

LIBERAL STUDIES PROGRAM OVERALL LEARNING GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Preamble

DePaul's Catholic, Vincentian, and urban character distinguishes its students' experiences. In turn, its Liberal Studies Program connects students – in progressively more integrated ways – to the university's mission and to values associated with social justice, diversity, and the desire to work toward socially and environmentally sustainable communities.

To prepare its students to understand, engage, and effect change as global citizens, these revised Liberal Studies Program learning goals and outcomes provide students with an integrative and intellectually challenging education. The rhetorical, creative, intellectual, analytical, quantitative, and interdisciplinary knowledge gained from the program's connected coursework facilitates success as students and as life-long learners. The Liberal Studies Program supports the student's academic major with learning across disciplines – both in and beyond the classroom.

Faculty from virtually every department, interdisciplinary program, and college teach over 1,400 different courses from which students can choose to fulfill their Liberal Studies Program requirements. This wide spectrum of participation on the part of students and faculty alike contributes to a strong sense of intellectual community at DePaul University as well as a shared commitment to its mission and values.

Goal 1. Mastery of Content

This goal embraces the breadth and depth of ideas, theories, approaches, and information which DePaul students encounter through and beyond their studies.

Outcomes: DePaul students will demonstrate and be able to apply:

- general knowledge of cultures, religions, science, the arts, history, and computational reasoning.
- specialized knowledge and skills from within a specific discipline or field.

Goal 2. Intellectual and Creative Skills

In order to fully engage with knowledge, whether for a specific purpose or for its own sake, DePaul students are encouraged to develop the ability to think critically and imaginatively, formulate their own understanding, and effectively communicate their ideas. This goal articulates specific skills that comprise these broader abilities.

Outcomes: DePaul students will be able to:

- systematically access, analyze, and evaluate information and ideas from multiple sources in order to identify underlying assumptions and formulate conclusions.
- solve quantitative problems.
- create and support arguments using a variety of approaches.

- use existing knowledge to generate and synthesize ideas in original ways.
- communicate clearly in speech and writing.

Goal 3. Personal and Social Responsibility

This goal honors the notion that knowledge reflects and contributes to the values of individuals and communities. DePaul students, in particular, are challenged to consider their own values in light of the university's mission.

Outcomes: DePaul students will be able to:

- articulate their own and others' beliefs about what it means to be human and to create a just society.
- articulate what is entailed in becoming a self-directed ethical decision-maker and living a life of personal integrity.
- evaluate ethical issues from multiple perspectives and employ those considerations to chart coherent and justifiable courses of action.
- benefit their communities through socially responsible engagement and leadership.

Goal 4. Intercultural and Global Understanding

This goal speaks to the likelihood that, in our diverse and increasingly interdependent world, the future depends on individuals being able to learn from each other and make the best use of finite resources.

Outcomes: DePaul students will demonstrate:

- respect for and learning from the perspectives of others different from themselves.
- knowledge of global interconnectedness and interdependencies.
- knowledge to become a steward of global resources for a sustainable future.

Goal 5. Integration of Learning

Given the wide range of opportunities for learning at DePaul, it is important for students to develop the ability to consider relationships among individual experiences of learning so as to make meaning of their education in all its variety.

Outcomes: DePaul students will be able to:

- relate their learning – curricular and co-curricular – to multiple fields and realms of experience.
- make connections among ideas and experiences in order to synthesize and transfer learning to daily practice.
- design, develop, and execute a significant intellectual project.

Goal 6. Preparation for Career and Beyond

This final learning goal builds on all the rest and calls on students to be ready to apply their knowledge and skills to the changing world that awaits them.

Outcomes: DePaul students will be able to:

- set goals for future work that are the result of realistic self-appraisal and reflection.

- articulate their skills and knowledge and represent themselves to external audiences.
- work toward goals independently and in collaboration with others.
- employ technology to create, communicate, and synthesize ideas.
- set priorities and allocate resources.
- apply strategies for a practice of life-long learning.

Additional Notes

The revised learning goals and outcomes are derived from national research and best practices surrounding liberal education. Building on the four pre-existing LSP meta-goals (reflectiveness, value consciousness and ethical reasoning, multicultural perspective, and creative and critical thinking), and recognizing the challenges and opportunities of the contemporary world, these revisions amplify the four traditional outcomes of a liberal education¹ while engaging DePaul University's mission throughout the program.

¹ American Association of Colleges and Universities. College Learning for the New Global Century: A Report from the National Leadership Council for Liberal Education and America's Promise. (Washington, D.C., 2007) 11-50.