ACADEMIC COLLABORATIONS EXPAND OPPORTUNITY

Partnering with Rush University Medical Center, DePaul is creating opportunities for accelerated academic programs, guest lectures and mentoring of students considering medical school. Student internship, externship and research assistant opportunities, as well as the creation of joint faculty research projects, a Center for Excellence in Medical Education and executive leadership certificate programs in health are being explored. The Rush agreement complements the existing alliance between DePaul and Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. Last year, DePaul and RFUMS invested $800,000 to fund promising pilot research conducted jointly by faculty from both institutions that has potential to attract significant external funding.

GLOBAL LEARNING WITH NO FLIGHT DELAYS

DePaul is piloting high-impact practices to internationalize the curriculum and expand students’ access to transformative intercultural experiences. The new Global Learning Experience program awards grants to faculty who co-teach portions of their courses at a distance with a colleague in another country. Graduate creative-writing students learned professional editing techniques and explored differences between British English and American English through exchanges with their peers at a university in the United Kingdom, while communication students compared features of Chinatowns in Milan and Chicago.

STUDENTS DELIVER HALF MILLION SERVICE HOURS

DePaul students delivered 518,848 documented hours of community service to non-profits, health clinics, schools, churches, and other agencies in Chicago and beyond. Graduate students and nurse practitioners in the School of Nursing generated the largest segment of service by volunteering nearly 150,000 hours of hands-on care to patients in hospitals and clinics. Student teachers engaged thousands of elementary and high school students by spending more than 132,000 hours supporting Chicago metro classrooms. Community-based service-learning courses and service projects arranged through the Steans Center generated another 131,000 hours, while University Ministry delivered 71,000 hours in the metropolitan area and around the world.

Second Year in Review 2013–2014

Now in its second year of implementation, DePaul’s strategic plan is driving excellence across the university. DePaul is forging new academic collaborations to expand student opportunities, has become one of the state’s largest resources for online learning, is implementing a host of initiatives to support student success and is serving our community in innovative ways.
IMPROVING FACULTY SUPPORT

Across the university, initiatives to orient new faculty and support pre-tenure and adjunct faculty are underway, creating a solid foundation for faculty to succeed from their first day on campus. The College of Computing and Digital Media is mentoring adjunct faculty by improving administrative support, analyzing course-evaluation data, and offering targeted advice to enhance syllabi and learning outcomes. The Social Science Research Center employs a biweekly accountability group of junior faculty to encourage completion of teaching and scholarship goals. And the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences hosts monthly meetings to familiarize new faculty with the culture of the college and build community among its new cohort.

ONLINE COURSES EXPAND TO MEET DEMAND

DePaul has made a concerted effort to expand the availability and flexibility of course and program offerings by preparing faculty to teach more of them online. Consequently, DePaul ranks fifth in the percentage of all students taking at least one online course among Illinois’ doctoral and research universities, according to IPEDS fall 2012 data. DePaul also ranks fifth nationally in the percentage of all students taking at least one online course among similar private universities, fourth among the largest privates in the country and second among the largest Catholic universities in the nation. The numbers are impressive. In academic year 2012-13, about 10 percent of DePaul’s total credit hours were delivered online, while about one in five DePaul students took at least one online course in the fall 2013 term.

IDENTIFYING HOW LEARNING OUTCOMES ARE ACHIEVED

DePaul has aligned all learning outcomes for academic and co-curricular programs with the university-wide learning goals and outcomes. Consequently, for the first time, DePaul can begin to assess the degree to which students are achieving the university’s learning goals and outcomes. The result is a better understanding of learning as students experience it: as an integrated and fluid whole. This alignment also illuminates opportunities for collaboration between programs with common learning emphases.

ADVISING SYSTEM CONNECTS STUDENTS TO ACADEMIC SUPPORT

DePaul enhanced the way it supports academic advising with a new online system called BlueStar, DePaul’s branding of the Starfish product. It combines existing advising tools into one platform and adds new functionality. Now, any faculty and staff member who has a formal advising relationship with a particular student can review each other’s notes in that student’s electronic file. A new early alert component enables instructors to raise an electronic flag that notifies students and advisors of a concern, and students can schedule advising appointments online for assistance. Advisors can use filters to create searches that, for example, identify students not yet on academic probation but who may be struggling and otherwise might go unnoticed. Intervening with assistance earlier enables students to continue making academic progress toward their degrees.

BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

To help more students complete their freshman year with a 2.5 GPA and 48 hours of credit—a benchmark that predicts likely graduation—DePaul implemented a set of initiatives called Foundations for Success. The new Learning Commons, which clusters academic support services, saw about 1,000 students in its first year, while a website that consolidates information on support resources received nearly 4,000 hits. Meanwhile, students from low-income families with low-academic preparation were invited to become Marillac Fellows, taking two courses as a cohort, and received mentoring and other support. The program is already demonstrating strong positive results. The fellows’ GPAs were higher and academic progress better than the control group.
NEW RESOURCE GUIDE FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

To support undocumented students, DePaul developed a 20-page resource guide to share important information regarding financial aid, admission, and offices that offer advice and assistance, including referrals to legal aid and regional resources. The guide was received enthusiastically on the state and national stage when it was presented at conferences and on panels such as those hosted by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities and Governor Quinn’s Panel on Diversity and Inclusion. It has been cited as a best practice, and other universities are eager to secure copies to help them create guides of their own.

FUNDRAISING GOAL EXCEEDED

The largest fundraising project in DePaul’s history—the Many Dreams, One Mission campaign—not only met but exceeded its original goal of $250 million by a remarkable 30 percent. When the campaign officially closed, $333 million had been raised. More than 40,000 donors stepped forward, two-thirds of them alumni. The best news of all: we raised $107 million in scholarships and expanded the endowment by nearly $155 million, which strengthens our ability to fulfill our mission far into the future.

BLENDING WORK AND SCHOOL

A new Corporate and Employer Outreach initiative is delivering targeted enrollment growth by customizing academic programs to meet employers’ educational needs. Ten major businesses have already signed on, including CDW, United Airlines and HCSC (parent of Blue Cross Blue Shield). Among the benefits businesses receive are curricula tailored to industry needs and on-site cohort-based programming that strengthens employee teamwork. A cohort of MBA students from Medline, a major manufacturer and distributor of healthcare supplies, recently launched, representing a $2.8 million investment by Medline and its employees.
DePaul’s Family and Community Services (FCS) center was called upon by Chicago Public School administrators to support 300 students who attended several of the school’s slated for closure after news of the closings sparked community concern. FCS responded by delivering a three-month stress and coping project to 48 classrooms. The effort provided the children with effective strategies for dealing with transitions, language to describe what they were feeling, and methods of empowering themselves by articulating thoughts about their situation. FCS followed the students to their new schools to aid in their transition and worked with these schools to welcome their new students successfully.

DePaul University and Depaul International, a London-based charity that supports homeless and marginalized people around the world, launched an Institute of Global Homelessness to provide research, leadership development and opportunities for international collaboration on effective strategies to end homelessness. It is one of the first academic establishments of its kind to provide training and research on best practices for working with homeless people worldwide. A key goal is to equip policymakers and people working on the ground with the knowledge, skills and insight they need to address homelessness across the globe.

DePaul’s STEM Center partnered with Chicago Public Schools to roll out the new Common Core state standards for mathematics in grades 6 to 11. In a five-year effort, DePaul is developing and supporting professional learning communities, meeting regularly with teacher leaders to talk about mathematics and classroom engagement, providing in-classroom coaching, and giving CPS teachers the resources they need to teach math in a dynamic, inclusive way. In related efforts, SNL Associate Professor Barbara Radner, serving as scholar in residence at the Chicago History Museum, organized outreach programs with 80 Chicago public schools and developed guides and projects to integrate learning Chicago’s history with the state’s new Common Core literacy standards.

The U.S. Green Building Council awarded the new Pelli Clarke Pelli-designed Theatre School facility LEED Gold status. This internationally recognized rating system verifies a building is designed and built using strategies that achieve high performance in human and environmental health. Among the building’s features are green roofing to reduce storm water run-off and create additional insulation; water-efficient landscaping and water-use reduction; energy-efficient primary heating, cooling, and ventilation systems; recycled and regional construction materials; use of low-emitting materials; indoor air-quality management, automated lighting and mechanical systems; and availability of alternative transportation.

There is a national shortage of people who fully understand both the education and child-development principles of early childhood education. Academic programs usually focus on one or the other. DePaul launched a doctoral program that will graduate early childhood education experts who have rigorous research experience and the ability to prepare educators with the best practices to educate young children. In this integrated approach, doctoral students acquire an extensive knowledge of curriculum design and education policy while also delving deeply into child development, psychology, mental health and special needs issues for this population.
ENGAGING STUDENTS IN RESEARCH

Building on existing initiatives, DePaul is expanding opportunities to involve students in research early in their academic careers, instilling an appreciation for the connection between theory and practice and improving preparation for postgraduate education. In 2013-14, more than 100 chemistry students were co-authors on refereed publications with faculty members. They sought to discover new polymers not described in chemical literature. Meanwhile, undergraduate and doctoral students in philosophy were paired, enabling undergrads to work closely with doctoral candidates on a challenging research project and doctoral students to teach, mentor and work collaboratively with undergraduates, many of whom will go on to do graduate work.

SNL INVITED INTO NATIONAL NETWORK

The Competency-Based Education Network chose the School for New Learning to join its national research and development cohort of degree programs that award credit based upon students’ ability to demonstrate the knowledge and skills that they have mastered. Funded by the Lumina Foundation and coordinated by Public Agenda, this 20-college network is creating an evidence-based approach to expand the availability of high-quality, affordable competency-based education to serve students from all backgrounds. As one of the oldest and largest competency-based programs in the network, SNL brings expertise in developing transparent learning outcomes, applying rigorous assessment and educating adults.

FACULTY HANDBOOK REVISED WITH BEST PRACTICES

After several years of examining best practices across the nation, DePaul’s Faculty Handbook was revised to reflect the most effective, contemporary practices in faculty and shared governance. The revisions introduced greater transparency and clarity to this important document. Policies and procedures regarding promotion and tenure review, appeals and grievances, and faculty appointments were all improved and updated. The Faculty Council approved the entire revised handbook unanimously. It will go into effect in the 2015-16 academic year.

EDUCATION AND COUNSELING SERVICES OFFERED

A new building, expanded space, and a desire to serve the community comprehensively led to a transformation of the Education and Counseling Center (ECC). The center introduced counseling services and enhanced its educational offerings to include tutoring sessions focused on subject knowledge and strategies for becoming a successful student. The ECC also provides professional development for teachers and counselors. That’s on top of literacy assessments and remediation services that it has always offered. DePaul students gain early clinical experience by working with the ECC’s clients in a supervised environment, while community clients receive low-fee services to support their academic success. Nearly 1,000 hours of service were provided last year through the center.

HOUSING DATA COVERS NINE MILLION PEOPLE

Homes create the foundation of a community. DePaul’s Institute for Housing Studies won a $500,000 grant through the Illinois Attorney General’s Office from the National Foreclosure Settlement Awards to expand data, analysis and expertise to groups that assist families facing housing issues. Now, planners from eight counties in Northern Illinois can use 16 key housing indicators to address issues as they occur in their communities because the information provides a regional picture of the housing market for nearly nine million people.
FIRST TO USE AVATARS IN NURSING

DePaul’s School of Nursing became the first in the world to utilize i-Human Patients, an avatar-based computer application designed to teach students how to assess patients and develop clinical reasoning skills. Taking a cue from medical schools, DePaul incorporated the interactive, digital patients to start developing students’ clinical skills early in their academic careers. Students gain valuable experience in taking a medical history and doing a physical exam by interacting with the simulated patients prior to fine-tuning their performance later with real patients.

DEPAUL PREP READIES HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE

DePaul University and Gordon Tech College Prep High School have been working together to strengthen Catholic education on Chicago’s North Side, thus increasing the number of students heading to college. In summer 2014, Gordon Tech changed its name to “DePaul College Prep, Fr. Gordon Campus” to reinforce the extensive support the university is providing through in-kind resources, professional development and curricula. The university also is offering administrative and academic expertise and is supporting the school’s efforts to assist students with college planning and counseling. In a major move to increase the academic profile of the high school, the university helped it apply for International Baccalaureate candidate status, which the high school received in August 2013. Authorization to become an IB World School is expected in the 2014–15 academic year.

CHOIRS PERFORM INTERPRETATIONS OF MOZART MASTERWORK

Mozart’s “Requiem” is one of the greatest choral and orchestral works ever created. DePaul choruses had the extraordinary opportunity to perform the piece under four different conductors last year—two DePaul faculty conductors, Maestro Danzmayr of the Illinois Philharmonic and Maestro Chen of the Chicago Sinfonietta and with three different orchestras—student, community and professional. DePaul students were able to compare and contrast the leadership of different conductors, gaining a deeper understanding of this great musical masterwork. And, in so doing, they showcased the talent of DePaul student musicians to important new musical communities.

INNOVATIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The College of Education (COE) established the Office of Innovative Professional Learning (OIPL) to address the expanding need for professionals across career fields to acquire skill and expertise in effective teaching. A successful partnership in which COE taught doctors on the Rush Medical College faculty—who are experts in medicine—the best practices in teaching prompted DePaul to expand the initiative. In summer 2014, OIPL hosted programs for Italian and Chinese educators. Faculty and administration from Cometa School in Como, Italy sought expertise on how to teach within systems and structures, while 32 of Beijing’s best teachers developed understanding and experience in STEM educational practices.

THEATRE, CINEMA STUDENTS COLLABORATE

Highly ranked theatre and film programs are often located at the same university, as is the case at DePaul, but less often is there cross-over between these programs. Actors, screenwriters, directors, technicians, and production students from The Theatre School and School of Cinema and Interactive Media did just this, collaborating in a class that produced five screen adaptations from a play and five short scripts. Primarily master of fine arts students, each gained practical experience and produced work samples for their portfolios. Several of the acting students in the course have already booked film work and national advertisements as a result.
STUDENT TEACHERS IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

College of Education students are completing about 25 percent of their field work in Catholic schools as part of the 100-plus hours of required field work they perform to gain the skills necessary to student teach. DePaul’s student teachers are sought after, well-mentored, and learn successful management and discipline skills in metro area Catholic schools. These schools are an excellent resource for employment after graduation. DePaul student teachers also teach in the Chicago Public Schools, charter schools, private schools, independent schools and suburban schools to learn how different types of schools operate, honing their teaching skills in a variety of classroom environments.

FAIR TRADE PRODUCTS DIGNIFY WORKERS

DePaul relies on its Catholic, Vincentian identity to guide its business practices. The latest achievement in the university’s 20-year effort to protect the rights and safety of workers around the globe is its designation as a Fair Trade University by Fair Trade Campaigns. Selling fair trade products and implementing rules regarding good conduct, fair pay, women’s rights, living wages and other criteria have sent a strong signal to companies that provide services to DePaul. Fair trade coffee, tea, sugar, chocolate, ice cream and rice are offered at dining venues across campus.

TUTORING AIDS CITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

To boost the achievement of young students attending Chicago Public Schools, faculty, staff, and students in the Driehaus College of Business, College of Communication, Department of English and University Ministry spent more than 1,500 hours tutoring CPS students last year. DePaul coordinated this initiative with “Working in the Schools,” a non-profit that promotes literacy and a love of learning in CPS elementary school students through volunteer-powered programs.

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL WINS ACADEMIC CHAMPIONSHIP

For the second time in three years, the women’s basketball team was named National Academic Champion by Inside Higher Education, a prominent online academic publication. Inside Higher Education analyzed the academic achievements of all 64 teams in the NCAA tournament and advanced teams based on the NCAA’s multiyear measure of classroom progress and their NCAA graduation rate success. In addition, the team was named to the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association Academic Top 25 Team Honor Roll and also won its first-ever BIG EAST championship before advancing to the NCAA tournament’s Sweet 16.

EASING THE TRANSFER TRANSITION

Students entering DePaul from community colleges or other institutions present unique needs. With guidance from Student Affairs, the Transfer Student Union (TSU) revised its mission and goals, developing more targeted efforts and services tailored to the specific circumstances of our transfer population. These initiatives have already resulted in higher participation of transfer students at TSU events. TSU has also seen an expanded following on social media and increased inquiries about organizational involvement, all things that will ease transfer students’ transitions into their new academic lives at DePaul and help them succeed academically.
DePaul University expanded its Double Demon Scholarship program to all alumni who enroll in any of 100 master’s degrees and select certificate programs in seven schools and colleges. A 25 percent tuition discount rewards alumni who continue their relationship with DePaul and complements other valuable benefits given to alumni, such as free transcripts, duplicate diplomas, and undergraduate admission fee waivers. There is no application. Alumni receive this scholarship automatically upon admittance into a qualifying program.

About 60 women and faculty and staff of color were taught to exercise their voices to influence national and international conversations by writing and publishing opinion pieces in respected news outlets. They studied with The OpEd Project, which is increasing the range and quality of ideas presented for public debate by preparing diverse thought leaders to offer commentary in major media forums. DePaul participants were published in many influential venues, including the New York Times, The Atlantic, Harvard Business Review Blog, Forbes and The Guardian.

The Office of Law Career Services launched a new alumni/student mentoring program linking students to practicing attorneys to learn more about the practice of law and develop a professional network prior to graduation. DePaul is uniquely positioned to offer such services because it has alumni in firms and courthouses across the city. Students are paired with alumni mentors who meet monthly, enjoying a wide range of activities from attending court hearings to engaging in practice interviews. The students and mentors have developed a strong bond, and the relationships will continue to serve students as they develop their legal careers.

The National Science Foundation’s Taste of Computing funding enabled the College of Computing and Digital Media and partner universities to roll out the Exploring Computer Science course to secondary students in Chicago. Thirty-five Chicago public high schools and 9,000 students benefited, in particular female students (44 percent), African-American students (50 percent) and Hispanic students (35 percent). More than 100 high school teachers participated in the accompanying professional development. DePaul-partnered Early College STEM schools—Lakeview High School and Gordon Tech—were among the schools that adopted the curriculum.

Student Affairs, the university writing center, library, and Research Services hosted the first annual Graduate Thesis and Dissertation Conference to help students better understand the process of developing a dissertation, thesis or large-scale graduate project. The one-day event deepened graduate students’ understanding of academic scholarship and the processes required to conceptualize and manage a significant research project.
Working with Academic Affairs, Human Resources transformed the adjunct faculty hiring process, creating a new electronic system that consolidates and streamlines similar processes for hiring part-time faculty, staff, and students under one unit. Using document imaging to transform a paper-based system to a paperless one and eliminating unnecessary forms, HR has shortened the hiring process from as long as three weeks to just one or two days. The new process enables the university to focus on hiring new talent, especially adjunct faculty, in an efficient and timely fashion.

DePaul is bringing men’s basketball back into the city of Chicago. The university is working with the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority to build a 10,000-seat events center at the McCormick Place Convention Center Campus, designed by the renowned Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects. In addition to hosting basketball, the events center will be the site for DePaul’s graduation ceremonies and other university events. It is easily accessible from the Lincoln Park and Loop campuses. The facility is set to open during the 2016-17 academic year.

For the fourth year in a row, The Princeton Review highlighted DePaul as one of 322 green colleges in the nation. It profiled DePaul’s commitment to sustainability and gave it high marks for its environmental degree programs, LEED-certified buildings, car-sharing options and the dining hall compost program. The university is spreading its energy-saving HVAC, lighting and electrical projects across campus, increasing the volume of renewable energy certificates purchased and generating even greater participation in recycling.

The new relationship between the Center for Latino Research and the National Museum of Mexican Art expands the university’s connections to Chicago’s Mexican community. While the center has long-standing links to the Cuban and Puerto Rican communities, this partnership solidifies important relationships that create inroads into Chicano and Mexican arts and culture. Last year, DePaul students traveled to the museum to hear artists discuss current work on exhibit and witnessed Mexican novelist/journalist Elena Poniatowska receive a lifetime achievement award.