

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Holmes Community College (HCC) Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), titled *Career Compass*, is aligned with the college's mission to offer innovative educational opportunities to students to prepare them for university transfer, productive employment, and lifelong learning. After extensive research, the college has identified a significant obstacle that students face in their career readiness: choosing a program of study that will lead to a fulfilling career.

Career Compass will focus on students who choose General College Studies (GCS), one of the college's largest programs of study. Some students opt for GCS as a precursor to being accepted into selective programs; however, many select it because they are uncertain of the career they want to pursue. The college's QEP will attend to this uncertainty, as research has shown the advantages of selecting a program of study earlier rather than later.

As the value of a college degree faces growing scrutiny, *Career Compass* aims to guide undecided students toward selecting an academic or career program of study through its interventions. By doing so, it enhances their likelihood of graduating and successfully transitioning into the workforce or higher education. Through a career-focused research essay (Career Profiles Assignment), a career exploration course, career exploration seminars, and advisor training, *Career Compass* is expected to have a positive effect on students' academic and career success. The actions of the QEP will lead to fulfillment of the following overall goal with specific focus on three student learning outcomes (SLOs).

Career Compass Goal

Students who are undecided in their career path (GCS students) will select their academic or career program of study within their cohort year, thereby increasing their probability of graduation and facilitating their entry into the workforce or university transfer.

Career Compass Student Learning Outcomes

1. GCS students will report increased confidence and clarity in the academic and/or career path they want to pursue.
2. GCS students will indicate an increase in their knowledge and awareness of attainable career paths.
3. GCS students will make contact with local businesses and industries that may impact their academic and/or career choice.

