



## Part I: Follow-up Assessment Report Template

**Date of Follow-up Report Submission:**

**Name of Department / Unit: Dean of Students Office**

**Name of Contact Person: Ellen Fingado**

**Name of Person(s) Completing Follow-up Report: Ellen Fingado**

### I. Follow-Up on Last Year's Assessment Report Recommendations

The Dean of Students office planned to do the following project during the 19-20 school year:

To what extent are students who participate in holistic care and intervention initiatives student able to describe relevant campus and external resources? This project examines students who participate in student consultation activities with a DOS staff member using a post-only methodology. A purposive focus on student consultations related to housing and food insecurity will narrow the data sample and enable collaboration with TRiO Pathways' assessment project. Specifically, staff will invite students to participate in the project who 1) met with a DOS staff member in the last half of the winter term and 2) were tagged with a housing or food security concern in Maxient. Staff will collect data using a Qualtrics learning survey distributed at the end of the winter term. To simultaneously increase the response rate and address student needs, DOS is exploring giving students who complete the survey a modest Whole Foods gift card. Immediate next steps involve creating a Qualtrics learning survey. (This assessment project only focuses on a single activity because there is only one activity that maps to the selected learning outcome for this year's project.)

Ultimately we didn't wind up executing this due to the pandemic and significant demand for SEAF starting in March. We did, however, connect with TRiO on their assessment and discussed ways we can centralize information for students who are experiencing housing & food insecurity. We also gave TRiO some feedback about how some of their information is outdated. Given the recent restructuring of TRiO moving into Student Affairs, we expect this sort of collaboration on initiatives and assessing students' needs to become more common and accessible.



**Part II: Annual Assessment Report Template: Learning**  
Academic Year: 2020-2021

**Date of Report Submission: 7/9/21**

**Name of Department / Unit: Dean of Students Office**

**Name of Contact Person: Dan Amato**

**Name of Person(s) completing report or contributing to the project: Dan Amato**

**I. Abstract**

The Dean of Students (DOS) office meets with students for one-on-one conversations offering support on student concerns. Staff often enter the meeting with little information on presenting issues and end uncertain what was retained by the student. The DOS office created a learning survey to assess information retained by students about resources after the meeting. The survey found that 81.8% (9/11) and 18.1% (2/11) of participants correctly described a campus and external resource respectively. In conclusion, the data show that students are retaining information on campus resources but struggle to describe external resources. Further research is needed to sort out if this is a result of DOS staff not discussing external resources at all, not well enough, or students failing to recognize the difference between campus and external resources. Further work to improve participation in survey by students to increase data sample should also be considered.

**II. Assessment Question**

To what extent are students who participate in a dean's consultation meeting able to describe relevant campus and external resources?

**III. Introduction & Context**  
**Project Overview**

The Dean of Students office meets with students for one-on-one conversations offering support on student concerns. Staff often enter the meeting with little information on presenting issues and end uncertain what was retained by the student. The DOS office created an intake survey to gather details about concerns before the meeting and a post survey to assess information retained by students about resources after the meeting.

**Learning Outcomes Assessed**

- Students who participate in activities and services designed to support student academic success or provide holistic care and intervention will be able to describe relevant campus and external resources.

**Context for This Year's Report**

Within the Dean of Students Office, we often describe our work as seeking to help remove barriers to success for students who are struggling with personal or academic challenges. One of the main ways that we do that, is to provide insight into resources and supports available within campus and externally so that students are more readily able to engage those resources on their journeys to their degrees. Looking at the learning outcomes listed above, this project sought to measure how well are students able to describe said resources post meeting with a DOS staff member. Such an assessment helps provide tangible data on what students are actually taking from our meetings so that we can better tailor our conversations towards those goals.

Divisionally, there are certain metrics that this project aims to influence such as Academic & Personal Wellbeing Barriers, Resources, and Resiliency. Having a better understanding of the resources students can identify after meeting with our team, will again allow us to better influence these metrics in our conversations.

In a pandemic driven academic year, understanding the knowledge retention from student meetings, is particularly vital as students are being presented with additional outside of the classroom challenges in a remote environment. This past year also presented some shifting in the needs/priorities of the students that DOS engaged. Specifically, DOS saw an increased volume of students who were presenting with financial barriers, housing insecurities, and medical challenges precipitated by COVID. DOS generally works with a high volume of students with Mental Health concerns and COVID only seemed to heighten those concerns as well, presenting students with isolation and changes in access to support resources.

In thinking about interpreting data collected towards this end, we identified that it was not simply enough for a student to be able to name a resource. Instead, we sought to gauge a deeper level of understanding requiring students to be able to accurately describe resources. Thinking back to the divisional metrics, specifically, Resiliency, this depth of knowledge is important to measure. Students often engage with DOS when they are lost or unaware that supports even exist. In order to provide long term stability to those students, it is important that their takeaway from our meeting is not only the name of the resource, but the details on why and how one would access said resource.

#### **IV. Data Collection & Methodology**

##### **Population and Sample**

- The Dean of Students office meets with students from any aspect of university life. For this reason, the population identified was all students who meet with a DOS staff member for a non-student conduct related conversation.
  - Student conduct related meetings were excluded from the data collection as we were seeking to connect with students whom were not mandated to meet with our team but rather chose to meet with a staff member. This decision was based on a desire to improve how we serve these students. First of all by preparing better for their concerns prior to the meeting. Secondly, by understanding what takeaways about resources discussed during their meeting students are able to describe.

- The total population that was eligible to participate is ~21000 including both undergraduate and graduate.
- It is difficult to count the number of students that could have completed the survey. The DOS office created roughly 2400 new cases during the entire 20-21 academic year. Data was only collected for this assessment for the Winter and Spring quarters which theoretically accounts for 2/3 of the cases above.
- Of the 1600 cases that were estimated to be created during the data collection period, not all represent students that met with a DOS staff member, further reducing the number of possible participants. I estimate that students that actually met with a DOS staff member to be closer to 500 as many case types do not require a formal meeting that would meet the criteria for this project.
- We planned to analyze data on two demographic factors: Undergraduate/Graduate and Gender. We identified an interest to analyze responses based on student financial need if we were able to access that data as well. We did not complete demographic analysis, citing that any variances could not be attributed to demographic factors with such small n sizes.

### **Data Collection**

- Data was collected using a post-meeting survey that was typically sent within the same business day of the meeting.
- Students received a link to the survey via email after their meeting was concluded. In many cases, the DOS staff member already was sending the student a follow-up email after meeting to share links to resources or other information for the student to have on hand. The survey and a quick statement asking them to participate was simply added to this follow-up email.
- The learning survey was internally-created within Qualtrics by the primary investigator with guidance from the Assessment and Effectiveness Specialist.
- This survey collected student ID so that demographic data could be pulled later for analysis.
- Additionally, the survey collected open ended responses from students regarding resources discussed in their meetings.
- The post-meeting survey questions can be found in Appendix B.
- Additionally, the pre-meeting survey can be found in Appendix A.

### **Data Analysis**

- Data was analyzed using an analytic rubric to score students' open-ended responses on the survey.
- Data was analyzed by the principal investigator. Given the small sample size, data was only examined by one individual. Had the sample size been larger, a secondary investigator would have been brought into the team to provide for some objectivity to analysis through inter-rater reliability.
- The rubric contained six domains, three each for evaluating campus-based and external resources. These three domains focused on the ability to identify a resource, describe the purpose of the resource (e.g., what you use the resource for help with), and describe how to access the resources (e.g., a website or phone number). Acceptable performance was categorized as individuals who received a "meets" or "exceeds" expectations on 2/3 competencies for each assessment question.

- The rubric can be found in Appendix E within the Appendices.

### **Participant Consent**

- Completion of the survey for this project was completely voluntary for each student. Students were provided with a link that they could choose to fill out the pre/post surveys and there were no requirements to do so.
- Participation in the pre-meeting survey was framed to students as an opportunity to provide information for staff to help inform their meeting. This was presented as a way for the student to provide context on their situation so that staff members could enter their conversations more prepared than without.
- Participation in the post-meeting survey was framed to students as a voluntary way to provide feedback and information to the office in order to improve how our staff serve future students within our meetings.
- In both cases, students were emailed a link that they could choose to click and fill out. Students were also informed that their information was to remain confidential and disassociated with their names and identity.
- Pre-meeting data was collected through our maxient software that is protected through user login/access that is limited to the DOS staff team and the two Level five users of that software. Post-meeting data was collected through qualtrics using the university access and only the primary investigator and Assessment project supervisor have access to the survey.
- The only identifying information that was collected on each student was their student ID to be able to tie back to other demographic data in analyses.

## **V. Data & Findings**

### **Response Rate and Demographics**

- With 11 students completing the post-meeting survey out of the 53 who completed the pre survey that gives us a yield of 20.8%. Anecdotally, we know that we met with more than 53 students during the data collection period but that not all of them completed the pre-meeting survey.
- With a sample size of less than 15, demographic analyses/comparisons were not completed. Hypotheses and explanation for the response rate will be discussed in findings and recommendations.

### **Key Findings**

Demographic data is presented here, although as indicated prior demographic analyses were not completed based on small sample size. Eleven participants completed the post-meeting survey entering into the data pool. Ten out of eleven participants or 91% were undergraduate students. Nine out of eleven participants were female (82%) with the other two (18%) identifying as male. Race breakdown for participants was as follows: 2 (18%) Asian, 2 (18%) Black, 5 (45%) Hispanic/Latinx, and 2 (18%) White.

The survey found that 81.8% (9/11) of participants correctly described a campus resource. Campus resources identified were: University Counseling Services, DePaul

Central, Center for Students with Disabilities, and some specific Dean of Students Office resources (administrative withdrawal process and absence notification process).

Only 18.1% (2/11) of participants were able to correctly describe an external resource. In both cases, students described the mySSP counseling support application that DePaul has contracted with recently to provide support for students amidst the pandemic. Seventy-three percent (8/11) participants described a campus resource when answering the question about external resources. Six of those eight individuals, identified campus resources that were external to the Dean of Students Office but still within campus.

In only two responses, did any participants identify more than one resource either campus or external in their response and fall into the “exceeds” expectations category for the scoring rubric.

<b>Program Level Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Number of Students Assessed</b>	<b>Number of Students with Acceptable or Better Performance</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students who participate in activities and services designed to support student academic success or provide holistic care and intervention will be able to describe relevant campus and external resources</li> </ul>	11	2

\*Acceptable performance was categorized as individuals who received a “meets” or “exceeds” expectations on 2/3 competencies for both assessment questions.

## **VI. Discussion & Interpretation of Findings**

- The majority of students were able to identify and describe at least one campus resource. Furthermore, many students identified campus resources as external resources in their responses.
- This ability to correctly identify campus resources at such a high level/percentage of respondents, speaks towards the success of the DOS team in providing information and guidance to students about relevant campus resources.
- The lack of ability to identify/describe external resources is cause for concern but also for further research. Based on student responses to the external question more often than not pointing to campus resources, the question arises of is there a lack of understanding of what the question is asking or a lack of understanding of campus v. external resources? Further discussion of recommendations for sorting this can be found below in the plan for action.

- A very strong limitation of our ability to bring this data more broadly or to speak more in depth on demographic implications of the survey is the small participant pool. With only 11 individuals completing the survey, our participation rate is very low. There is not enough data to be able to be generalized and provide information on implications of our work based on student demographics.
- I think that our survey distribution and lack of incentive for participation were strong contributing factors to the low level of participation. Anecdotally, the entire data collection period happening in a remote environment is likely another contributor to the low participation rate.

## **VII. Recommendations and Plans for Action**

### **Recommendations**

- Given that six students identified external resources that were still within the campus community but outside of the Dean of Students Office, I hypothesize that many students interpreted the external resources question to mean resources external to the Dean of Students office and not external to DePaul as intended. Given this hypothesis, it is recommended that the question wording be examined to try to direct students more specifically to the desired answer type.
- Participation in the survey was far too low than desired given the number of possible participants. I hypothesize that this could be due to several possible conditions. First of all, we were unable to incentivize participation in the survey. This was a result of some COVID related constraints financially. Secondly, distribution of the survey was decentralized to each staff member to send on their own. This was done to simplify distribution and not make work for other individuals but it is possible that the survey link was not always sent to students that were eligible. This also meant there were no reminders or second requests to participate on any sort of timeline. Future recommendations would be to find a way to incentivize participation and to reconsider survey distribution methods to ensure survey is always delivered to eligible students and allow for reminders to go out to students who have not participated.

### **Action Plan**

- Action item #1: Examine survey question around external resources to ensure it accurately points to the desired type of resources
  - Add in clarifying information or statement to indicate external to DePaul as opposed to just external. Complete by end of August to have survey ready to implement again at start of Fall quarter 2021.
- Action item #2: Incentivizing the survey
  - Develop plan with Dean of Students Ellen Fingado for allocating funds to incentivize.
  - Incentivize participation either using one large prize quarterly or a small prize to each person that participates.
  - Gather financial information and approval by August 15<sup>th</sup>
  - Add information into survey communication about incentive by August 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Action item #3: Survey distribution

- Develop survey distribution plan with staffing model for who and how this happens. August 15<sup>th</sup>
- Communicate implementation plan to involved parties gathering any feedback and suggestions to make it work. August 30<sup>th</sup>.

### **Sharing the results**

At this point, based on the small amount of data collected, the plan is to share the data within the Dean of Students team as we work to improve the project for future data collection. The aim of this project is to have this survey be an ongoing, indefinite data collection method of the office aimed at improving how we serve students.

Should we be able to bolster the data collection in the future, then there are a number of key stakeholders/partners that represent the campus/external resources discussed that we would plan to share out data and implications with. For example, being able to share with the counseling center team how many students were able to correctly identify their office from our meetings and any themes that came up in those descriptions.