



PROGRESS REPORT

APRIL/MAY 2025



Prepared By:
Swim Digital Group



Introduction

The HCC Forward initiative continues to move forward with thoughtful planning, strong collaboration, and a clear focus on impact. This dual month progress report features updates on recent workshops, cross-campus collaboration, and the preparation for launching new task forces while realigning current task forces. Each effort reflects a shared commitment to strengthening student outcomes and advancing institutional goals. Swim Digital Group remains honored to support this important work alongside the HCC community.



HCC Forward Updates

Student Success Steering Team Updates

On May 29, Swim Digital Group joined Howard Community College faculty, staff, and national experts for the Corequisite Education Summit, a full-day event dedicated to strengthening the college's understanding of the corequisite model. Held in the Kahlert Complex, the summit featured keynote insights from Dr. Nikki Edgecombe of the Community College Research Center and Dr. Desmond Lewis of Houston Community College, who emphasized how corequisite approaches can drive access, equity, and student momentum. HCC faculty also led engaging breakout sessions that explored inclusive teaching, thoughtful course design, and collaborative strategies to support students beyond gateway English and Math.

In addition to the summit, Swim convened with the Student Success Steering Team to begin planning the next phase of the Accelerated Pathways initiative. Together, we explored the rollout of Fall 2025 corequisite courses, identified early institutional needs, and aligned on key elements within the Achieving the Dream (ATD) Action Plan.



WCCE Updates

During the March 31 Change Management workshop, participants highlighted the importance of collecting feedback from HCC's industry and community partners, with a focus on job placement and workplace outcomes. As the college adopts a one-college model, it is essential to communicate that workplace outcomes are relevant across all types of courses and learning experiences, not just career-specific programs.

To support this effort, Swim Digital Group met with HCC stakeholders on April 16 to co-develop a community partnership assessment. The group collaborated on survey questions and identified key external partners for outreach. The survey launched the week of May 12 and will officially close on Friday, June 13. Results from this assessment will help shape strategies for strengthening employer engagement and incorporate workplace readiness across the student journey.



Task Force Updates

Swim Digital Group also met with several Task Force chairs/co-chairs to revisit the foundational elements guiding their work. These sessions focused on refining task force charges, aligning objectives, clarifying milestones, and affirming expectations for participation. The conversations helped reinforce a shared sense of direction and will equip each task force to move forward with confidence, coordination, and a renewed sense of purpose within the broader HCC Forward initiative. Swim met with:

- Dr. Darren Gibson, Chair of the WCCE Program Alignment Task Force
- Zakia Reaves-Johnson and Candace dePass, Co-Chairs of the Retention & Completion Task Force
- Kismet Flagg-Webster and Dr. Jon Iuzzini, Co-Chairs of the Strategic Scheduling Task Force
- Dr. Jon Iuzzini, Chair of the Accelerated Pathways Task Force
- Dr. Sylvia Lee, Chair of the Corequisite Education Task Force



Change Management Development Team Updates

As part of our ongoing collaboration with HCC, Swim Digital Group facilitated an Empathy Walk on May 6 designed to immerse participants in the lived experiences of WCCE students. Through guided storytelling, participants embodied personas such as adult re-skillers, traditional students, opportunity youth, and incumbent workers. This exercise encouraged reflection and helped staff and faculty connect with the emotional and practical realities students face. The structure encouraged exploration of students' life journeys, challenges, and aspirations, creating space for meaningful insight into how institutional systems shape the student experience.

Reflections from the session revealed critical themes around visibility, trust, and the need for emotionally safe learning environments. Participants noted that many students remain unaware of available support, particularly those with mental health needs or neurodivergent experiences. These takeaways point directly to opportunities within existing initiatives, and Swim recommended institutionalizing proactive intake surveys, integrating empathy training into staff onboarding, and strengthening cross-functional collaboration to align efforts with student needs.



What's Next

June is slated to be a busy month as task forces either kickoff for the first time or reorganize around a new task force charge. On June 5, the following task forces will have their “kick-off” meeting:

- Strategic Scheduling Task Force
- Retention & Completion Task Force
- WCCE Student Integration Task Force
- WCCE Program Alignment Task Force

On June 16, two more “kick-offs” will take place with the below task forces:

- Accelerated Pathways Task Force
- Corequisite Education Task Force

Swim Digital Group looks forward to supporting each team as they launch their work, clarify goals, and identify high-impact strategies to improve the student experience across Howard Community College.





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