



Co-curricular Assessment Alternate Assessment Project Report

Academic Year: 2025-26

Date of Report Submission: September 30, 2026

Name of Department/Unit/Program: Designated co-curricular programs: Campus Recreation; Mission & Ministry; Steans Center; Belonging, Engagement & Mission (formerly Student Affairs); University Library; Writing Center

Name of Contact Person: Katy Weseman, Data Analyst & Assessment Manager, Division of Belonging, Engagement & Mission

Names of Assessment Committee Members: Barbara Smith, Howard Rosing, Jennifer Schwartz*, Karl Nass, Katie Brick*, Katie Brown, Katy Weseman*, Matthew Pearson, Samantha Glennon*

**Report authors*

Part I: Follow-Up on Last Year's Assessment Report Recommendations

The designated co-curricular units completed individual learning outcome assessments in the 2024-25 academic year. Below are brief follow-up notes organized by individual units.

Campus Recreation

Outcomes assessed in 2024-25:

1. Student employees will articulate core knowledge relevant to the program subject area.
2. Student employees will model techniques and/or concepts that contribute to regular wellness practices.
3. Student employees will foster positive relationships with participants.

During the 2025–26 academic year, Campus Recreation built upon the previous assessment by enhancing student employee onboarding, ongoing training, and supervisor coaching. Departments intentionally incorporated more scenario-based learning, regular feedback conversations, and opportunities for students to practice applying program knowledge and customer service skills in real-world situations. Supervisors also emphasized wellness practices, relationship-building, and reflective learning through staff

meetings and individual check-ins. As a result, student employees demonstrated increased confidence in their roles, stronger participant interactions, and continued professional growth, supporting the department's commitment to providing a high-quality student employment experience.

Mission & Ministry

Alternate project in 2024-25: Bridge Building Fellowship

While the Division of Mission and Ministry (DMM) does not have a learning outcome focused on dialogue skills, these skills are increasingly important to both the university and the division. In 2024-25 DMM received a grant from Interfaith America to run the Bridge Building Fellowship dialogue training program and completed an alternative assessment of that project. Based on the success of year one, DMM continued the program.

Multiple recommendations were made in the 2024-25 report and implemented in AY26. Open information sessions and expanded recruitment efforts were introduced to broaden participation. The curriculum was updated to take students' identities more into account and include exercises focused on polarization and engagement across differences, responding to student feedback that difficult real-world issues should be addressed directly. Leadership pathways were created allowing participants to serve as peer facilitators within the program (four did so this year) or support Dialogue Collaborative initiatives across the university. Staff collected qualitative feedback on students' spring projects. These enhancements contributed to a successful second year in which 49 students completed seven dialogue-training sessions and went on to engage 224 additional students through dialogue-based projects. Post-assessment results showed increased confidence in bridgebuilding and a greater willingness to engage across differences.

Belonging, Engagement & Mission (formerly Student Affairs)

Outcome assessed in 2024-25: Students who participate in Student Affairs experiences will be able to describe specific academic success strategies and/or resources and apply them to their academic or personal needs or goals.

In 2025-26, the division implemented the recommendations of the 2024-25 project into the success coaching program. Notably, success coaches now work with participants to establish SMART goals in their initial sessions, providing a roadmap for their future meetings and overall academic progress. Furthermore, the division updated the coaching curriculum and skill-building modules based on our assessment project results. The team

developed a collection of asynchronous online modules for students on academic probation as a direct result of this project.

Steans Center

See Annual Evaluation Report

University Library

Outcome assessed in 2024-25: Students attending DePaul University Library instruction sessions, workshops, and engaging with its services will be able to develop effective search strategies for finding information.

In 2025-26, we implemented the recommendations of our 2024-25 project into our HST 299 instruction sessions. Student reflections from the assessment survey were shared with classes, reinforcing the need to allot enough time for searching databases. Additionally, more emphasis was placed on keyword/topic search strategies including demonstrations of searches based on solicited examples from students in the classroom. Results and recommendations from the 2024-25 assessment project were also shared with faculty in the History Department to inform their own work with students.

Writing Center

Outcome assessed in 2024-25: Through participation in Writing Center programs, tutors develop culturally sensitive and research-based strategies for supporting a diverse population of writers.

Findings from this assessment indicated a need for specifically focusing and introducing strategies on maintaining adaptability and inclusive practices in tutoring work. As such, Writing Center administrators began incorporating related themes in professional development training during Spring Quarter, specifically teaching strategies for remaining engaged in tutoring while also employing strategies to avoid emotional burnout.

Part II: Report on This Year's Project

Type of Project

What type of Project did you conduct?

- ☐ Extension of Previous Assessment Project

- ☐ Needs Assessment
- ☐ Curriculum or Course Project
- ☒ Other

Abstract

DePaul's six designated co-curricular units engaged in a collaborative alternate assessment project in 2025-26 that established five common learning outcomes spanning all co-curricular programs. The five new learning outcomes will replace unit-specific outcomes. One of these outcomes will be assessed by a **co-curricular working group** each year.

This alternate project highlighted a need for ongoing collaboration in co-curricular assessment. As a result, the committee established a **quarterly co-curricular assessment meeting** as an important complement to the working group. The quarterly meeting provides an opportunity to highlight existing assessment, evaluation, and research in co-curricular units and best practices in data collection.

Since this alternate project was completed collaboratively, the same report is being submitted for academic year 2025-26 by each of the six designated co-curriculars – Campus Recreation; Mission & Ministry; Steans Center; Belonging, Engagement & Mission (formerly Student Affairs); University Library; Writing Center.

Project Description

In the 2025-26 academic year, representatives from DePaul's six designated co-curricular units conducted a collaborative alternate assessment project to determine if we could develop a common set of learning outcomes for all co-curriculars. This project served as an "assessment of our assessment process" and provided an opportunity for the designated co-curricular programs to chart our future path as it pertains to learning outcome assessment. Establishing shared learning outcomes creates an opportunity to better understand the collective impact of co-curricular experiences on student learning across the university. By aligning our assessment efforts, units can reduce duplication, strengthen collaboration, and generate broader insights that may be difficult to identify through individual unit-level assessment alone. Katy Weseman (Data Analyst and Assessment Manager for Belonging, Engagement, and Mission) served as the project lead. The committee met monthly to discuss progress of the project and engaged in

asynchronous work/communication via shared documents housed in a Microsoft Teams channel.

The six units that engaged in this project are referred to throughout the report as “designated co-curriculars.” As defined on DePaul’s [Center for Teaching and Learning website](#), designated co-curricular programs include:

- a. Units that operate outside of the academic colleges; and
- b. conduct work with students that is evaluated through defined and measurable learning outcomes.

DePaul’s designated co-curricular programs include Campus Recreation, the Division of Mission and Ministry, the Steans Center, the Division of Belonging, Engagement & Mission (formerly Student Affairs), the University Library, and the Writing Center. Each of these units has one or two staff representatives on the standing co-curricular assessment committee. These representatives made up the project committee.

In an academic year that included budget reductions and a 7.6% reduction in university staff, this project enabled us to craft a collaborative and sustainable plan for the future of co-curricular assessment at DePaul. The project resulted in a new set of shared learning outcomes which will allow us to design annual projects with larger student samples and find common themes through the work of all co-curriculars.

Data Collection and/or Methodology

This collaborative project involved four methodological steps:

1. **Inventory unit-level co-curricular learning outcomes to identify key themes** that span outcomes in multiple areas.
2. **Examine** existing co-curricular assessment **committee structure and effectiveness** to identify possibilities for **the group’s future purpose and function**.
3. **Determine whether each** of the six existing designated co-curriculars **will participate in the collaborative assessment process** moving forward, or if any wish to retain unit-level learning outcomes.
4. Referring to best practices in learning outcome design, **develop new, shared co-curricular learning outcomes**. Once finalized, submit them to the Associate Provost for Student Success and Accreditation for formal adoption.

Throughout this process, committee members engaged in collaborative discussions to identify overlapping themes, consider the applicability of each outcome across units, and ensure the proposed language reflected measurable student learning. This iterative

approach allowed the group to balance the unique contributions of individual units with the broader goal of establishing a shared institutional assessment framework.

Results

This project resulted in two outcomes: (1) The development of a set of shared co-curricular learning outcomes. (2) A plan for the co-curricular assessment committee's structure and function moving forward. We organized this section of the report by these two outcomes:

1. Establishing new co-curricular outcomes.

Our inventory of existing unit-level outcomes revealed 25 distinct outcomes across the six designated co-curricular units. Table 1 provides this full inventory, organized by unit.

Table 1

Existing unit-level outcomes (pre-2025-26)

Unit	Existing Unit-level Learning Outcome
Campus Rec	Value a lifestyle that incorporates health and wellness.
Campus Rec	Demonstrate personal and professional leadership practices.
Campus Rec	Build relationships to create connections to communities.
Mission & Ministry	Students will describe an experience of inclusive community from the perspective of our Vincentian mission.
Mission & Ministry	Students will demonstrate understanding of Vincentian heritage and living legacy.
Mission & Ministry	Students will describe an experience of spiritual practice as part of their integral development
Mission & Ministry	Students will describe an experience of service or systemic change from the perspective of our Vincentian mission
Steans	Recognize a community's strengths, resources, and ability to contribute to its own development.
Steans	Understand social and systemic inequalities.
Steans	Develop a stronger commitment to social justice.
BEAM (formerly SA)	Describe specific wellbeing strategies and / or resources and apply them to their academic or personal needs or goals.
BEAM (formerly SA)	Articulate the transferrable skills from their campus employment experiences to post-graduate opportunities.

BEAM (formerly SA)	Describe specific academic success strategies and / or resources and apply them to their academic or personal needs or goals.
BEAM (formerly SA)	Describe the benefits and responsibilities of belonging to our campus community.
BEAM (formerly SA)	Demonstrate knowledge of interpersonal skills for building and sustaining meaningful relationships.
University Library	Articulate the value of information inquiry.
University Library	Develop effective search strategies for finding information.
University Library	Explain the socio-political landscape of information, including who creates it, who controls it and where to find it.
University Library	Evaluate the appropriateness of information sources based on their format, structure, and purpose.
University Library	Compile information ethically, following the standards of a scholarly discipline
Writing Center	Use strategies for finding, assessing, integrating, and documenting sources.
Writing Center	Demonstrate the ability to articulate their own writing needs.
Writing Center	Implement feedback to revise their writing.
Writing Center	Be able to engage in conversations about writing as an open-ended, recursive process.
Writing Center	[Writing Center] Tutors will develop culturally-sensitive and research-based strategies for helping a diverse population of students improve their writing skills.

We engaged in multiple rounds of review and synthesis, resulting in grouping 12 of our existing outcomes into four categories (see Table 2).

Table 2 represents 12 outcomes identified for synthesis, rather than the complete inventory of 25.

Table 2

Combined, Synthesized Outcomes

Unit	Existing Unit-level Learning Outcome	Health & Wellness	Information Inquiry & Study Skills & Critical Thinking	Leadership and/or Career	Community / Mission
Campus Rec	Value a lifestyle that incorporates health and wellness.	Yes			
BEAM (formerly SA)	Describe specific wellbeing strategies and / or resources and apply them to their academic or personal needs or goals.	Yes			
Library	Articulate the value of information inquiry.		Yes		
Library	Develop effective search strategies for finding information.		Yes		
BEAM (formerly SA)	Describe specific academic success strategies and / or resources and apply them to their academic or personal needs or goals.		Yes		
Writing Center	Use strategies for finding, assessing, integrating, and documenting sources.		Yes		
Writing Center	Demonstrate the ability to articulate their own writing needs.		Yes		
Campus Rec	Demonstrate personal and professional leadership practices.			Yes	
BEAM (formerly SA)	Articulate the transferrable skills from their campus employment experiences to post-graduate opportunities.			Yes	
Mission & Ministry	Students will describe an experience of inclusive community from the				Yes

	perspective of our Vincentian mission.				
Steans	Recognize a community's strengths, resources, and ability to contribute to its own development.				Yes
Mission & Ministry	Students will demonstrate understanding of Vincentian heritage and living legacy.				Yes

The outcomes in Table 2 reveal common outcome themes across units, clustered into four categories: Health & Wellness; Information Inquiry & Study Skills & Critical Thinking; Leadership and/or Career; Community / Mission.

Through multiple rounds of review and discussion, the committee refined the four initial categories into five distinct, measurable learning outcomes. This included separating one broader category to better distinguish two areas of student learning, ensuring each could be independently assessed while maintaining alignment with the committee's shared goals. This process reflected the committee's commitment to developing outcomes that were both institutionally relevant and applicable across diverse co-curricular experiences.

New Co-curricular Learning Outcomes:

1. Students who participate in co-curricular experiences as employees, mentors, or leaders will be able to explain how the skills gained in their campus employment/leadership connect to their future vocations and communities.
2. Students who participate in co-curricular experiences will be able to implement holistic health and wellness practices in their daily lives.
3. Students who participate in co-curricular experiences will be able to effectively use academic success strategies to support their ongoing growth as learners.
4. Students who participate in co-curricular experiences will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the importance of engaging across differences, thus contributing to inclusive communities.
5. Students who participate in co-curricular service or advocacy will be able to explain the importance of community engagement from the perspective of DePaul's Catholic and Vincentian mission.

The committee determined that we will assess the first outcome on the list in the 2026-27 academic year, since all six of our areas cultivate experiences for student employees,

mentors, or leaders. Moving forward from that first year, we will collectively assess one learning outcome each year. Following this structure, we will assess each outcome every five years, surpassing the Higher Learning Commission requirement that we assess each outcome every ten years.

2. Co-curricular assessment committee structure and function.

This alternate project resulted in a new co-curricular assessment committee structure. Beginning in academic year 2026-27, units engaged in co-curricular assessment will meet in two contexts: (1) an annually assembled project working group and (2) an expanded group of co-curricular representatives meeting quarterly. This report sub-section describes each context.

Annual Project Working Group

To assess our five co-curricular learning outcomes, we will assemble a project working group each year. The group leaders and members may vary depending on the learning outcome being assessed.

We will assemble the group with representation from units whose work connects most strongly to the outcome. For example, in the 2026-27 academic year, we will assess our first outcome “Students who participate in co-curricular experiences as employees, mentors, or leaders will be able to explain how the skills gained in their campus employment/leadership connect to their future vocations and communities.” In the 2026-27 cycle, the working group will likely include representatives from units with the most student leaders/employees. We will also invite staff from the Office of Student Employment to participate in the working group, given how closely their work connects to this outcome.

Additionally, the first working group will establish a consistent approach to documenting assessment methods and findings for future groups. The working group will meet once a month and will consist of approximately 3-6 members. To maintain consistency across assessment cycles, each working group will document its methodology, findings, and recommendations to inform subsequent assessment projects and support continuity as committee membership evolves.

Co-curricular units who do not have representatives on the working group will not be required to conduct separate assessment projects in the year(s) they are not serving on the working group. However, they may be asked to assist in administering surveys or other data collection of students/data in their unit as part of the annual project.

Quarterly Expanded Co-Curricular Meeting

The group of staff that completed this alternate assessment project met monthly in the 2025-26 academic year. We found that conversations about data collection and data tracking were integrally entwined with our conversations about learning outcome assessment. In our September 19, 2025 meeting, we brainstormed a list of the tools and platforms we use for data collection/participation tracking at the university. Table 3 shows a sample of data tracking platforms used by co-curricular units at DePaul.

Table 3

Data Tracking Platforms Used by Co-Curricular Units at DePaul

Platform/Tool	Unit(s)	Function(s)
Collaboratory	Steans, DMM	Community service tracking
DeHUB	BEAM, DMM, Campus Rec	Student organization and campus events participation tracking
Handshake	BEAM	Career Center engagement
Springshare/Alma	Library	Use of library facilities, collections, and staff resources
WC Online	Writing Center	Writing tutor appointments

Through our conversations about data tracking and analysis, we determined that there is great value in co-curricular units across the university having a structured space to share resources and best practices. We determined that our co-curricular assessment group will meet quarterly beginning in the academic year 2026-27.

This quarterly meeting will provide space to highlight existing assessment, evaluation, and research in co-curricular units and best practices in data collection/analysis.

Representatives from the six units that participated in the 2025-26 project will attend these meetings. These meetings will also provide opportunities for units to share how assessment findings have informed programmatic decisions, identify common challenges, and explore opportunities for collaboration across co-curricular experiences. In these meetings, we will intentionally incorporate findings from research shared by areas such as Institutional Research and Market Analytics (IRMA). We will invite other co-curricular partners across the university, including those who have not engaged in stated learning outcome assessment in the past. The Data Analyst and Assessment Manager from BEAM will convene these meetings initially.

Interpretation of Results

The co-curricular assessment committee found that we had significant thematic overlap in our existing, unit-level learning outcomes. We believe that the new combined co-curricular outcomes will allow our units to “work smarter, not harder” in upcoming years. We are optimistic that the new structure will allow for larger participant pools for projects, thus enabling us to draw more sound conclusions based on the data we collect.

Beyond improving assessment efficiency, this shared approach creates an opportunity to better articulate the collective contribution of co-curricular experiences to student development. By identifying common learning outcomes across units, we can begin to recognize broader trends, identify areas for improvement, and use assessment findings to inform programmatic decisions and future student learning opportunities. While each co-curricular unit maintains its distinct programs, services, and approaches to engagement, the shared outcomes provide a common language through which we can collectively articulate and assess our contributions to student learning.

Even though this project did not directly assess student learning, it established a foundation for future collaborative assessment. As the committee implements the shared outcomes in 2026–27, we will need develop consistent assessment methods that account for the diverse ways students engage with co-curricular experiences across units.

We are enthusiastic about the new committee structures. The annual project working group will allow different staff to lead projects each year, enabling us to benefit from new perspectives. The quarterly meetings will allow an expanded group of co-curricular units to learn from each other.

Recommendations and Plans for Action

- 1. Recommendation:** Finalize our five co-curricular Learning Outcomes and ensure they are listed in the University’s Academic Catalog

Action Outcome: The group has finalized the Learning Outcomes, and they were added to the University’s [Academic Catalog](#) in July 2026

Timeline: Completed
- 2. Recommendation:** Invite additional units outside of the academic colleges to participate in quarterly co-curricular meetings and annual co-curricular assessment project working group

Action Outcome: By expanding the group of co-curriculars involved in student learning assessment, we can assess more co-curricular experiences, and further the impact of student learning in all areas through a cycle of dedicated assessment

Timeline: Finalize larger group membership in early fall 2026, begin quarterly meetings in fall 2026

3. **Recommendation:** Establish quarterly co-curricular meetings to share best practices in assessment and data collection

Action Outcome: These meetings will provide opportunities for units to identify common assessment challenges, discuss effective data collection practices, and share how individual assessment findings have informed programmatic improvements. By exchanging information on how data is captured, stored, analyzed, and applied, the larger group can strengthen its collective understanding of student learning across the University

Timeline: Discussions will begin with the first quarterly meeting in Fall 2026

4. **Recommendation:** Institute a forum to share top research findings from this group with a larger audience

Action Outcome: The details for this forum will be decided collectively at the quarterly meetings

Timeline: The possibility of creating a webinar of this type will be discussed during the 2026-27 academic year