



# GROUND ED IN MISSION

THE PLAN FOR DEPAUL 2024



## TO OUR DEPAUL FAMILY,

Our new strategic plan—“Grounded in Mission: The Plan for DePaul 2024”—serves as our guide on the path forward as an institution, to a destination where DePaul will be unequalled among U.S. urban universities. We embark on this next chapter of our journey, which includes celebrating DePaul’s 125th anniversary, with an abiding faith in the power of education to transform individuals and communities.

We have used strategic plans in recent years to transform the university and deliver the education students of the day needed to thrive in their personal and professional lives. In that way, our strategic plans have enabled us to shape our present. This plan recognizes where we have come from and charts an ambitious course for DePaul, while remaining true to who we are and what we stand for.

“Grounded in Mission” focuses our collective effort on the success of a diverse community of students. We recommit to our Catholic, Vincentian and urban mission of welcoming marginalized, low-income, first-generation and immigrant students. Our plan acknowledges the changing world around us and challenges us to deliver an educational experience to all our students that is distinctively DePaul—empowering in its breadth and rich in its depth.

We will deliver on the promise of our plan by investing in areas of academic excellence and cultivating opportunities for our students to develop the skills and competencies required for success in a multicultural society. We will expand our academic offerings and methods of delivery, support scholarly and creative activities, and foster meaningful relationships with each other, our community and this wonderful institution. We will be noble stewards of our precious resources and engage with our extended DePaul family—including our alumni, friends and supporters—to secure our future.

“Grounded in Mission” presents each of us the opportunity anew to answer the Vincentian question, “What must be done?” I look forward to working alongside each member of our DePaul family to answer that call, to enable the continuation of this important work for well beyond another 125 years and to keep DePaul grounded in mission.

Sincerely,

*Sabir Esteban*

**IN AN ERA WHEN HIGHER EDUCATION IS INCREASINGLY CHALLENGED TO DEMONSTRATE ITS VALUE,** DePaul University exemplifies how a mission-driven institution responds to pressing human problems and transforms communities through education, collective engagement, and innovation.

Guided by our Catholic, Vincentian, and urban mission, the university respects the dignity of each person within and beyond the DePaul community. We continue to strengthen what makes DePaul unique: respected academics, real-world knowledge, and a commitment to social responsibility, all informed by the place we call home—the urban and multicultural city of Chicago. The university’s distinctive mission establishes a strong foundation of inclusive liberal-arts education, religious pluralism, and social justice—responsibilities that endure in the life of the university today. Each member of the DePaul community helps fulfill this educational and societal mission. Our distinguished faculty, both full-time and part-time, and dedicated staff contribute to students’ learning inside and outside the classroom. We share a primary and enduring commitment to the education of underserved populations, including students who are first-generation, low-income, immigrants or students of color, affording them the opportunity to make a difference in the trajectory of their lives and communities.

At DePaul, our teaching, scholarship, creative work, and public service must have transformative impact beyond the academy. DePaul has been deeply engaged with Chicago for more than a century to the benefit of our city and our students. Students’ learning is shaped by a city that is a vital node in the global economic system and home to vibrant immigrant communities. Mastering curricula that blend theory with practice, our graduates are prepared to work, succeed, and contribute in the global community. Through classes, research, and service, students engage the complexities of today’s world—the effects of globalization, growing inequality, economic instability, and changing sociopolitical climates, all amplified by the digital revolution—and are empowered to develop solutions. DePaul students, faculty, and staff bridge divides through a collective vision of collaboration, building entrepreneurial and productive partnerships across disciplines, institutions, industries, and geographies. In all we do, we recognize that meaningful inclusion of diverse voices strengthens our teaching, research, service, and outreach.

Students’ ability to access and obtain a high-quality education is integral to our shared work of fostering an equitable society. We embrace the ideals of lifelong learning and a vibrant culture of intellectual and creative discovery that contribute to the university and the greater community. We live in a world defined by rapid technological change. We prepare our students to thrive in a digital economy, unleashing their creativity to meet the challenges of a dynamic society. What is true for our students and alumni is also true for us as educators; we, too, must continually evolve as scholars, makers, mentors, and teachers as technology and the science of learning transform our work.

The goals articulated here guide our evolution as a mission-driven university dedicated to continuous improvements that support better student outcomes. As we consider the actions we will take in this plan, we also must look forward to what lies beyond 2024. Members of the DePaul community—students, faculty, staff, and alumni—must remain mindful of how each step helps us respond to urgent human needs and enables us to transform communities through education, engagement, and innovation. Our Catholic and Vincentian tradition calls on us to be leaders who make a better world while stewarding our resources, so we continue these important efforts throughout DePaul’s second century.



# GROUND IN MISSION

THE PLAN FOR DEPAUL 2024

## OUR VISION

DePaul will be unequalled among urban universities in the United States in ensuring the success of a diverse community of learners. Through programs that integrate theory with practice and ideas with action, DePaul's expert and dedicated faculty and staff will develop students' readiness to engage with and thrive in a changing world. The university will broaden its historical mission of access to address the lifelong learning needs of our students by providing innovative and affordable programs and varied curricular structures and modes of delivery. Equipped with a transformative education grounded in our Catholic and Vincentian values, DePaul graduates will be recognized as effective and responsible change agents.

## OUR SIX STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 1** Deepen our commitment to DePaul's Catholic, Vincentian, and urban mission
- 2** Ensure a welcoming, engaging, diverse, and inclusive campus environment
- 3** Excel in preparing all students for global citizenship and success
- 4** Expand access to a portfolio of high-quality, affordable academic programs that meet student, workforce, and societal needs
- 5** Elevate academic excellence and embrace a culture of creativity and discovery
- 6** Employ bold approaches to ensure DePaul's continued fiscal strength for future generations

## DEPAUL'S MISSION DISTINGUISHES US AMONG THE FINEST CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES IN THE NATION.

This mission defines our identity, determines our actions, and grounds our goals. Our primary enduring commitment remains in taking intentional action to sustain and further institutionalize our Catholic, Vincentian identity. The Vincentian question "What must be done?" calls us to take action in service of others as we prepare students to contribute to the collective good.

### 1.1 Enable the DePaul community to assume responsibility for advancing the mission into the future

- A. Develop and implement succession plans for the board of trustees and executive and senior leadership to ensure that the next generation of university leaders, whatever their religious affiliations, is fully prepared to sustain DePaul's Catholic, Vincentian, and urban identity.
- B. Develop and implement curricular and co-curricular programs to promote undergraduate and graduate student engagement with all aspects of the university's mission, identity, and values, including service, faith development, inter-religious dialogue, and advocacy for systemic change and social justice.
- C. Strengthen and deepen faculty and staff understanding of our Catholic, Vincentian identity.

### 1.2 Sustain support for teaching, service, and research that nurture our Catholic, Vincentian identity

- A. Ensure DePaul remains the premier international center for the study of Vincentian history and spirituality.
- B. Continue to develop curricular engagement with the Catholic intellectual tradition and Vincentian studies.
- C. Provide thought leadership in addressing pressing issues of social and environmental justice, including global efforts to eradicate street homelessness.
- D. Strengthen partnerships with local Catholic schools.
- E. Better coordinate and advance our mission-based community outreach efforts at the local, national, and international levels.

# 1

# DEEPEN OUR COMMITMENT TO DEPAUL'S CATHOLIC, VINCENTIAN, AND URBAN MISSION

DEPAUL REAFFIRMS ITS COMMITMENT TO BE AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY THAT DRAWS ON DIVERSITY AS A SOURCE OF LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING.

It is our collective responsibility—as faculty, staff, and students—to support this commitment, which is grounded in our core values as a Catholic and Vincentian institution. We believe that a diverse community is essential to preparing students to engage the complexity of the world today, and we commit to recruiting and retaining faculty and staff to reflect the rich, vibrant diversity of our student body. We will nurture an inclusive and welcoming community in which every member is empowered to express themselves fully and supported to realize their full potential. Together, we dedicate ourselves to engaging all students, faculty, and staff more deeply in the life of the university to improve their sense of belonging and their overall experience at DePaul.

## 2

# ENSURE A WELCOMING, ENGAGING, DIVERSE, AND INCLUSIVE CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT

### 2.1 Create an inclusive and engaging experience for all students

- A. Coordinate student welcome programs to ensure all students receive a comprehensive introduction to the university.
- B. Establish a student academic convocation and enhance other university traditions.
- C. Strengthen programs that serve students of color, first-generation students, low-income students, and LGBTQIA+ students to broaden participation.
- D. Engage students in co-curricular activities on Fridays.
- E. Establish funding to support academic program-based student groups and activities.
- F. Expand student-to-student and alumni-to-student mentoring programs.
- G. Improve use of physical spaces and our website for building student and faculty community.
- H. Leverage university departments, such as athletics, to strengthen community and enhance campus life.
- I. Use the Fullerton Arts and Culture Corridor to strengthen the relationship between the DePaul community and the neighborhood.

### 2.2 Commit to a respectful and inclusive workplace environment, welcoming of all staff and supportive of their career development, retention, and success

- A. Increase diversity within the ranks of administrative and management leadership.
- B. Promote and strengthen leadership, professional development, and diversity programs for staff.
- C. Provide diversity training for staff hiring managers.

### 2.3 Increase the diversity of DePaul's full-time and part-time faculty in each college and ensure an inclusive, welcoming community for all faculty

- A. Implement diversity training for academic units, in particular for personnel committees and unit leadership.
- B. Strengthen diversity training for full-time faculty search committees and develop diversity-supportive hiring processes for full-time and part-time faculty.
- C. Strengthen mentoring programs for faculty.
- D. Pilot a faculty recruitment and retention fund to support competitive offers that enhance a unit's diversity.
- E. Improve communication and engagement with adjunct faculty.

IN AN INTERCONNECTED GLOBALIZED SOCIETY, A QUALITY EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE WILL REFLECT THE COMPLEXITY OF CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES, THE DIVERSITY OF OPINIONS AND WAYS OF THINKING, AND APPRECIATION OF DIFFERENCE.

DePaul undergraduates deserve a rich educational foundation that exposes them to the diverse disciplinary perspectives and practices that the liberal arts cultivate. As technology and globalization transform our world, DePaul graduates will succeed by drawing on critical-thinking skills, intercultural and multilingual competence, and disciplinary breadth as well as the practical, problem-solving mindset that experiential learning instills. By fostering these skills and dispositions and better supporting student degree progress and career exploration, we will bolster students' academic and professional success.

### 3

## EXCEL IN PREPARING ALL STUDENTS FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND SUCCESS

### 3.1 Ensure that DePaul prepares undergraduate students to be well-rounded critical thinkers and lifelong learners

- A. Ensure the university upholds a shared commitment to broad-based liberal arts education as integral to students' success in an interconnected global society.
- B. Ensure that all graduates demonstrate core competencies and transferable skills (e.g., cultural agility; technological, information, and data literacy; computational thinking; critical and systems thinking; effective communication; and ethical and moral reasoning).
- C. Increase the global perspectives and multilingualism of DePaul graduates.

### 3.2 Improve undergraduate students' first-year academic success, as well as their retention, progress, and timely degree completion

- A. Ensure that all instructors of first-year courses use effective classroom practices to improve long-term student success.
- B. Enhance the freshman first-year experience to support successful transition to DePaul, inclusion in the DePaul community, and academic success.
- C. Create college- or program-specific first-year experiences for entering transfer students to better integrate them into the DePaul community and their academic program.
- D. Increase the use of high-impact practices in classes across programs, among them learning communities, project-based learning, e-portfolios, global learning experience projects, and supplemental instruction in targeted courses.
- E. Develop programs that focus on the retention and degree completion of student populations most at risk.
- F. Promote student health and wellness through improved communication and accessible evidence-based services and programs.

- G. Leverage predictive analytics to identify students at risk of attrition quarterly and ensure intervention.
- H. Improve overall student degree progress by using improved course scheduling analytics.

### 3.3 Enhance the value of the DePaul degree by improving student career readiness and outcomes

- A. Develop a career exploration component in the undergraduate curriculum of every program.
- B. Engage first-year students in career exploration.
- C. Expand student and alumni participation in the Alumni Sharing Knowledge (ASK) program.
- D. Expand the Educational Development Grant for Employability (EDGE) program to engage more students in career-oriented freshman internships.
- E. Enhance the Career Center's ability to help students become career-ready.

### 3.4 Expand the commitment to experiential learning, including service learning, student research, study abroad, and internships

- A. Increase the number of students participating in internships through engagement with employers, alumni, and funders.
- B. Enhance support for global learning, including study abroad.
- C. Leverage the city of Chicago in students' learning experiences.
- D. Expand the numbers of international students on campus to enrich the learning experience for all students.
- E. Increase opportunities for students to engage in research.

DEPAUL WILL EXTEND ITS HISTORICAL COMMITMENT TO PROVIDING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION BY DEVELOPING NEW CURRICULAR STRUCTURES THAT SERVE THE LIFELONG LEARNING NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS.

These include alternative, more affordable curricular pathways for high-need students, continuing education and certificate programs for adult learners and alumni, expanded online offerings, and flexible curricula. DePaul also will significantly expand graduate and undergraduate programs for students interested in health-related careers through external partnerships and expanded support for existing programs.

## 4

# EXPAND ACCESS TO A PORTFOLIO OF HIGH-QUALITY, AFFORDABLE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS THAT MEET STUDENT, WORKFORCE, AND SOCIETAL NEEDS

### 4.1 Deliver academic programs with alternative access points, including those that address the lifelong learning needs of students and alumni

- A. Create baccalaureate degree-completion programs, with flexible delivery methods, such as short courses and online or weekend classes, responsive to the needs of adult learners.
- B. Develop and deliver high-quality online programs in selected areas that have potential for significant new enrollments.
- C. Improve accessibility and flexibility of curricula for transfer students.
- D. Study moving from a quarter-based to a semester-based academic calendar.

### 4.2 Secure DePaul's position as a leading provider of graduate and continuing professional education

- A. Create new, innovative, and sustainable graduate programs in select areas that capitalize on DePaul's distinctive expertise.
- B. Strengthen existing graduate and professional programs to ensure offerings prepare our students for emerging career opportunities and respond to societal needs.
- C. Develop post-baccalaureate programs, such as unbundling selected curricula into course sequences for skill-focused certificates and credentials, that respond to the lifelong learning and career advancement needs of working professionals, including DePaul alumni.

### 4.3 Expand academic programs for students interested in health-related careers

- A. Develop new health-related undergraduate and graduate programs through external partnerships or other strategies.
- B. Expand support for existing health-related programs.
- C. Expand pre-professional advising and support for students interested in health careers.

### 4.4 Improve affordability and increase the transparency and predictability of students' educational cost

- A. Create an affordable curricular pathway for Chicago Public Schools students with highest financial need through a partnership with City Colleges.
- B. Explore alternative pricing options, including cohort-guaranteed tuition or a guaranteed net price model.
- C. Develop clearer, more personalized approaches to providing cost and financial aid information in the recruitment process, including better methods for early estimates of long-term costs and financial aid.
- D. Expand financial literacy, financial planning, and financial counseling services for prospective and current students and parents and develop a tool that allows students to track aid eligibility and debt.
- E. Explore options to improve timely degree completion, including extending aid to summer quarter courses and expanding summer online and hybrid course offerings.
- F. Provide support for faculty to explore and experiment with ways to access more affordable course materials.

### 4.5 Develop and realize a comprehensive and unified academic information technology vision to support a state-of-the-art learning community

- A. Develop an academic IT strategic plan for technology support of teaching, learning, and scholarship that is shared and encourages collaboration across colleges.
- B. Design a university-level structure to support the implementation of the academic IT strategic plan.
- C. Build technology-enriched classroom and lab spaces to support pedagogical and curricular innovation, the production and delivery of high-quality online programs, and faculty and student research.

DEPAUL'S MISSION STATEMENT TELLS US THAT AMONG THE THREE FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF ALL UNIVERSITIES—TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND PUBLIC SERVICE—“THE UNIVERSITY PLACES HIGHEST PRIORITY ON PROGRAMS OF INSTRUCTION AND LEARNING.”

In this age of constant change, easy access to information, and automation, DePaul graduates need not just a mastery of their field, but also the ability to create, innovate, and discover. Our academic mission is to serve as an incubator and repository of knowledge and to transfer that knowledge, first and foremost between faculty and student, and also between university and society. Our learning community of faculty, staff, and students will be further strengthened by focused support of distinctive academic initiatives, improved teaching effectiveness and program assessment, and enhanced support for faculty and student research and creative work.

## 5

# ELEVATE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND EMBRACE A CULTURE OF CREATIVITY AND DISCOVERY

### 5.1 Elevate DePaul's academic profile

- A. Create a funding mechanism to support innovative academic initiatives.
- B. Increase selectivity and elevate DePaul as a valued destination for high-achieving students.
- C. Invest in marketing strategies designed to build and sustain DePaul's brand awareness and promote its academic distinction.
- D. Implement changes in institutional practice and performance to improve DePaul's national academic rankings.
- E. Support faculty's work as public intellectuals and publicize distinctive research and creative activities to internal and external audiences, including alumni and trustees.
- F. Secure funding for endowed chair positions to recruit and retain outstanding faculty in select areas.
- G. Support doctoral programs to enhance the academic reputation of the university and sustain its Carnegie classification.
- H. Ensure DePaul maintains its competitiveness and commitment to academic excellence through continued investment in the recruitment and retention of junior tenure-line faculty.
- I. Develop an appropriate balance within programs between tenure-line, term, and adjunct faculty that recognizes the central role of tenure-line faculty in personnel decisions and the development and oversight of academic programs.

### 5.2 Enhance faculty teaching effectiveness

- A. Create a centralized resource for faculty development related to teaching and provide incentives to all ranks of faculty to continue to develop skills as teachers.
- B. Implement faculty development workshops to teach best practices on cultivating inclusion in the classroom.
- C. Develop more effective procedures for peer evaluation of teaching and better tools for measuring teaching effectiveness.

- D. Develop flexible faculty workload models to support alternative curricular structures and better balance individual faculty teaching, research, and service obligations.
- E. Implement tools to improve the consistent tracking of faculty workload.
- F. Foster and support cross-college interdisciplinary faculty collaborations such as team teaching.
- G. Improve use of academic program assessment results to inform curricular and pedagogical revisions in all programs and the Liberal Studies Program in particular.

### 5.3 Integrate diverse perspectives into academic programs

- A. Charge each program with integrating diverse topics into its curriculum.
- B. Implement faculty development workshops on integrating diversity in the curriculum.
- C. Enhance the tenure and promotion standards to recognize teaching, research, and service accomplishments that promote and advance diversity and equal opportunity.

### 5.4 Increase support, incentives, and recognition for scholarly and creative work by faculty and students

- A. Enhance and expand college and university structures that support research, creative activities, and technology transfer.
- B. Strengthen support to help faculty locate, secure, and manage external funding.
- C. Increase student participation in research and creative activities by providing incentives for faculty research supervision and competitive financial support for graduate and undergraduate research assistants.
- D. Strengthen support for students and faculty seeking competitive external scholarships (e.g., Fulbright, Rhodes, Boren).

## A SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL FOUNDATION IS NECESSARY FOR DEPAUL'S REALIZATION OF ITS MISSION AND EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS.

As a highly tuition-dependent institution, the university must achieve enrollment and tuition revenue goals in a competitive environment where affordability and value for students are paramount. It also requires a sharpened focus on the profitability of our portfolio of programs and the prioritization of our purposes. We will work diligently to reduce costs, improve efficiencies, remain an employer of choice, reallocate resources in light of strategic priorities, and reduce tuition dependence by building our endowment and increasing philanthropic support.

# 6

## EMPLOY BOLD APPROACHES TO ENSURE DEPAUL'S CONTINUED FISCAL STRENGTH FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

### 6.1 Achieve sustainable annual operating margins of at least 4 percent through a balanced long-term plan for revenue growth and cost containment

- A. Develop long-term financial plans for the academic and auxiliary enterprises.
- B. Review subsidies to nonacademic units.
- C. Implement cost management strategies, including consolidation of administrative and academic functions and structures while continuing to invest in academic, instructional, and student support.
- D. Invest in technology that improves efficiency, integration, and scalability of services and operations.
- E. Realize course scheduling efficiencies by using improved course scheduling analytics.
- F. Develop new sources of auxiliary income.

### 6.2 Increase revenue from philanthropy in terms of funds raised and participation levels of key constituencies

- A. Launch a comprehensive campaign, aligned with the vision and goals of the strategic plan.
- B. Increase the percentage and amount of alumni giving.
- C. Increase grant revenue and sponsorships from private foundations and corporations.
- D. Increase collaborations between faculty and development, leveraging faculty innovation in research and curriculum.

### 6.3 Grow the endowment to a market value that is consistent with the university's size and credit rating (\$1 billion by the end of fiscal 2024)

- A. Contribute a minimum of \$25 million in gifts on average annually to the endowment pool.
- B. Employ investment strategies that produce sufficient endowment returns to meet the university's distribution objective and provide for real growth in the market value of the endowment.

- C. Contribute a portion of any annual operating surplus to the endowment.
- D. Continue the university's return-to-principal practice related to the DePaul General Endowment Fund.

### 6.4 Develop formal and transparent processes for ongoing prioritization of academic programs and identify opportunities for investment, strategic alignments, consolidations, and/or closures

- A. Deploy a program proposal software system to coordinate new program development across the university.
- B. Incorporate a budget-aware prioritization step in the process for proposing and approving new academic programs and tie resources to program enrollment benchmarks.
- C. Improve checks and balances on the redundancy of course offerings, especially in courses meeting Liberal Studies requirements.
- D. Develop and launch an academic program prioritization process during the 2018-19 academic year.

### 6.5 Achieve a sustainable and optimal undergraduate enrollment that meets net tuition revenue goals while balancing mission and quality outcomes

- A. Define the optimal size, enrollment mix, and net revenue goals for undergraduate academic programs in light of market trends, financial goals, and academic and mission priorities.
- B. Build the marketing, recruitment, and enrollment support required to increase applicant demand and yield from new freshmen and transfers sufficient to achieve enrollment goals, improve selectivity, and increase net revenue.
- C. Increase market share and transfer enrollment through expanded marketing, recruitment, partnerships, and services that streamline the transfer process.

- D. Increase out-of-state freshman enrollment through dedicated regional recruitment staff and outreach programs.
- E. Increase international undergraduate enrollment through external partnerships.

## **6.6** Increase DePaul's market share and competitiveness in graduate and professional programs

- A. Create new graduate-level programs that contribute additive net tuition revenue.
- B. Expand corporate partnerships for programs responding to employers' workforce development needs.
- C. Increase international graduate enrollment through external partnerships and improved coordination and integration of recruitment efforts.
- D. Expand marketing efforts to generate greater awareness of graduate programs and sufficient applicant demand to achieve enrollment growth and improve market share.
- E. Determine and implement optimal, differentiated, and competitive pricing of graduate degree programs.
- F. Centralize support for the development, marketing, and delivery of continuing and professional education.

