

CITY COLLEGES OF CHICAGO
HAROLD
WASHINGTON
5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN



2014-2018



CITY COLLEGES of CHICAGO

Harold Washington

Education that Works

From the President

The mission of Harold Washington College is to be a student-centered urban institution of higher education offering opportunities for academic advancement, career development and personal enrichment. Since the launch of Reinvention in 2010 by City Colleges of Chicago Chancellor Cheryl Hyman, the Harold Washington College community has worked together to couple our historic commitment to student access with an equal dedication to our students' success.

Our focus on success has been and will be guided by the following goals:

- Increase the number of students earning college credentials of economic value
- Increase the rate of transfer to bachelor's degree programs following City Colleges graduation
- Drastically improve outcomes for students requiring remediation

These goals are designed to empower all of our students, whether they seek immediate employment, a successful transfer to a four-year institution, or an accelerated path toward college-level classes to advance in their goals. Through the efforts of faculty and staff, Reinvention has led to measurable improvements in the outcomes for our students, including: increases in enrollment, retention, completion, transfer and career placement.

We look forward to building upon these gains through the work of Reinvention², in which a team of faculty and staff at Harold Washington College and at each of our sister colleges are supporting Student GPS, a comprehensive campaign to provide students with clear, structured pathways through our institution to help them efficiently achieve their academic and professional goals.

This Five-Year Plan, part of City Colleges' District-wide strategic plan, presents key targets for the college through 2018 that will help us measure our progress. It will ensure that we build upon our achievements to provide students with a high-quality education that prepares them for both further college and careers.



Donald J. Laackman
President, Harold Washington College

AT HAROLD WASHINGTON COLLEGE, success means that all students receive the guidance, support and instruction to efficiently earn a credential of economic value that prepares them for a career, whether their goal is to enter the workforce immediately or seek further education first. Since the Reinvention initiative launched in 2010, this renewed focus on student outcomes has represented a paradigm shift at Harold Washington College from a focus on access to a focus on both access and success. A robust set of outcomes is now paramount, including: completion, retention, and the value we deliver to students, their communities, employers and four-year colleges alike.



Jeffrey Barrett
Class of 2013 Valedictorian

Reinvention launched with collaborative teams of faculty, staff and students from every college. Their task: to comprehensively review and revamp all aspects of City Colleges to ensure students' success. They were given time away from their regular responsibilities to dedicate themselves to the reform effort. More than three years later, the model remains in place, creating a permanent mechanism for deep and lasting change at City Colleges.

In 2013, City Colleges went a step further by launching Reinvention⁷, or Reinvention to the seventh power, implying the multiplication of impact by embedding the taskforce reform model at each of the seven City Colleges. Reinvention⁷ puts in place the processes and procedures that allow students to make good choices, to complete on time, and to transfer or move directly into the workforce. It ensures that cultural change permeates Harold Washington College—from the advisors to the deans to the faculty to the support staff and of course to our students. Every person at Harold Washington College has a hand in bringing about our reinvention.

One of the first tasks the Reinvention⁷ team worked on was development of new advising tools to provide students with a clear path through our institution and on to further college and careers. The comprehensive campaign included creation of 10 focus areas to simplify the process of choosing a program and semester-by-semester program maps informed by faculty expertise, which advisors, faculty and staff can use to inform conversations about students' educational plans. These new tools will help to eliminate many of the barriers students experience when attempting to complete their degree or certificate.

Since the launch of Reinvention, Harold Washington College has made real progress toward creating a true student-centered culture of success.

COMPLETION

When Reinvention launched, Harold Washington College's graduation rate was 4 percent, and by 2013, it had jumped to 9 percent.

The total number of Harold Washington College degrees crossed 600 in FY2013, marking an 83 percent increase under Reinvention.

CREDIT ENROLLMENT

Overall credit enrollment is up by nearly 2,200 students, or 18 percent, since the launch of Reinvention.

COLLEGE TO CAREERS

Under Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chancellor Cheryl Hyman's leadership, City Colleges launched College to Careers (C2C), a program that partners City Colleges faculty and staff with industry experts to better prepare students for careers in growing fields.

In 2012, Harold Washington College became the City Colleges' hub for business, professional services and entrepreneurship programs through College to Careers. Since then, staff and faculty have worked with industry partners to design new and enhanced programs that prepare students for this growing field.

In 2013, the business department at Harold Washington College launched new courses with a focus on insurance to prepare students for jobs in this growing field. Industry partners including Allstate, AON, Country Financial, Kemper, Willis and Zurich participated in curriculum meetings to help shape the student learning objectives presented in the courses.

With the help of partner Accenture, Harold Washington College launched the Employment Success Skills Program in 2013, which is a

series of workshops focusing on soft skills. At the end of the pilot, 26 completers knew how to highlight their new skills on their resumés and in job interviews. In fact, 19 students landed job interviews and 32 percent of those interviewed were placed into either full-time positions or internships.

NEW CAPITAL PLAN

City Colleges has launched a five-year \$524 million capital plan to address years of neglected maintenance and reflect the latest changes in pedagogy and technology to ensure our students are job-ready and four-year-ready when they walk out of the classroom.

Major investments will be made at Harold Washington College in the coming years, funding new and renovated teaching and learning facilities including smart classrooms, science classrooms, libraries, labs, and student support centers.

Major capital improvements include: hiring of an architecture firm to analyze the use of space and draft recommendations for improvement, a new thermal solar hot water system to replace the electric hot water tank, and new pavement and turnstiles at the building's entrance to improve safety.

More than three years in, Reinvention boasts many proud accomplishments. But while outcomes have improved, we are still working to reinvent Harold Washington College into the best-in-class institution that Chicagoans have a right to demand. To build on our early successes, we must leverage the now-proven winning approaches in new ways by taking to the next level our drive to make our student-centered culture pervasive across the organization.

Through Reinvention⁷, we will achieve deep and lasting change at Harold Washington College. We will ensure every student has access to programs that lead to further college or a career, and that every student is equipped with a plan for how to reach their goals.

Executive Summary

In five years, we aim to have transformed Harold Washington College into a best-in-class urban community college where:

- The number of degrees awarded annually has increased by more than **2.5 times** since the launch of Reinvention to **903** in FY2018.
- The number of degrees and credentials of economic value awarded annually tops **1,300**.
- More than two-thirds (**68 percent**) of students transfer to four-year institutions following graduation from Harold Washington College and more than double the percentage of students graduate (**20 percent**) than today.
- More than two-thirds (**71 percent**) of occupational completers are employed in their area of training.
- More than a third (**35.1 percent**) of new remedial students advance to college-level work within one year, up from **31.7 percent** today.

We have set ambitious goals in order to make good on the promise of providing a high-quality, affordable post-secondary education that delivers credentials of economic value and puts Chicagoans on a clear path to further college and careers.



Core Strategies

To reach these ambitious but necessary targets, Harold Washington College is pursuing the following key strategies: increasing relevance, reducing time and increasing student supports in order to boost retention and completion. Taken together these strategies will establish a culture of student success at Harold Washington College that will improve the lives of our students and their communities. These strategies are being furthered through Reinvention⁷ and Student GPS (Guided Pathway to Success) initiative to ensure every student has a clear path to further college and careers.

INCREASING RELEVANCE

We must ensure that the courses of study that students embark on will advance their goal of moving to four-year universities or to a meaningful career. To deliver on this promise, we have examined what the marketplace will demand today and tomorrow. Through this work, Harold Washington College programs will have real value for employers, four-year colleges, and most importantly, our students' futures.

REDUCING TIME

We seek to maximize our students' resources—both the time and money spent at Harold Washington College as well as on the longer road to a bachelor's degree and beyond. Numerous studies show that the longer it takes to complete a degree, the less likely the chance of degree completion. We are, therefore, employing a number of strategies to reduce the length of students' programs without sacrificing educational quality, including structured pathways, predictive scheduling, whole program enrollment and more.

INCREASING STUDENT SUPPORTS

We are dedicated to supporting our students on the path to their goals. City Colleges has strategically invested in student supports, including wellness centers, career centers, transfer centers, veterans centers, tutors, advisors and a new early alert system, to ensure students complete and move on to further college and careers. Going forward, we aim to use data more effectively to help students and provide more information to students so they can better help themselves. This will not only require improvements in data management, but also in the way we work to help students reach their end goals.



GOALS & TARGETS

Measuring student access and success

Through a combination of discussions with faculty, staff, and students, and analysis of the challenges confronting current and prospective students, Harold Washington College has developed specific measures that, collectively, forge a culture of student success. Our performance goals deal with how we will know whether we are improving student success.

Increase the number of students earning college credentials of economic value

Harold Washington College has made significant strides through Reinvention in terms of the number of students earning credentials of economic value. We must build upon this early progress by boosting retention and giving students clear, relevant, and direct pathways to high-growth, high-wage jobs and to successful college transfer through Reinvention⁷, the College to Careers initiative and enhanced student supports. Our goal is to double our graduation rate to achieve an IPEDS rate of 20 percent by 2018.

Reinvention already has taken a significant bite out of Harold Washington College's chronic dropout problem by boosting student retention. We also are forecasting robust growth in student placement in relevant jobs as a result of our College to Careers initiative to align our occupational curriculum with the expectations of industry. Our goal is to have in five years more than 70 percent of occupational program completers employed in their area of training. College to Careers is about more than jobs; it is about good-paying jobs. We expect the median earnings of graduates in these jobs to increase and be sufficient to at least sustain a family. Our goal is to ensure students earn a median income of \$38,129 in 2018.

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	
COMPLETION WITHIN 3 YEARS	HW	9%	10%	13%	15%	20%
	CCC	13%	14%	16%	18%	20%
TOTAL NUMBER OF DEGREES & CERTIFICATES AWARDED	HW	1,074	1,107	1,171	1,231	1,343
	CCC	9,815	10,070	10,562	11,024	11,895
DEGREES	HW	688	714	765	813	903
	CCC	4,122	4,280	4,586	4,873	5,414
CERTIFICATES	HW	387	393	406	418	440
	CCC	5,693	5,790	5,976	6,151	6,481

Retention

	Fall 2013 to Spring 2014	Fall 2014 to Spring 2015	Fall 2015 to Spring 2016	Fall 2016 to Spring 2017	Fall 2017 to Spring 2018	
CREDIT STUDENTS FALL-TO-SPRING RETENTION RATE	HW	68.0%	68.8%	69.4%	70.9%	73.1%
	CCC	66.9%	67.7%	68.2%	69.2%	71.6%

College to Careers

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT RATE IN AREA OF TRAINING

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
HW	60%	61%	64%	69%	71%
CCC	60%	61%	64%	69%	71%

MEDIAN EARNINGS OF STUDENTS EMPLOYED IN TRAINING AREA

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
HW	\$31,824	\$31,461	\$34,262	\$36,149	\$38,129
CCC	\$31,824	\$31,461	\$34,262	\$36,149	\$38,129

Enrollment with a Purpose

While many of the measures above focus on student success, we also need to ensure adequate student access. Urban community colleges across the country that excel in graduating their students concurrently enroll more of them, help current students complete, and have more new students follow in their footsteps.

Harold Washington College has made a strategic decision to focus on credit enrollment, which has increased markedly, showing the benefits of initiatives like College to Careers, refocusing our marketing and recruitment efforts, and better articulating the value of a certificate or degree from Harold Washington College.

TOTAL ENROLLMENT (unduplicated)

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
HW	15,045	15,168	15,303	15,474	15,682
CCC	108,252	109,139	110,110	111,340	112,837

CREDIT

HW	13,963	14,075	14,187	14,301	14,415
CCC	62,744	63,246	63,752	64,262	64,776

CONTINUING EDUCATION

HW	1,714	1,723	1,740	1,766	1,802
CCC	16,348	16,430	16,594	16,843	17,180

COLLEGE TO CAREERS

HW	3,919	5,822	7,726	9,629	11,532
CCC	17,611	26,163	34,716	43,268	51,821



Increase the rate of transfer to bachelor's degree programs following City Colleges graduation

The difference in earning potential between workers with a Baccalaureate degree versus a high school diploma—what economists call the “college-graduate wage premium”—has risen sharply since 1980 and now stands at 84 percent. Further, students with bachelor's degrees have lower unemployment rates, and jobs requiring a bachelor's degree continue to grow steadily while jobs requiring less than a college education continue to shrink. Many Harold Washington College students—including students in many of our occupational programs—are on track to transfer to a four-year institution either right after college or by going back after some time in the workplace. Just as with job placement, we must focus on ensuring that they not only transfer, but do so in a meaningful way that holds economic value.

Studies show that students who transfer following completion of an associate degree are more likely to go on and complete their bachelor's. That is why we have consciously chosen to emphasize completion prior to transfer. Nevertheless, recognizing that currently the vast majority of our transfer students transfer prior to completion, we will also continue to monitor the transfer rate of students with 12 credits or more. We have set a goal that by 2018 409 students completing 12 credit hours will transfer to a four-year institution.

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	
Rate of transfer to bachelor's degree programs within 2 years of CCC graduation	HW	52%	53%	58%	63%	68%
	CCC	42%	43%	47%	51%	55%
Number of fall new students who transfer to four-year institutions after earning 12 credits	HW	265	269	311	347	409
	CCC	726	736	853	950	1,121

Drastically improve outcomes for students requiring remediation

With the majority of incoming students requiring some amount of remedial education to achieve college-level readiness, we must alter our approaches to remedial education to reduce the time that any student is required to remain there before reaching college-level coursework. Co-requisites (classes taken concurrently rather than in succession), contextualized remediation (embedding math and/or literacy skills in occupational or other coursework), summer refresher programs, as well as more accurate placement measures are among the strategies we are using to reduce time in remediation. Ultimately, we believe that addressing these issues early in students' college careers will be the best way to position them toward degree attainment and transfer.

Our goal is to have at least 35.1 percent of students in remedial coursework progress to college-level work within one year of their first semester by 2018.

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	
Percentage of students in the cohort (new students enrolled in remedial course) advancing to college-level work within 1 year of their first semester	HW	32.0%	32.4%	33.0%	33.6%	35.1%
	CCC	30.2%	30.5%	31.2%	31.8%	33.1%

Increase the quality and effectiveness of student services and support

All of our performance goals rely heavily on our ability to serve our students' needs beyond the classroom. From admissions and advising through transfer and career placement, we must provide effective supports to our students that remove barriers to success and encourage persistence and achievement. As with moving students from developmental education to college credit, we believe that an early indicator of success is our students' credit accumulation.

In the coming years, our goal is to have increased significantly the share of students who successfully complete in their first year 30 and 15 credits for full-time and part-time students, respectively.

Percentage of students in the cohort (fall first-time, full-time degree/cert. seeking students taking >12 credit hours) who earn 30 credits within their first year

	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018
HW	7.9%	8.1%	8.4%	8.8%	9.6%
CCC	8.1%	8.2%	8.6%	8.9%	9.6%

Percentage of students in the cohort (fall first-time, part-time degree/cert. seeking students taking <12 credit hours) who earn 15 credits within their first year

HW	14.8%	14.9%	15.2%	15.6%	16.2%
CCC	20.0%	20.4%	21.3%	22.2%	23.9%





CITY COLLEGES®
of CHICAGO
Education that Works