

## QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN (QEP) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### ***What is SACSCOC and what is accreditation?***

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) is, as defined by SACSCOC, “an institutional accreditor for quality assurance in higher education. SACSCOC accredits institutions that award associate, baccalaureate, master’s, or doctoral degrees, including those offered via distance and correspondence education, and direct assessment within these institutions.” Holmes Community College is accredited by the SACSCOC to award associate degrees and certificates. Accreditation aims to assure stakeholders and the public that higher educational institutions maintain acceptable standards of quality and integrity.

### ***What is a QEP?***

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is an important part of the SACSCOC reaffirmation of accreditation process for the college. Each institution that is reaffirming its accreditation is required to develop a five-year plan defined by SACSCOC as a “carefully designed course of action that addresses a well-defined and focused topic or issue related to enhancing student learning and/or student success.” QEP development is a school-wide effort with broad-based support from the college’s stakeholders.

### ***Why do we need a QEP?***

As part of the accreditation reaffirmation process, SACSCOC requires institutions to submit a QEP that will enhance the institution’s quality and effectiveness by improving student learning and/or student success in a particular area.

### ***What is the title of our QEP?***

*Career Compass*

### ***What does our QEP address?***

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.

### ***Who selected our QEP topic?***

Students, faculty, staff, administrators, Holmes’ Board of Trustees, and QEP Committees have been involved in the identification of the topic and development of the plan since Fall 2023. The final decision of the QEP topic was made based on support across the college and community from a collection of surveys, Holmes’s strategic initiatives, and focused, research-based support submitted by the QEP Planning Committee.

### ***What is the overall goal of our QEP?***

The overall goal of *Career Compass* is for students who are undecided in their career path (with a focus on General College Studies students) to select an academic or career program of study within their cohort year at Holmes, thereby increasing their probability of graduation and facilitating their entry into the workforce or university transfer.

### ***Who is our QEP’s target audience (cohort)?***

While the actions and benefits of *Career Compass* will be available to all students, those who begin a fall semester with General College Studies (GCS) as their program of study and have not yet completed courses incorporating the QEP initiatives (English Composition I and Career Exploration) will be the initial target audience.

## **QEP FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)**

### ***Why were General College Studies students selected as the QEP's targeted audience?***

General College Studies is one of Holmes' largest programs of study. While some students opt for GCS as a precursor to being accepted into selective programs, many choose it because they are uncertain of the career they want to pursue. *Career Compass* will address this uncertainty, as research has shown the advantages of selecting a program of study earlier rather than later in the educational journey.

### ***What are the desired outcomes of our QEP?***

Along with the overall QEP goal, three student learning outcomes (SLOs), listed below, have been identified to assist students in confidently selecting their program of study early in their college career, thereby enriching their academic experience and facilitating their entry into the workforce or university transfer.

#### ***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.

### ***How will these outcomes be achieved?***

With investment across the college, the following four actions will be implemented to meet the student learning outcomes, and thus, the overall goal of *Career Compass*:

- Career Profiles Assignment in English Composition I (ENG 1113)
- Career Exploration Course (LLS 1321)
- Career Exploration Seminars
- Advisor Training

### ***How will the QEP be assessed?***

Using institutional research and current baseline data, measurable student learning outcomes were developed along with appropriate assessment tools (reports, surveys, and advising questions) to measure the progress of *Career Compass*. As the QEP evolves over the next five years, specific cohorts, strategies, and measurements may be modified.

### ***How will the QEP's success be determined?***

Each year, the QEP student learning outcomes and program outcomes will be assessed. After five years, an Impact Report will be submitted to SACSCOC along with the Fifth Year Interim Report. Implementation, documentation, and evaluation have been established and will be supported with activities, assessments, budget, and timeline strategies.

### ***Who will be involved with the QEP?***

Administration, faculty, staff, and students have been involved with the QEP from the start and will continue to be throughout its implementation. All Holmes students, but primarily students who choose General College Studies as their program of study or are undecided in their academic or career path, will have the opportunity to benefit from the initiatives of *Career Compass*.