



CITY COLLEGES of CHICAGO

Harold Washington

Strategic Enrollment Management Plan

FY 2020 - 2022

HISTORY & PROMISE

In the fall of 2017, Harold Washington College revitalized the college mission to reaffirm the commitment to the core values embodied in the work of our namesake mayor and reconnect his legacy to the important work the college is doing today. The majority of Harold Washington College graduates (55.2%) transfer to four-year colleges within two years of degree completion to continue their academic journey and future success. The college building is a very small corner of downtown Chicago, but the community within our doors is vibrant and committed to social change through education.

Harold Washington College is a student-centered institution that empowers all members of its community through accessible and affordable academic advancement, career development and personal enrichment. The following core values are the guiding principles that help fulfill our mission. At Harold Washington College, we:

- ▶ embrace human diversity
- ▶ care about the whole student
- ▶ offer responsive and relevant education
- ▶ pursue academic excellence, assess to improve learning
- ▶ build community
- ▶ foster global citizenship for social justice

A NEW WAY FORWARD

It is critical to continue the legacy of Harold Washington. The vision of the Strategic Enrollment Management plan is that Harold Washington College becomes a leader in providing accessible, equitable educational opportunities to the residents of every Chicago neighborhood, developing a skilled workforce and advancing the business community. Harold Washington College aims to build a sustainable enrollment model that is innovative, relies on real-time data to inform strategy and implement best practices and adapts to the needs of the Chicago market.

The current enrollment landscape creates a sense of urgency requiring the college to provide access and communicate the value of Harold Washington College at a much greater scale than ever before. It is a priority to develop an intentional and integrated approach to enrollment management that supports collaboration, engagement, innovation, and consensus.

The Strategic Enrollment Management process has allowed the entire Harold Washington community to engage in strategic three-year planning, and support the overall enrollment goals with the priorities outlined below. The following strategic priorities provide Harold Washington College with an action plan to guide the sequence of steps over the next three years to increase enrollment and retention.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

RELEVANT PROGRAMS

Prioritize Loop location and Harold Washington College's Center of Excellence in Business & Professional Services.

- ▶ Enhance existing, high-demand academic programs and pathways to transfer to four-year institutions and careers
- ▶ Expand portfolio programs such as Early College fellowship opportunities and continuing education
- ▶ Grow online programs and course offerings

STUDENT PIPELINE

Serve all Chicago neighborhoods comprehensively and at scale.

- ▶ Create tailored, comprehensive plans to drive new student pipelines for online, relevant programs, and early college
- ▶ Strengthen the college's distinctive identity and deepen relationships with partners and communities that the college serves
- ▶ Improve and streamline admission processes to improve efficiency across all onboarding departments and ensure more students can move through the admission funnel successfully and optimize enrollment

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Improve the quality of instruction and support services to increase student retention and graduation rates, and promote success for all students.

- ▶ Establish standard benchmarks, best practices, and reporting models to bolster and assess current & potential student supports and retention efforts through Care Team initiative
- ▶ Ensure equitable student experience for all students through increased faculty engagement both inside and outside the classroom
- ▶ Enhance engagement with key partners like Chicago Public Schools with early touchpoints that allow prospective students to build community and affinity to the college before they apply



RELEVANT PROGRAMS

SUMMARY – Prioritize Loop location and Harold Washington College's Center of Excellence in Business & Professional Service by (1) enhancing existing, high-demand academic programs and pathways to transfer to both four-year institutions and careers, (2) expanding portfolio programs such as Early College fellowship opportunities and continuing education, and (3) grow online programs and course offerings.

METRICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase credit enrollment by 1% • Add 2-3 new 4-year transfer pathway programs • Increase continuing education enrollment by 20%
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TACTICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch the first year of DePaul Harold Washington Academy • Partner with Governors State University and Roosevelt University to offer a bachelor's in business degree • Partner with SAIC to enhance Human Sciences (Liberal Arts) pathway • Continue to expand partnerships with high schools to increase participation in architecture, banking and paralegals fellowships • Establish partnerships to offer new continuing education courses (e.g. Facebook) • Evaluate current partners resources/academic strengths • Develop new online courses from existing high demand face-to-face courses • Expand 8-week and 12-week session course availability to capture new market (transfer students)
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EARN AND LEARN IN THE LOOP

Harold Washington College is uniquely located in the heart of downtown Chicago, better known as “the Loop”, where nearly half a million people commute to work every day. Just outside of the college is access to five major CTA train lines and several bus routes, which make the campus extremely accessible to the city’s 77 neighborhoods. Aside from being Chicago’s epicenter for business and commerce as well as a melting pot for artistic and cultural events and organizations, over 10,000 Chicagoans also live in the Loop. With increasing growth and development in the Loop, Harold Washington College is eager to expand its programs to complement the area’s offerings as well as contribute to the education needs of the Loop’s everyday working professionals by providing continuing education courses, online/hybrid academic programs and course offerings, as well as apprenticeships and work-based learning opportunities.

ENHANCING INDUSTRY-ALIGNED PROGRAMS AND PATHWAYS

Currently, Harold Washington faculty and staff partner with industry leaders to ensure the curriculum reflects employer demand, to provide internships and give students the opportunity to interview for jobs in the field. Harold Washington College is also the Chicago site for Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program – which offers tools and professional support to develop a strategic and customized growth plan for small businesses in the city. The college’s corporate partnerships will continue to offer unique opportunities for our students, especially those older, part-time students that are looking for career pathways like the apprenticeship program sponsored by Harold Washington College and Aon, a global provider of risk management, insurance and reinsurance, human resources and outsourcing services. Additionally, the momentum of our transfer partnerships with local four-year colleges and universities continues. Harold Washington College plans to expand new four-year transfer pathway programs like the DePaul Harold Washington Academy.

WORK-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

In an ongoing effort to ensure Chicagoans have access to innovative and in-demand learning opportunities, Harold Washington's Continuing Education portfolio continues to expand. Recently the college partnered with Facebook to create a digital marketing continuing education certificate. Through this strategic goal, Harold Washington aims to build a sustainable enrollment model that is innovative, relies on real-time data to inform strategy and implement best practices, and adapts to the needs of the Chicago market.

EARLY COLLEGE

The Early College program at Harold Washington has been growing steadily over the past several years and now comprises a significant portion of enrollment, building partnerships between Chicago public high schools to offer equitable early college opportunities like the J2J Banking Cohort (currently involving 24 CPS schools including Alcott, Epic, Farragut, Hyde Park, Roosevelt & Morgan Park), the Architecture Fellowship (with Air Force, Curie and Gage Park) and Paralegal Fellowship (Al Raby, Mather, Legal Prep & Simeon starting with 20 students). Forthcoming is a partnership with Intrinsic Charter High School downtown campus in hopes of exposing the entire school to at least one early college course before graduation. By expanding our Early College program to provide more opportunities for students, our expectation is that more Early College students will also choose Harold Washington College as their college of choice after graduation from high school.

ONLINE

In addition to brokering new articulation agreements to expand the current online offerings at Harold Washington, an additional tactic is to develop new online courses from existing high demand, face-to-face courses as well as 8-week and 12-week session online courses to capture new markets like the under-educated, under-employed working full-time in the Loop. The college has intensified the promotion and marketing of our online associate in business degree. Additionally, within the last year, Harold Washington has looked to its partnership with Governors State University as an extension to the existing online associate in business degree.

STUDENT PIPELINE

SUMMARY – Serve all Chicago neighborhoods comprehensively and at scale by (1) creating tailored, comprehensive plans to drive new student pipelines for online, relevant programs, and early college, (2) strengthening the college’s distinctive identity and deepening relationships with partners and communities, and (3) streamlining admission processes to improve efficiency across all onboarding departments and ensure more students can move through the admission funnel successfully and optimize enrollment.

METRIC	Increase applicant to enrolled yield from 38% to 55%
TACTICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce innovation, increase quantity, and enhance the quality of communications with prospects and recent applicants, highlighting career pathways, online course offerings, and student supports. • Increase engagement strategies with top feeder schools via special campus visits • Create “how-to” videos for counselors • Engage students in career/academic/transfer as part of the first-year experience • Create social media campaigns to highlight student life and academic programs, highlighting career pathways, online course offerings, and student supports

NEW PROGRAMS = NEW STUDENT PIPELINES

Clearly defining recruitment targets and creating tailored, comprehensive plans to drive action to online, relevant programs and Early College will be important to expand our student pipeline beyond the traditional high school graduate. The college has a unique advantage due to its location. Beyond continuing to target our high school partners, particularly those from top feeder schools since those communities already know and understand the value of Harold Washington, targeting those that commute to and from the Loop that may be working offer a unique prospective student pool. Online/hybrid options, as well as continuing education, create additional new student pipelines.



INCREASING SCOPE

With national and state trends in higher education continuing to show declining enrollment, it becomes critical to broaden Harold Washington's prospect pool. The second strategic focus of increasing and expanding Harold Washington College's student pipeline by strengthening our distinctive identity and deepening our relationships with our partners and the communities that we serve is all about access and moving beyond the traditional college student. It will be important to be able to measure whether students and partners are promoting, remaining neutral, or detracting from our value and brand as an institution based on how satisfied they are with their experience. Therefore, one of the key metrics that Harold Washington will focus on is the net promoter score. Understanding the sentiments and how external stakeholders view the college will help us strengthen our distinctive identity and deepen our relationships with communities.

IMPROVING APPLICATION PROCESS

Harold Washington strives to improve and streamline the admission processes to increase efficiency across all onboarding departments and ensure more students can move through the admission funnel successfully, thus optimizing enrollment. This is a critical aspect to ensure equity and access for all students looking to enroll. Especially for Black, Latinx and immigrant students, navigating cumbersome application systems and large bureaucratic institutions provide obstacles to accessing and persisting in their education path. Improving the quality of service that the college provides to students as they move through the admission funnel is a critical component of this plan. In addition to improving internal policy and processes, Harold Washington has begun an aggressive informational outreach strategy to provide better and more timely information to students, families, teachers, and counselors to improve planning and preparation for college. Using a variety of media – publications, videos, computer technology – the college should provide materials to alert students and their families, especially during the critical early stages of planning, to the application process, program offerings, and support services available.



STUDENT EXPERIENCE

SUMMARY – Improve the quality of instruction and support services for our students to impact retention/completion and promote success for all students by (1) establishing standard benchmarks, best practices, and reporting models to bolster and assess current/potential student supports and retention efforts through the Care Team initiative, (2) ensuring equitable student experience inside and outside of the classroom through enhanced communication and increased faculty engagement, and (3) strengthening our partnership with Chicago Public Schools to create earlier touchpoints and engagement that allow prospective students to build community and affinity to the college before they apply.

METRIC	Improve fall to spring retention by 2-3% YOY
TACTICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase resources for academic advising • Increase usage of Early Alert system to ensure proper outreach and support for struggling students • Develop measures of early indicators to gauge student likelihood to complete, and use measures to intervene and support student success • Enhance College Success course, with more coordination among student supports • Establish standard benchmarks, best practices, and reporting models to bolster and assess current and potential student supports and retention efforts. • Launch community-building efforts both in and out of the classrooms • Increase career fairs and presentations by transfer 4-year partners • Add more peer to peer engagement • Optimize communication across modalities (face-to-face and online) by implementing technology solutions that assist faculty/staff/ students in goal setting, persistence & completion • Engage faculty strategically to highlight the center of excellence

CARE TEAM

In the last year, Harold Washington has established the Care Team. The main goal of the Care Team is to assess student performance by using data analytics, and then develop interventions or leverage existing interventions to support students and to give them the greatest chance for success. Given the demographic shift of the city, it will be important to track and prioritize retention moving forward. Expanding the use of early alert systems for monitoring and improving student performance is a priority as a means to promote retention and completion rates. Moreover, establishing on-track indicators to ensure students are progressing toward their degrees is important for the Care Team. These indicators can be used to encourage students to begin remedial coursework, progress to higher-level courses, and complete 20 to 30 credit hours during the first year.

FACULTY ENGAGEMENT

Establishing a sense of belonging and ensuring an equitable student experience for all of Harold Washington students through effective communication and increased faculty engagement is a priority for the college. The college has made headway in strategic collaboration between faculty and support staff – implementing consistent, frequent and simple key messaging and outreach to students regarding enrollment and registration deadlines, supporting first-year students through the faculty mentor pilot program, and increasing early intervention efforts to reduce the number of no-show withdrawals (NSW) and administrative withdrawals (ADW). Moving forward, scaling and expanding these collaborative efforts between student services and faculty will have a significant enrollment and fiscal impact.

EARLY TOUCHPOINTS

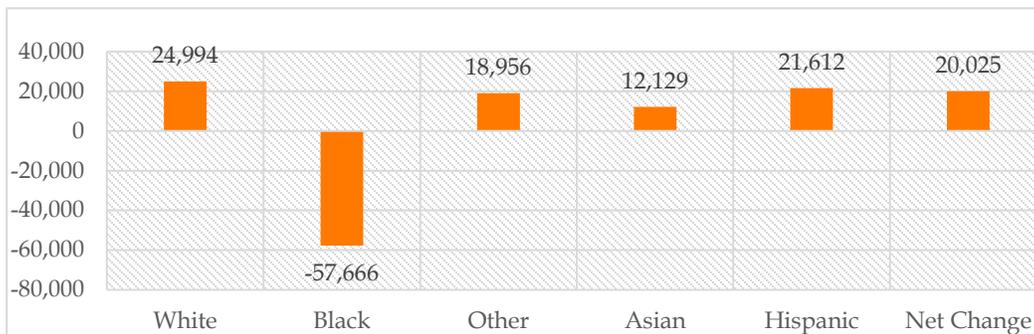
A key part of an effective retention strategy for the college will be centered on earlier, enhanced engagement for both current students (through enhanced student life and improved communication) and prospective students during the exploration phase. Cultivating a welcoming climate that supports student success will be a strategic priority for the college. Increasing both the current and prospective student satisfaction is a strategic goal. For example, this year the college began revamping on-campus tours and the visitor experience, working more closely with top feeder schools to inform and guide the campus experience. Moreover, the college looks to Chicago Public Schools top feeder high schools’ feedback around what critical information prospective students need and when they need it – which can guide the timing and strategy around marketing (social media and paid advertisement), communication, and the printed collateral that is created and shared.

OBSERVATIONS FROM THE DATA

DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFTS

Harold Washington College has a student population that closely mirrors the broader Chicago population because it pulls students from all across the city. Chicago’s population was increasing until 2014 and has since decreased. The city is experiencing population change at varying degrees depending on the community. However, generally speaking, the Hispanic community has thrived in Chicago adding as many new residents as the number of White residents that have left the city. The Asian population has also increased, masking the loss of Black residents. The Black community is shrinking in all the City Colleges of Chicago service areas, with the exception of Truman. The population in the City of Chicago has become more racially and ethnically diverse in recent years and it appears this trend will continue.

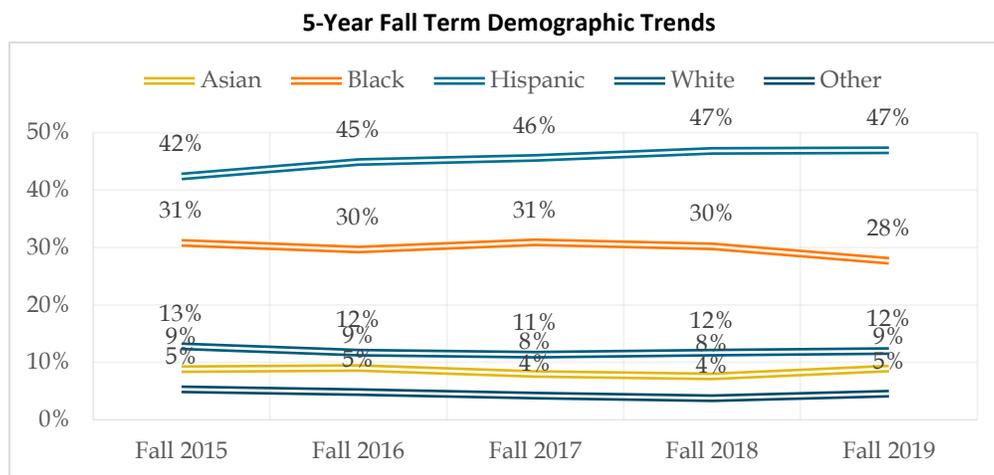
Population Trends, By Ethnic Group



In looking more deeply into the city population, there are also significant changes in Chicago’s age groups. The baby boomers are entering retirement age in large numbers and will continue to do so through the next decade. Currently, Millennials are the largest single age group. Moreover, as more Baby Boomers retire Millennials will continue to increase as a proportion of the workforce. This Millennial bonus may be short-lived because they are waiting longer to form families and are having fewer children.

CHALLENGES AND ENROLLMENT IMPACTS

Harold Washington has experienced declining headcount enrollment for the last several years. Mirroring Chicago trends, enrollment among Black students has decreased most significantly over the past four academic years – followed by Asian and White students. Hispanic and Multi-Racial students have experienced the mildest decline in this time period. Enrollment declines also appear to have been greater for older students. Enrollment among the 18-19 age group has remained relatively level after a large drop in the 2016-2017 academic year. While enrollment is decreasing for both part-time and full-time students, part-timers are comprising an increasing percentage of credit students. Because of these disparities in Chicago's racial make-up, it will be important to be more intentional to view enrollment with a lens on equity and access.



Harold Washington pulls students from all Chicago neighborhoods. However, the top feeder neighborhoods are on the south/southwest side (in the Malcolm X, Daley, KKC service areas). Even though there is population loss pattern across the city, Daley or Malcolm X regions are growing in population. This creates an opportunity for Harold Washington to enhance engagement with the high school partners in those areas. Moreover, in terms of applications, new first-year students continue to make up the majority of applicants, with prior college and readmits bringing the next largest applicant pool.

WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC TRENDS

Professional and business services continue to be the largest single industry sector in the Chicago metro area and has been the primary driver of growth. This is tremendous for Harold Washington since college has already been forging partnerships with industry leaders to better align the curricula with the demand in these growing fields.

Another key trend is that most of the job openings over the next decade will result from the need to fill existing positions rather than from new jobs. Job openings created by workers retiring from existing positions are expected to outpace new job openings by a ratio of about 2 to 1 overall. Moreover, although Illinois is still experiencing slower growth in relation to neighboring states or the national economy, many occupations have seen significant wage increases. In Cook County, occupations that typically require an associate degree or post-secondary credentials, with a few exceptions, have followed this trend. For historical enrollment information, please see the Environmental Scan.

3-Year Strategic Enrollment Management Scorecard

	FY19 Actual	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022
Total Enrollment	12,561	11,923	11,923	12,043
Credit Enrollment	12,377	11,700	11,700	11,817
Continuing Ed. Enrollment	234	235	259	284
Credit Hours	222,955	216,318	218,481	222,851
Fall-to-Spring Retention	66.3%	67.7%	69.8%	71.9%