



# Program Distinction + Expansion

Executive Summary

**Total Number of Sessions:** 3 all-inclusive sessions with faculty and staff.

Date	Modality and Location	Audience	# of Participants
May 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2023	In-Person, LPC	Faculty and Staff	24
May 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2023	In-Person, Loop	Faculty and Staff	23
May 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2023	In-Person, Loop	Faculty and Staff	11
<b>Program Distinction + Expansion Total Participants:</b>			<b>58 community members</b>

#### **Faculty and Staff Discussion Questions:**

1. Where should we be connected in Chicago?
2. What global opportunities should we be focused on?
3. What needs to change in the university (policies, process, and procedures)?

#### **Narrative of the efforts:**

The President or Chief of Staff began each session by welcoming the group and introducing the initiative. They asked the community to think about the different types of interdisciplinary opportunities and how we might go about creating new programs and new institution-to-institution/corporation/organization connections. Leadership also wants us to consider our connections within the city of Chicago and across the globe to help build sustainable interdisciplinary relationships. After the introduction, we split into small groups consisting of about 10 staff or faculty members to respond to the topic's discussion questions. Each small group discussion was facilitated and documented by a member from the offices of the President or Continuous Improvement.

Faculty discussed the current challenges in co-teaching/team-teaching that impact the internal levels of interdisciplinary courses and programs DePaul can offer. Faculty and staff also discussed the need for more flexible degree programs to allow students to explore other disciplines or possibly design their own DePaul degree. The small groups addressed obstacles raised in other design session conversations: access to alumni information, dynamic tuition pricing, internal competition for resources, and a lack of framework for developing external relationships.

#### **Recommended Initiatives to design our program distinction + expansion:**

We documented over 200 pieces of feedback in response to the Program Distinction + Expansion discussion questions. From this feedback, we converted the themes into 11 unique initiatives that represent a portion of our community's thoughts on program distinction and expansion. These conversations overlapped with some themes and initiatives from the Geographic + Community Expansion and Philanthropic Expansion design sessions; due to the

overlap, the list of Program Distinction + Expansion initiatives include 5 initiatives identified from Geographic + Community Expansion and 2 initiatives from Philanthropic Expansion.

### **Initiatives unique to the Program Distinction + Expansion design sessions:**

**Initiative 1: Review the process for co-teaching/team-teaching to identify improvements and remove financial and administrative disincentives that prevent faculty from pursuing these opportunities.**

Discussion themes supporting this initiative:

- There is internal competition between colleges regarding course numbers and resources, and administrative red-tape, that deters faculty from trying to pursue co-teaching/collaborative opportunities.
- There is a need for improved collaboration and communication across different departments, colleges, and stakeholders within the university.
- Identifying existing institutes/centers, or developing new interdisciplinary centers, that require faculty participation will help create cross-college connections and interdisciplinary initiatives.

**Initiative 2: Review the faculty tenure evaluation process to identify ways to encourage and reward interdisciplinary efforts.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- Tenure review process disincentivizes faculty from building upon an initiative, even when it contributes to many small initiatives across the university, instead of working on the already well-maintained initiatives/projects/centers.
- Identifying existing institutes/centers, or developing new interdisciplinary centers, that require faculty participation will help create cross-college connections and interdisciplinary initiatives.

**Initiative 3: Develop or refresh existing training resources on starting a partnership contract process with experts from OGC.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- There are inconsistent processes for onboarding vendors and a need for greater support in initiating the contract process for potential partnerships.

**Initiative 4: Develop or refresh existing training resources on onboarding a vendor with experts from Procurement Services and Human Resources.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- There are inconsistent processes for onboarding vendors and a need for greater support in initiating the contract process for potential partnerships.

**Initiative 5: Evaluate standard faculty employment contracts and financial implications to determine how to expand teaching responsibilities outside of main unit and include service in an interdisciplinary center.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- They have seen challenges in hiring faculty to support programs outside their main unit.
- There is a need for improved collaboration and communication across different departments, colleges, and stakeholders within the university.
- Identifying existing institutes/centers, or developing new interdisciplinary centers, that require faculty participation will help create cross-college connections and interdisciplinary initiatives.

**Initiative 6: Review comparable institutions' policies for students designing their own degree programs to determine feasibility at DePaul.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- Would like to allow more flexibility in academic curriculum through special topics courses or explore new initiatives like piloting an invent-your-own-major program.

**Initiative 7: Audit existing degree program requirements to understand available credits for exploratory/special topics courses and the progress implications of adding additional room for non-required coursework.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- Would like to allow more flexibility in academic curriculum through special topics courses or explore new initiatives like piloting an invent-your-own-major program.

**Initiative 8: Identify possible undergraduate programs that could be converted into a cohort model and determine the impact on scheduling, coursework, support services, etc.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- Would like to explore alternative teaching models (such as cohort models) with smaller populations of undergraduate programs.

**Initiative 9: In tandem with an initiative from Geographic + Community Expansion, include a review of potential partners' mission and ethical practices before committing to a partnership.**

**G+CE Initiative 9: Develop 3-5 priorities that the university would like to address, like forced migration, and communicate this to the community. Identify what programs or initiatives we have established to address these needs or create new working groups with members from the community, local and abroad, to define success and begin work towards achieving it.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- This group wants to intentionally connect with ethical organizations and focus on value creation beyond monetary contributions so we can engage with the community in a responsible and ethical manner.

**Initiative 10: In tandem with an initiative from Geographic + Community Expansion, audit current partnerships and initiatives with the film industry in Chicago and abroad to understand current relationships and gaps to expand our presence in Chicago, and eventually India.**

**G+CE Initiative 1: Complete a holistic review of existing partnerships to determine potential overlap or ways to better share resources across departments and colleges.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- There are several opportunities to expand into a hub for the film industry, both in Chicago, and to bring our expertise to other global communities, like India.

**Initiative 11: In tandem with an initiative from Geographic + Community Expansion, audit current partnerships and initiatives with the Latin American and Mexican communities in Chicago and abroad to understand gaps in potential services or where existing programs could expand to serve these communities.**

**G+CE Initiative 1: Complete a holistic review of existing partnerships to determine potential overlap or ways to better share resources across departments and colleges.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- Latin American and Mexican communities, both in Chicago and internationally, are underserved and DePaul could increase our support in mission-driven, meaningful ways.

**Initiatives identified in the *Geographic + Community Expansion design sessions*:**

**Initiative: Complete a holistic review of existing partnerships to determine potential overlap or ways to better share resources across departments and colleges.**

Discussion themes supporting this initiative:

- There's confusion about internal infrastructure, lack of clarity on responsibilities of those managing the partnerships, key contacts for establishing partnerships, and the need for internal communication.
- There's a need for improved collaboration and communication across different departments, colleges, and stakeholders within the university.

**Initiative: Elevate the awareness of the partnerships published in Collaboratory to highlight how the university is engaging with various communities.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- There's confusion about internal infrastructure, lack of clarity on responsibilities of those managing the partnerships, key contacts for establishing partnerships, and the need for internal communication.
- There's a need for improved collaboration and communication across different departments, colleges, and stakeholders within the university.

**Initiative: Review Steans and Egan Centers current processes for initiating and maintaining partnerships to determine if there are opportunities to make it easier to support individual connections staff and faculty have across the university.**

Discussion themes supporting this initiative:

- There's confusion about internal infrastructure, lack of clarity on responsibilities of those managing the partnerships, key contacts for establishing partnerships, and the need for internal communication.
- A central office or structure to manage all partnerships and programming would help streamline processes.

**Initiative: Review and identify gaps in resources available to international students and support staff/faculty about navigating the visa and internship/employment process.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- DePaul needs to establish more comprehensive support systems for international students, including more on-campus job opportunities and workshops to help students acclimate to the US.

**Initiative: Evaluate current on-campus employment opportunities available for international students.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- DePaul needs to establish more comprehensive support systems for international students, including more on-campus job opportunities and workshops to help students acclimate to the US.

**Initiatives identified in the *Philanthropic Expansion design sessions*:**

**Initiative: Develop a university-wide data governance policy to provide transparency and equity to university data, including alumni and donor data.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- Faculty currently do not have access to their alumni which forces them to rely on individual connections to develop potential partnerships.

**Initiative: Review privacy policies to determine a compliant way to share alumni contact information with chapter leaders and faculty, or others outside Advancement.**

Discussion theme supporting this initiative:

- Faculty currently do not have access to their alumni which forces them to rely on individual connections to develop potential partnerships.

**Next Steps**

The Office of the President will review this comprehensive list of initiatives and determine which ones to pursue.