CHAPTER 2:
THE SNL UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A. Demonstrating Competence
B. Navigating DePaul's Campus Connect
C. The Learning Plan

SECTION A: DEMONSTRATING COMPETENCE

Competence in Liberal Arts Learning

The School for New Learning (SNL) is primarily a competence-based program[1]. Students can demonstrate competence by choosing one of four degree programs. The individualized program offers the most flexibility; the remaining three joint degree programs provide more structure: the BA in Computing (BAC), with the College of Computing and Digital Media; the BA in Early Childhood Education (BAECE), with the College of Education; and, the BA in General Business (BAGB), with the College of Commerce.

The completion of any of the competence-based DePaul degree through SNL is not a result of attaining a certain number of credit hours, but rather is a result of successfully meeting the requirements of a series of statements which describe knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to liberal learning; in other words, demonstrating competence. Achieving competence requires not only reaching a certain information level, but also includes some performance, some application of ideas, some grappling with issues related to a topic, and some speculation resulting from reflection on experience. Thus, competence can be defined as knowing about something sufficiently to be able to do something with that knowledge, and to arrive at an informed interpretation of its meaning. Simply stated, the competent person *knows how* to do something, *can* do something, and *has reached some conclusions* about *why* and *how* things are done.

Competence can be developed in a variety of ways and in a variety of settings. In addition to classroom learning, experience in the workplace, in the community, and at home can contribute to the development of competence. A Liberal Arts college education, such as that offered by the School for New Learning Bachelor of Arts program, is designed to foster the development of general competence.

Traditionally, liberal arts education treated those topics that helped to develop the well-rounded person: mathematics, the arts, literature, history, language, and science. These topics are divided into three broad areas by which most liberal arts college programs are defined. These are called the **social sciences**, or topics related to human society, its development and history; **natural sciences and mathematics**, which cover areas of thinking related to physical and mathematical descriptions and analysis of the world and their accompanying technologies; and the **humanities**, which deal with the philosophical, visual and literary creations and analysis of our world. The liberal arts are interrelated and interdependent, however. One can't really be effective in the arts without some knowledge of how previous cultures have regarded the visual arts. One's understanding of human motivation is incomplete without some knowledge of biology, for example.

The School for New Learning defines competence as a broad statement of ability that requires the application of reflection to action. In relating theory to practice both are enriched and either may come first. The place, method, and time involved in learning become flexible as the focus shifts to the ability to perform, reflect, generalize, apply, and integrate learning. At SNL, competence is the transferable and generalizable learning that is derived from experience.

[1] For qualified students SNL also offers a Degree Completion Major (DCM), with specific requirements that do not include Foundations of Adult Learning. For more information go to: http://snl.depaul.edu

Competence-based education is particularly appropriate for adult learners. Adults usually have much experience from which to generalize. They also are familiar with the need to apply knowledge, to make things work, and to see results. Adult learners are focused on outcomes. They want to know not only what scientific theories and historical movements mean, but also what benefits they derive from these fields of study. The SNL competence framework is designed with these learning objectives in mind.

The themes of the Liberal Arts, and hence the SNL competence framework, can be used as a source of ideas adults use to make sense of life in our contemporary world. The process of demonstrating competence and mastering the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts degree will help you reach these goals.

SNL Faculty and Students alike use the competencies as a guideline for research, development of evidence, and for assessment. Your *Foundations* instructor will lead you through the Competence Framework and help you learn to use it to plan your program.

For more on this subject, read "On the Outcome of a Liberal Education " in Chapter 10.

The Three Areas of Competence at SNL

Students demonstrate a total of fifty competencies at SNL within three areas in the School for New Learning curriculum grid.

1. The first area, **Lifelong Learning**, is composed of twelve competence statements that reflect knowledge, ability, and comprehension in personal and academic development. These competencies include statements in goal analysis, academic skills, research ability, and self-assessment. The L area statements, except L-9 and L-11, are defined by the School and are the same for each student in the program.

2. The center area of the grid is the **Liberal Learning** area. There are three categories in the Liberal Learning Area: Arts and Ideas (A), Human Community (H), and Scientific World (S). Students complete eight competencies in each category, and two Advanced Electives, for a total of 26 competencies in this area. H, S, and A categories have two required competencies, numbered 4 and 5 on the competence grid. These categories are each further divided into three subcategories. Think of each subcategory ("1," "2," "3,") as a drawer that holds several competence statements from which you may choose. Students must complete at least one competence in each of the subcategories. This system allows students to tailor the SNL program to their individual needs. (Please refer to specific liberal learning subcategories in Chapter 4: "The Liberal Learning Area & Competence Criteria for Assessment" for more information.)

3. The last area, the **Focus Area**, includes twelve competencies that define your field of concentration. Of these twelve statements, the F-1 and F-11 competencies are defined by SNL. Because each student's concentration is different, **the other eleven competencies in the Focus Area are defined and written by each individual student with the assistance of the faculty mentor and professional advisor**. Thus, no SNL degrees are exactly alike.

Methods of Demonstrating Competence

SNL's curriculum is based on competence, and students are not limited to taking courses to fulfill credit hour requirements at SNL. You might demonstrate competence through past or future courses, or through other means. These possibilities are identified below.

1. SNL Courses

The School offers a variety of formats for courses. Because DePaul University has four eleven-week quarters, most SNL courses meet once a week for ten weeks, with the eleventh week offering an exam or coursework due date. However, some topics lend themselves to alternative scheduling. Some faculty offer individualized courses on certain topics, and some students want to pursue topics not offered through SNL courses. All of these possibilities are viable and are described below. Tuition for these options is charged according to DePaul University's credit hour rate.

a. Classroom Courses

Courses designed and delivered by faculty generally meet for three hours a night or weekend, over ten or eleven weeks, for a total of thirty contact hours. Classes may meet on an evening during the week or on a weekend during the morning hours. However, some courses are offered on alternative schedules: five six-hour weekend sessions; all weekend sessions, etc. Students can register for up to two competencies for most SNL courses. Occasionally, the School will offer a one-competence course that meets in five sessions. Courses can also be taken over the Internet, with no campus-based meetings, through SNL Online - see http://snl.depaul.edu. These experiences are all designed and assessed by a faculty member. Course offerings and available competencies for each quarter are available at http://snl.depaul.edu

b. Faculty Designed Independent Studies (FDIS)

Some SNL faculty members have designed courses which can be completed independently, outside the classroom setting. These experiences are fully articulated in syllabi and assessed by the faculty. This option is particularly helpful for those students with heavy travel requirements, and those who are successful at working alone. The work is largely independent, but students have the option of calling on faculty at any point in the process. Students register for these course options as they would register for classroom courses listed above, although there are no scheduled meetings. Students must obtain the course syllabus from the Internet, and must contact the instructor upon registering for the course. These experiences are described and listed on the SNL website under Courses.

c. Guided Independent Studies (GIS)

Students wishing to investigate topics that are not offered in the SNL curriculum can meet with a faculty member to plan an independent study. For example, no courses are currently offered at SNL on the study of fashion and its relationship to social values over the ages. This topic might be approached from a variety of perspectives. A student's Faculty Mentor can help sort out what competence the student might choose to address, and what member of the SNL faculty, resident or adjunct, would be an

appropriate teacher for this material. Thus, you must have completed *Foundations* before registering for this option. Students register for a Guided Independent Study after contacting the chosen teacher and working out a learning contract for the experience. Students participate in the design of the GIS, but the faculty member assesses all work.

GIS Proposal and Learning Contract
As is stated above, your Faculty Mentor will help you locate a teacher for your Guided Independent Study. Once you have an instructor for your GIS, you must write a Learning Contract in order to refine your interest and structure your research. This Contract should include a description of your topic, some learning strategies, the competence you hope to address, a description of the product you will submit, criteria for evaluation and a completion time frame. Include the following elements in your Contract:

Topic: In two or three sentences, explain the idea or problem you want to address;
Strategies: How will you carry out your project? What methods will you use to gather information? From what sources?
Competence: State several learning outcomes. What ability or insight do you hope to gain? To which competence does this apply?
Product: Describe what the project will look like. What sort of evidence will your GIS instructor evaluate?
Evaluation: How will your GIS instructor know you have achieved your learning goals? Describe the criteria your instructor will use to evaluate your work;
Time Frame and Communication: Explain how often your GIS instructor should expect to hear from you about this project. When and how will you communicate? Send outlines? Rough drafts? When will you complete the project?

2. Accredited Non-SNL Coursework

Prior college completed at an accredited college or university, including other colleges within DePaul, may be transferable for competence. Some courses may be pre-approved, some may be non-preapproved and submitted using an assessment form, while others may be assessable as Independent Learning Pursuits. Courses not acceptable for transfer include most Physical Education courses, courses with less than 3 quarter or 2 semester hours, courses that are remedial in nature, and courses in writing and critical thinking. Please see Chapter 3, "Transfer of Non-SNL Coursework," and Chapter 7, "The Independent Learning Pursuit & Learning from Experience," for more information.

3. CLEP Examinations and AP Courses

The College Level Examination Program of the Educational Testing Service offers several examinations that can be transferred into SNL for certain competencies. There is no charge for this transfer of credit. Advanced Placement courses transfer similarly.. Please see Chapter 3, "Transfer of Non-SNL Coursework" and Chapter 7, "The Independent Learning Pursuit & Learning from Experience," for more information.

4. Proficiency Exams

SNL offers Proficiency exams for L-4 (Writing for Competence), L-5 (Critical Thinking), and L-6 (Quantitative Reasoning). You may register for proficiency exams while enrolled in or upon completion of Foundations of Adult Learning. See http://snl.depaul.edu under Student Resources:

5. Independent Learning Pursuits (ILPs)

All experiences, courses, seminars, documents, projects, etc., that do not fall into the categories listed above can be developed and presented for credit. An ILP is not a course. It has neither tuition nor credit hours. You do not register for ILPs. Rather, you are charged a non-refundable assessment fee of $150.00 per competence upon submission of the documentation to TLA. You will pay this fee through the University's Payment Center, and it cannot be paid with financial aid. This fee does not apply to the F-1 competence. Please see, Chapter 7, "Independent Learning Pursuit & Learning from Experience" for more information, including a full discussion of ILPs and documentation and submission processes.

SNL Undergraduate Program Competence Statements

The following statements are explained in detail in chapters that follow.

Lifelong Learning Area

Independent Learning Seminar

L-1: Can use independent learning skills and strategies to organize, initiate, and document prior, current, and future college-level learning goals.

Foundations of Adult Learning

L-2: Can design learning strategies to attain goals for personal and educational development.

Civic Engagement

L-3: Can assess the social and personal value of civic engagement for achieving change.

Writing for Competence

L-4: Can write to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate experiences and concepts to demonstrate competencies.

Critical Thinking

L-5: Can analyze issues and reconcile problems through critical and appreciative thinking.

Quantitative Reasoning

L-6: Can use mathematical symbols, concepts, and methods to describe and solve problems.

Collaborative Learning

L-7: Can learn collaboratively and examine the skills, knowledge, and values that contribute to such learning.

Research Seminar

L-8: Can pose questions and use methods of formal inquiry to answer questions and solve problems.

L-9: Written by student/faculty.

Externship

L-10: Can reflect on the learning process and methods used in an experiential project.

L-11: Written by student/faculty.

Summit Seminar

L-12: Can articulate the personal and social value of lifelong learning.

Liberal Learning Area

The Arts and Ideas Category

A-1: Interpreting the Arts Subcategory

A-1-A: Can interpret works of art and relate them to one's own experience.
A-1-B: Can use public or private institutions as resources for exploring arts or ideas.
A-1-C: Can analyze artistic or textual works in terms of form, content, and style.
A-1-D: Can analyze writers' or artists' representations of human experience.
A-1-E: Can interpret the work of writers or artists within a historical or social context.
A-1-F: Can evaluate how the aesthetics and function of an object's or environment's design enhances the quality of life.
A-1-G: Can explain the functions of public art and its relationship to communities.
A-1-H: Can explain the function of folk arts in the transmission of culture and values.
A-1-I: Can use two or more theoretical approaches to interpret a work in the arts or popular culture.
A-1-X: Written by student/faculty.

A-2: Creative Expression Subcategory

A-2-A: Can create an original work of art, explore its relationship to artistic form, and reflect on the creative process.
A-2-B: Can perform proficiently in an art form and analyze the elements that contribute to proficiency.
A-2-C: Can employ principles of design to enhance the functions and aesthetics of objects or environments.
A-2-D: Can create an original work of art using an electronic medium and can discuss the creative process.
A-2-X: Written by student/faculty.

A-3: Reflection and Meaning Subcategory

A-3-A: Can interpret experience in relationship to the perspective of a significant thinker or tradition.
A-3-B: Can explore a model of spiritual development and apply it to oneself or others.
A-3-C: Can examine a social issue from an ethical perspective.
A-3-D: Can assess the assumptions and implications of a significant thinker's ideas about work or leisure.
A-3-E: Can compare substantially different theological or philosophical systems.
A-3-F: Can compare two or more philosophical perspectives on the relationship of the individual to the community.
A-3-G: Can assess the assumptions and implications of significant ideas about human experience.
A-3-X: Written by student/faculty.

Ethics in the Contemporary World

A-4: Can analyze a problem using two different ethical systems.

Creativity

A-5: Can define and analyze a creative process.

The Human Community Category

H-1: Communities and Societies Subcategory

H-1-A: Can understand and apply the principles of effective intercultural communication.
H-1-B: Can explain how two or more of the factors of race, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, age, gender, sexual orientation, or religion interact to shape communities.
H-1-C: Can explain the emergence, maintenance, or evolution of an economic or political system.
H-1-D: Can explain a system of law that governs a society.
H-1-E: Can explain the concept, function, and expression of culture and illustrate the explanation with one or more cultures.
H-1-F: Can describe and explain the roles of individuals, groups, societies, or states in history.
H-1-G: Can effectively speak, read, or write in a language other than English.
H-1-H: Can describe and analyze the challenges faced by communities in urban, suburban, or rural areas.
H-1-I: Can understand change methodology, plan change within a community, and assess its likely impact.
H-1-X: Written by student/faculty.

H-2: Institutions and Organizations Subcategory

H-2-A: Can understand a social problem and can analyze the effectiveness of social institutions in addressing it.
H-2-B: Can use public or private institutions as resources for understanding a social issue.
H-2-C: Can identify an organizational problem and design a plan for change based on an understanding of social science theories or models.
H-2-D: Can use two or more social science theories in the analysis of one's experiences in an organization.
H-2-E: Can compare one social, cultural, economic, or political institution in a society to a comparable institution in a different society.
H-2-F: Can explain the development, roles, and maintenance of social institutions.
H-2-G: Can evaluate the role and impact of mass media or information technology on society.
H-2-H: Can work with community partners to implement a service learning project.
H-2-X: Written by student/faculty.

H-3: Individual Development Subcategory

H-3-A: Can use two or more theories of human psychology to understand and solve problems.
H-3-B: Can explain how two or more of the factors of race, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, age, gender, sexual orientation, or religion interact to shape oneself or others.
H-3-C: Can use theories or models of adult growth and development to understand one's own experience.
H-3-D: Can employ the skills of negotiation, mediation, or interpersonal communication in the resolution of a problem.
H-3-E: Can speak effectively in public settings.
H-3-F: Can understand the interrelationships among intellectual, psychological, spiritual, and physical health in one’s own life.
H-3-G: Can analyze the impact of social institutions on individual human development.

H-3-H: Can explain cultural differences in the interpretation of adulthood.
H-3-I: Can explain how the self is interpreted in a variety of cultures.
H-3-J: Can manage one's ongoing development as a writer using principles and tools of assessment and feedback.
H-3-X: Written by student/faculty.

Power and Justice

H-4: Can analyze power relations among racial, social, cultural, or economic groups in the United States.

Global Perspectives

H-5: Can analyze issues and problems from a global perspective.

The Scientific World Category

S-1: Experiencing Science Subcategory

S-1-A: Can explore natural phenomena or the world of everyday experiences using scientific methods, and can use theories to interpret observations.
S-1-B: Can use public or private institutions as resources for learning science.
S-1-C: Can explain personal interactions with the physical environment using scientific principles.
S-1-D: Can design and plan an information technology solution for a problem.
S-1-E: Can analyze inventions or technologies and can understand their underlying scientific principles.
S-1-X: Written by student/faculty.

S-2: Patterns and Processes Subcategory

S-2-A: Can describe, differentiate, and explain form, function, and variation within biological systems.
S-2-B: Can describe, differentiate, and explain form, function, and variation within physical systems.
S-2-C: Can describe, categorize, and explain development or change within physical or biological systems.
S-2-D: Can describe, categorize, and analyze the interactions and exchanges between living organisms and their physical environments.
S-2-E: Can use mathematics or statistics to describe the patterns and processes of natural phenomena.
S-2-X: Written by student/faculty.

S-3: Science, Technology and Society Subcategory

S-3-A: Can understand different perspectives on the relationship between technology and society, and describe the scientific principles underlying technological innovations.
S-3-B: Can assess health care practices based on an understanding of the biological and social factors that contribute to definitions of health.
S-3-C: Can understand the scientific and social dimensions of an environmental issue.
S-3-D: Can use scientific knowledge to understand varying perspectives on a policy issue.
S-3-E: Can describe how scientific or technological knowledge affects perspectives on the relationships between humans and nature.
S-3-F: Can analyze the integration of new technology into a specific field of human endeavor

from at least two perspectives.
S-3-X: Written by student/faculty.

Interconnections in the Natural World
S-4: Can describe and explain connections among diverse aspects of nature.
Scientific Reasoning
S-5: Can explain and evaluate the nature and process of science.

Advanced Electives: E-1 & E-2: written by the student/faculty

<u>Focus Area</u>
Focused Planning
F-1: Can design a plan for development in one's Focus Area based on an analysis of elements that comprise the area.
F-2 - F-10: Written by the student/faculty.

Advanced Project
F-11: Can design and produce a significant document that gives evidence of advanced competence.
F-12**:** Written by student/faculty. This competence summarizes the particular focus and content of the Advanced Project.

SNL Competencies that Require Tuition Registration (must be taken at DePaul):

Lifelong Learning:
L-1
L-2
L-4
L-5
L-8/L-9
L-10/L-11
L-12

Focus Area:
F-1
F-11/F-12

SNL Courses, Faculty Designed Independent Studies, and Guided Independent Studies require tuition.

Other Learning Experiences that Require Payment of Fees:

Proficiency Testing
Independent Learning Pursuits

For a list of pre-requisites go to: http://snl.depaul.edu under Academics, Registration

SECTION B: NAVIGATING DEPAUL'S CAMPUS CONNECT

Your progress toward achieving the undergraduate degree requirements can be visualized in two ways. The first is a SNL grid or requirements chart that you will use to quickly mark your progress and plan for your future learning. To view the grids for the BA with an Individualized Focus (BAIFA), the BA in Computing (BAC), the BA in Early Childhood Education (BAECE), or the BA in General Business (BAGB), see: http://snl.depaul.edu under Student Resources

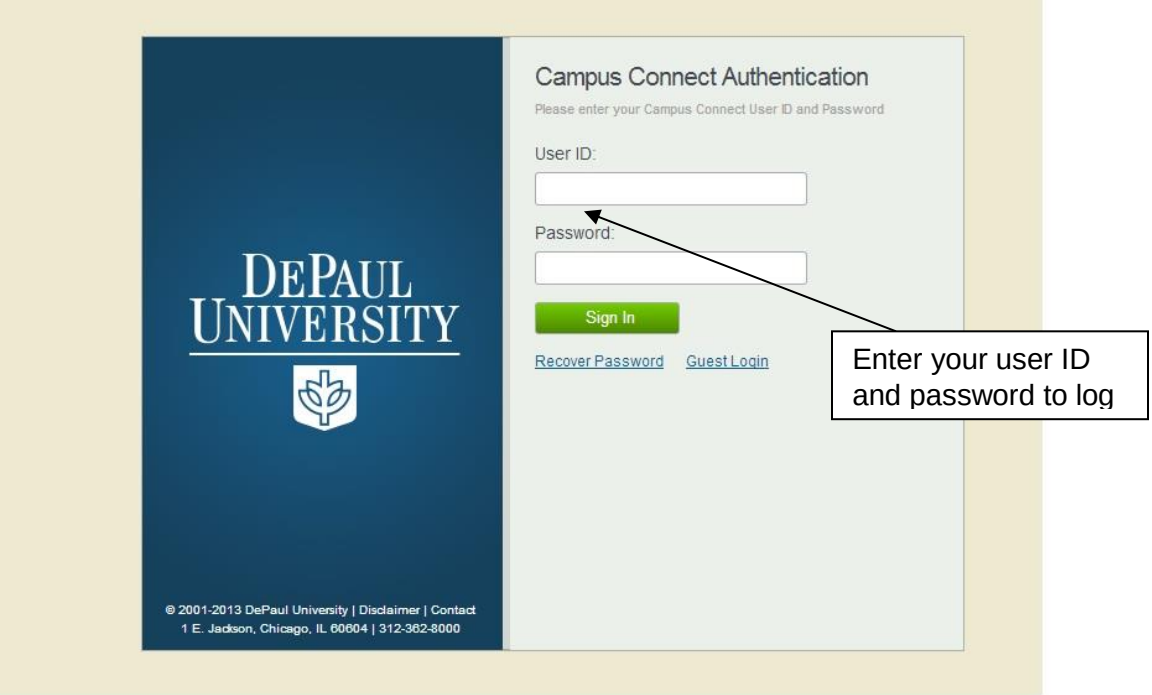
The second, the Degree Progress Report (DPR) within Campus Connection, DePaul's online portal, provides detailed visual information about your current and past academic status pertaining to SNL. When used together, the DPR and SNL Grid, regardless of your chosen program, can be powerful tools to help you plan for successful completion of your undergraduate program.

Login to the Campus Connection at https://campusconnect.depaul.edu with the username and password that you received after completing Independent Learning Seminar (ILS). If you have forgotten this information, call 312/362-8765.

See http://offices.depaul.edu/is/services/technology-training/topics/campus-connect/Pages/default.aspx for more information.

See Campus Connect resources for students at http://offices.depaul.edu/is/services/technology-training/topics/campus-connect/Pages/students.aspx

See Campus Connect features at: http://offices.depaul.edu/is/services/technology-training/topics/campus-connect/Pages/student-directory.aspx


DEPAUL UNIVERSITY
Campus Connect Authentication
Please enter your Campus Connect User ID and Password
User ID:
Password:
Sign In
Recover Password
Guest Login
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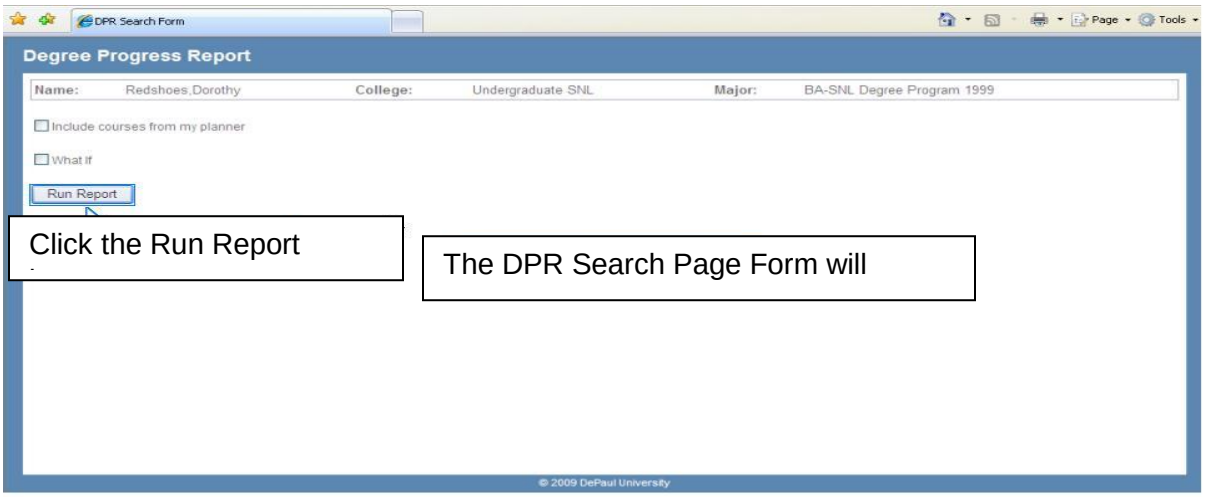
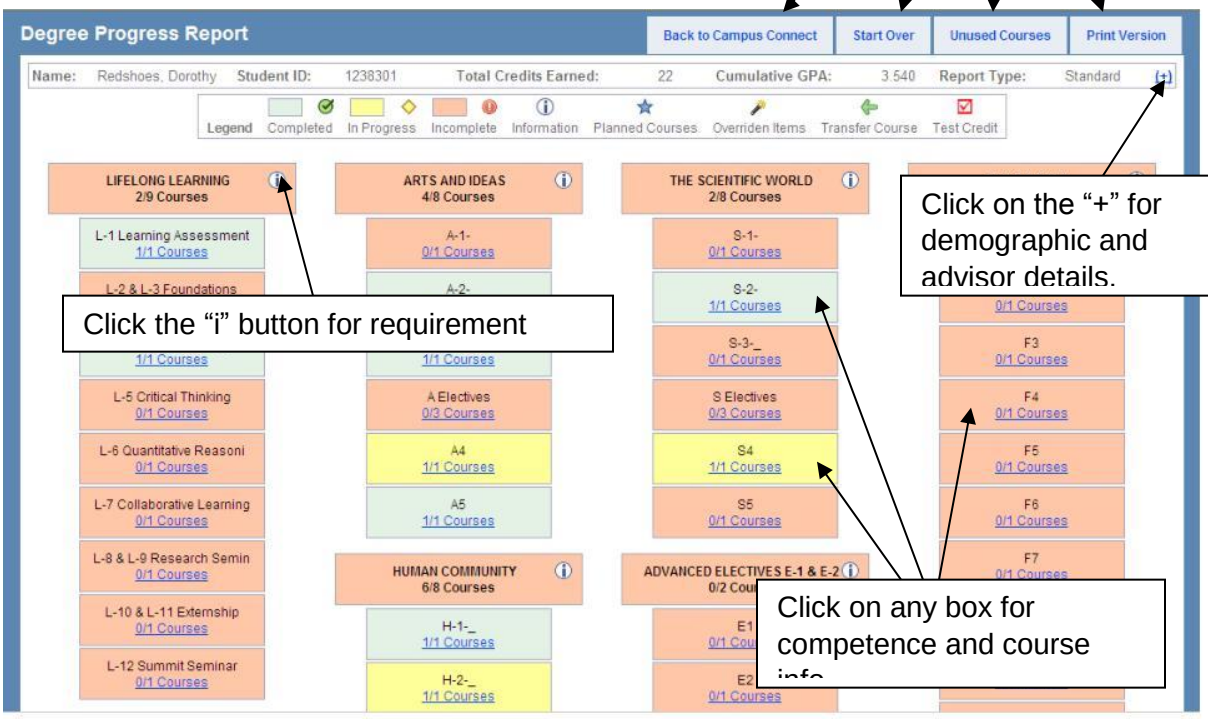
1 E. Jackson, Chicago, IL 60604 | 312-362-8000
Enter your user ID and password to log



Click the Run Report

The DPR Search Page Form will

Click on each tab to return to Campus Connect, re-run the DPR, see courses unassociated with a competence or to print



Click on the "+" for demographic and advisor details.

Click the "i" button for requirement

Click on any box for competence and course info

SECTION C: THE LEARNING PLAN

Like the DPR and the SNL Grid, the SNL Learning Plan is a tool to help you plot your course through the BA degree. With the help of your Faculty Mentor, you design your Learning Plan individually during Foundations. And, you will continue to update your Plan throughout your program. The ways you choose to fulfill the 50 competencies should take into account the program you are in, your learning skills, and your academic and professional goals.

Keep in mind that the Focus Area need not exclusively address professional skills. For example, if you are interested in social work, the Human Community will provide you with many opportunities to strengthen your learning in this category. Furthermore, ideas and skills you need for a career in business administration, such as computer literacy and psychology in the workplace, can also be found in the Liberal Learning areas of the competence framework.

The Learning Plan is designed to be flexible and easily revised. Its purpose is, simply put, planning. As with all planning, it may be modified at any time you and your Academic Committee deem it necessary. Your needs and goals, the advice of your Academic Committee, the demands of the competencies themselves, and available course offerings, will inform the ongoing design of this plan.

SNL Learning Plan Instructions

Your DPR, SNL Grid and your Learning Plan are linked in an important way. Your DPR visually shows your activity at DePaul since your admission into the program. The SNL Grid is a visual map of your progress, while your Learning Plan provides key details of your progress that you both plan and change when appropriate. As you visualize and plan your program, you should document your planned evidence, such as courses and ILPs, on your SNL Grid

When planning your curriculum while at SNL, you'll need to document your goals, as well as the membership of your academic committee. The Learning Plan (for Foundations), which can be downloaded from http://snl.depaul.edu under Student Resources, is for use by your academic committee, especially at your First and Final Committee Meetings. In your meeting you will discuss your Focus Area title among other items pertaining to your Focus Area and your overall plan. You will discuss, too, your Focus Area title that doesn't replicate titles for DePaul University majors. Consult the following website for a listing of current academic majors at DePaul: http://www.depaul.edu/academics/undergraduate/majors/Pages/default.aspx. The Focus Area is discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

In *Foundations*, you will fill in the appropriate areas and submit your Learning Plan to your Foundations facilitator. Keep a copy for yourself. For Learning Plans for the BAC, BAECE, and BAGB, go to: http://snl.depaul.edu under Student Resources.

Entering information into your Learning Plan:

When entering information into your Learning Plan (for Foundations), use the following codes to designate the kinds of evidence you intend to use to demonstrate competence:

- **Learning Evaluation (LE):** signifies learning through work or life experience, including informal or unaccredited study.

- **Accredited Coursework (AC):** indicates a course taken at an accredited college or university other than SNL.

- **School for New Learning Course (SNLC):** designates courses taken at SNL, including Advanced Project and Externship.

Remember, your Learning Plan is a "fluid" document that reflects your educational development. You will want to update it often. For your Academic Committee meetings your Learning Plan is an essential tool; like your grid you can save it with your name as a Microsoft Word document and email iit as an attachment. See Chapter 8 for more information about your Academic Committee.