for Gen AI training for all faculty as a suite of modules accessed via D2L. These modules may later be embedded directly into courses by instructors and/or serve as models for new faculty curriculum.
- Instructional design consultation about AI with relevant academic units for online async courses and high DFW courses.

Initiative 2: Gen AI Platform Adoption

- Boodlebox subscription: Boodlebox is an AI platform that aggregates more than a dozen text and visual AI tools, built specifically for academic use. The price below is based on a pilot subscription quoted for the Driehaus College of Business, but we hope that the opportunities for use may be wider than a single college. The pilot program will launch with a soft rollout in DCOB in Spring Quarter 2026, expanding to full implementation by Autumn 2026. Approximately 2,000 students, faculty, and staff will gain structured access to multiple premium AI models (including GPT-4, Claude, Gemini, LLAMA, and Perplexity) through a secure, FERPA-compliant environment integrated directly with D2L Brightspace via LTI.

Initiative 3: AI Engagement Grants

- Internal DePaul grants category specifically for AI Engagement. This does not require new offices or processes but rather reservation of granting by topic within ORS. It is expected that small internal grants will seed faculty research for successful external grants.

Initiative 4: Development of an “Intelligences Framework” (name TBD) into the Core Curriculum

- Develop required curriculum for critical AI literacy in the Liberal Studies and University Honors programs, ideally delivered in first year as well as later in a student’s career.

2. SCOPE

Objectives:

List 3-5 specific, measurable objectives for this initiative.

1. Highlight DePaul as an institution of creativity via multiple intelligences. Strengthen DePaul’s brand identity, research profile, and mission as home to a distinctive brand of education where students learn AI as part of a wider ethical approach addressing students’ multiple forms of intelligence: creative, emotional, physical, and technical. At DePaul we educate the whole person and nurture their multiple intelligences.

2. Curriculum: new AI training workshops for faculty offered by the Center for Teaching and Learning (step 1) and then incorporated across the wider curriculum as appropriate, including the Core Curriculum, via expanded access to AI tools (Boodlebox) (step 2).

3. Professional Development Opportunities for Faculty and Staff related to AI.
4. New and Updated AI Policy. University guidelines for AI Use and AI Ethics at DePaul.

Deliverables:

What tangible outputs will this initiative produce?

1. Draft curriculum of Gen AI training workshops for faculty (and some staff), and for students. This will be joint work of the Center for Teaching and Learning and faculty in multiple colleges.
2. Draft AI Guidelines and Vision Statements. This will be a set of draft documents about the distinctive DePaul approach to education that prizes students' creative intelligence and the multiple intelligences necessary for the world and workplace.
3. New internal grants category for AI Initiatives (including critical approaches) and new AI-themed courses and community projects.

Out of Scope:

What is explicitly NOT included in this initiative?

Success Metrics:

How will success be measured? Include baseline data if available.

1. CTL AI training will come in several forms.
 - One already underway for faculty fosters greater familiarity with various AI tools and methods and has been offered via D2L. Another for select faculty will target high DFW courses to better understand how AI might be useful for new kinds of student-responsive tutoring and other forms of supplemental instruction. Another will be for students, and is expected to be a set of modules for critical use and ethical understanding of AI.
 - For faculty AI workshops, CTL has budgeted stipends of up to \$700 for 400 faculty per year for the next three years (on a model of c. 1200 total faculty). The actual number of faculty completing and earning the stipend each year is likely to be lower; in AQ25 (the first offering of the training), over 400 faculty registered and 85 completed phase 1 and earned a partial stipend. As of December 2025, 25 faculty began Phase 2 of the training, implementation in their own courses, and would receive the remainder of the stipend.
 - For high-DFW courses, CTL will be available to relevant departments to identify AI tools to assist student learning, if applicable. We will be able to measure impact by changes in student assignment scores and grades and frequency of use of AI and human tutoring.
3. Boodlebox (AI Platform) Subscription:
 - We include estimates of contracts both for Driehaus only and for all of DePaul. Driehaus draft plans are for an unlimited site license for approximately 6000 users (i.e. all BUS faculty, staff, and students and a few extra licenses for other users at DePaul outside Driehaus). A detailed implementation document prepared by James Moore for DCOB is available, and upon which we draw for this item in this template.

3. SWOT ANALYSIS

Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of this initiative in terms of addressing the challenges described in Section 2. Discuss internal and external opportunities and threats that will increase or decrease the likelihood of achieving stated objectives.

Strengths:

What strengths does this initiative leverage? What advantages does it have?

This initiative will indicate the currency of DePaul in a campus research and post-graduation work environment where AI is a major feature (for better and worse). It will help highlight new work by students and faculty with AI but also critical approaches that are just as important for the future. A dramatic mission-centered narrative about DePaul's unique brand of education (we suggest multiple creative intelligences, not only "AI") can raise our profile. Joined with already nationally ranked programs in Game Design, Cybersecurity, Entrepreneurship, and others – and in combination with student hunger for authentic analog learning in tandem – we can craft a distinct "AI forward" message that stands out from competitors. The subcommittee feels that a "both/and" approach to AI and liberal education tied to our mission and our existing strengths in community service is a strong narrative for marketing purposes.

Weaknesses:

What weaknesses or limitations does this initiative face?

DePaul's AI strategy will need a special narrative to stand out in a crowded market with rival schools also advertising similar content and approaches. We have suggested some language elsewhere in this template ("multiple creative intelligences"). We must note that for a significant segment of students, staff, and faculty at DePaul – and the wider public – AI has many negative associations (job loss, online 'slop' and misinformation, deskilling, etc.) and we must be aware of that when developing our AI strategy.

Opportunities:

What internal and external opportunities will increase the likelihood of this initiative achieving its goals?

We can expand opportunities for AI engagement (both positive and critical) among faculty, staff, and students. There is already significant AI competency in Jarvis CDM and pockets of it in CSH and Driehaus as well as scattered among other colleges. In a wider initiative that invites, and models, ethical AI use and understanding, DePaul could stand out for its innovative brand of liberal education that spans the curriculum. This wider approach would embed AI into a more robust cross-college education where the Core is also revised for new skill/strengths as they've emerged in the past decade (analog and digital research methods, multimodal writing process, teamwork and its particular modes of communication now [e.g. working with AI agents as team members], design thinking and simulations/modeling, historical and cultural breadth, etc.). We have makerspaces (Idea Realization Labs) on both campuses and might expand use of these spaces, as well as the Library's collaborative spaces and archives, to enable new fields and multi-disciplinary collaborations by way of the targeted AI Engagement grants.

External: DePaul's innovative brand of ethical community-oriented AI engagement could spur new and expanded community partnerships; it could be of interest to new segments of potential students who value critical studies of AI as well as those seeking simply to use the latest tools). Marketed as a unique kind of liberal arts education, DePaul can place itself as a student-focused and guided experience of comprehensive "creative intelligences" in comparison to UIC, UIUC, and Loyola (where class sizes are much larger).

Threats:

What internal and external threats will decrease the likelihood of this initiative achieving its goals?

Negative Associations: AI has notable negative publicity, especially recently, and DePaul needs to be aware of an overly sanguine or uncritical stance on the role/scale of AI in the curriculum as well as in student-facing services such as advising. There is also a risk of any particular AI tool/platform becoming outmoded, uncool, or both in the marketplace. (This is the reason why the subcommittee recommends any possible future university-level AI narrative be wider than AI alone, stressing multiple intelligences first.) Adding too blatant an “AI forward” message tied to DePaul’s brand could seem contradictory to our Vincentian mission and be counterproductive as a marketing tool. DePaul can stand out among local competitors by focusing on the human as what makes us special and worth the extra cost. Students can get AI training online for free through programs like LinkedIn and Khan Academy; what they can’t get on their own for free is caring human mentors with expertise to guide their learning in AI or any other discipline.

Financial: Ongoing access to secure FERPA-compliant AI tools requires consistent institutional subscriptions. As AI tools become more specialized, providing students access with the latest technology will be increasingly expensive.

Stakeholder Feedback:

Summarize feedback gathered from relevant internal and external stakeholders that informed this analysis.

The Provost’s Advisory Committee on AI (ACAI) has been gathering opinion on campus for several months now, including written templates sent to units in the colleges and 8 listening sessions for faculty, staff, and students on both campuses and online. The ACAI has been logging opinion pieces, best practices articles, and other resources about the evolving nature of AI in higher education. We do not, to the subcommittee’s knowledge, have any specific data or stakeholder feedback from community and industry partners about AI that is not already public (national surveys, etc.).

Information Needed:

What additional information, research, or data will need to be gathered to support this analysis?

The ACAI committee will be gathering some of this. Ideally we need:

- data about use of AI at DePaul in faculty research
- data about ethical, historical, environmental, and other approaches to AI at DePaul (or where it might grow in the future)
- data about student uses of AI – both as academic integrity issues and as coursework
- more data about demand for, and refusal of, AI among students (by college, by field, by cohort, etc.)
- assessment data of the outcomes of CTL’s “Teaching and Learning with Gen AI” course
- assessment of university use of Boodlebox and other AI tools and platforms

4. TIMELINE

Fiscal Year 2026 (Current Year)

Phase / Milestone	Target Date	Key Activities
CTL Faculty Gen AI Training modules	Faculty: enrollment continues, expanded. Student enrollment to open AQ26 (trialing and pilot in summer 2026)	New faculty AI training modules launch (AQ26), and expansion of existing training modules.
Boodlebox license (Driehaus)	n/a	Contract begins TBD early 2026
URC new "AI Engagement Grants"	n/a	TBD starting AQ26

Fiscal Year 2027 (Planning Horizon)

Phase / Milestone	Target Date	Key Activities
Driehaus Boodlebox license	Full college rollout AQ26	Boodlebox incorporated into at least 60 courses (roughly 530 sections, grad and undergrad, over four quarters) in DCOB
URC new "AI Engagement Grants"	Begins application cycle AQ26	First AI Engagement Grants begin AQ27 (Daniela?)
	<i>[Date range]</i>	<i>[Activities]</i>
	<i>[Date range]</i>	<i>[Activities]</i>

Key Dependencies:

Timing for items above will depend on CTL workforce capacity (develop and maintain trainings); time to contract between DePaul and Boodlebox; Academic Affairs budgeting (for possible URC AI granting).

* Revision of the Core curriculum to possibly include AI will be a large-scale multi-year process requiring faculty primacy (curriculum development and approval). The key bodies to lead these discussions are the Liberal Studies Council and the University Honors Program Committee as well as the University CCP and Faculty Council.

5. PROJECTED EXPENSES & REVENUE

Describe projected expenses and potential revenue associated with the implementation of the initiative. Provide best-guess estimates on the likelihood of achieving the projected revenue.

Note: FY26 should only include expenses if any are required. We do not expect any revenue impact for FY26. Please work directly with Financial Affairs through the PMO to estimate any potential finances.

Projected Expenses

Cost Category	FY26	FY27	FY28
Estimated totals for CTL Faculty Training stipends (\$200 + \$500 for two phases) and stipends for select faculty teaching high DFW courses. (Estimates above are from CTL.)	\$377,000	\$403,000	\$403,000
Boodlebox Subscription (just Driehaus)	\$135,000	\$270,000	\$270,000
Boodlebox Subscription (all DePaul) (Estimate is from Boodlebox and Driehaus.)	\$278,788	\$604,040	\$929,292
AI Grants (Internal)	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
	\$	\$	\$
TOTAL PROJECTED EXPENSES	\$	\$	\$

Potential Revenue & Savings (FY27-FY28)

Revenue/Savings	FY26	FY27	FY28
		\$	\$
		\$	\$
		\$	\$
		\$	\$
		\$	\$
		\$	\$
TOTAL POTENTIAL REVENUE/SAVINGS		\$	\$

Likelihood Assessment:

Provide your best-guess estimate on the likelihood of achieving the projected revenue above. What assumptions are these projections based on?

Revenue/Savings	Likelihood (High/Med/Low)	Key Assumptions
[e.g., New enrollment revenue]	[High/Medium/Low]	[What needs to happen for this to be realized?]
[e.g., Retention impact]	[High/Medium/Low]	[Key assumptions]
[e.g., Cost savings]	[High/Medium/Low]	[Key assumptions]

Net Financial Impact Summary:

[Summarize overall financial picture: total investment needed, expected returns, timeline to break even or achieve positive ROI]

6. COLLABORATORS

Collaborating Units:

Which colleges, departments, or offices will need to be involved?

Unit	Nature of Collaboration
Office of Research Services (Academic Affairs)	Estimates of costs for possible AI grants
Center for Teaching and Learning	Estimates of costs for workshop programming; development of workshop curriculum; collaboration with units responsible for the high DFW courses; collaboration with faculty
Driehaus COB Dean's office	Boodlebox contract and college implementation
ACAI committee	Sharing strategic work and plans; reporting to/from ACAI to this subcommittee
Information Services	Vetting tool/platform implementation, existing AI and new compatibility issues, risks, and policy
Liberal Studies Council and Univ. Honors Program Committee	The curriculum and policy bodies for any changes to the core curriculum
Staff Council	Share staff operations feedback about AI
Faculty Council	Share faculty feedback about AI
University Registrar	Collaborate about FERPA and policy
IRMA	Collaborate with and report about AI data and relevant student, staff, and faculty data
AI Institute	This group has draft documents about AI Ethics and guidelines. Also has some personnel overlap with ACAI.

External Partners (if applicable):

[Vendors, consultants, peer institutions, community partners, etc.]