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The HERD Campaigns: Shaping the Bison Journey

To implement [The HERD Student Success Model](#), the Office of Undergraduate Studies was restructured to provide integrated support for [The HERD Campaigns](#). The HERD Campaigns consists of 21 structured developmental activities that are designed to complement existing initiatives across the Schools and Colleges.

Leveraging [Academic and Career Clusters](#), The HERD Campaigns are designed to ensure that all undergraduate students receive a common level of support that aid in defining “The Howard University Experience.” The HERD Campaigns consist of three themes:

- [Preparing to Launch](#)
- [Coming into Focus](#), and
- [Launching Forward](#).

Each theme is designed to provide developmentally appropriate support to students across three time periods:

- [Admission through First Year](#),
- [Sophomore through Junior Years](#), and
- [Senior through Early Post-graduate Years](#).

During each period, at least seven campaigns will be offered to support structured and constant contact with success team members. This constant contact approach minimizes major gaps in communication and builds trusting relationships between students, advisors, and other success team members.

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Theme: “Preparing to Launch”

Period: Admission through First Year

Campaign #1. Pre-Matriculation: Building the Foundation for Success.

Leverages technology for early engagement, pre-registration activities (such as placement exams, checklists, and Welcome to Howard webinars).

** Creates a comprehensive glossary that familiarizes students with key institutional technology tools and commonly used Howard University terminology, ensuring they can confidently navigate campus systems, language, and academic processes.*

Campaign #2. Bison Belong Campaign: Cultivating Community and Belonging.

Introduces trained Peer Captains/Navigators to foster a sense of belonging and aid new students with navigating new environments.

**Create a senior panel that answers FAQs for students particularly undecided freshmen, offering relatable insight and direction.*

**Further strengthens student success by establishing a study-skills course/workshop that is focused on improving note-taking, soft skills, and overall health and wellness, with dedicated attention to helping students manage anxiety during their first few weeks of school or semester does not unfold as expected.*

Campaign #3. Orientation & Onboarding: Enhancing Student Experience.

Provides formal orientation and advising experiences with campus partners (including Bison Prep and Bison Week).

Campaign #4. Financial Literacy & Support: Addressing Practical Needs.

Offers acute education regarding financial literacy, internal and external scholarships, grants, loans, and federal work-study. Reinforces the tenacity needed to pursue donor-based scholarships and funding opportunities.

Campaign #5. Wow...This is a lot!

Helps students navigate self-doubt after experiencing disappointment (earning first B, earning first F, not winning an election, feeling lost/homesick, and difficulty making connections).

Campaign #6. Goal Setting & Wellness

Develops an individual and community wellness mindset through integrated programming, such as study skills, time management, learning support, learning communities, goal setting, student organizations, and physical activity.

Campaign #7. Developing a Plan for Midterms and Finals

Helps students transition from “thinking about studying” to enacting a study plan that balances periodic versus intensive study plans for midterms and finals.

Campaign #8. Finding On-Campus & Off-Campus Employment

Help students identify both on-campus, Federal Work-Study and off-campus part-time employment which aids in retention, financial and personal well-being.

Campaign #9. Bison Bridge

Identify potential mentors through the Bison Bridge alumni & student networking platform. Gain advice and guidance about majors, careers, employers, industries, and life after Howard.

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Theme: “Coming into Focus”***Period: Sophomore through Junior Years*****Campaign #10. Career Exploration & Major Declaration.**

Ensures that students have opportunities to explore academic and career pathways, while emphasizing the importance of declaring a major/program of study. Shares alternatives for pursuing multiple interests without necessarily changing majors. Reviews degree-audit and “what-if” scenarios to support informed decisions regarding program changes.

Campaign #11. Understanding Digital Academic and Career Support Tools.

Provides refreshers for a range of digital tools that support academic and career goals (Focus II, What Can I Do With This Major, CareerShift, library databases versus web searches, Handshake career platform, V-Mock resume tools, Kaplan test preparation, live online tutoring).

**Professional Brand Development (Digital & In-Person): Supporting students in building strong résumés, LinkedIn profiles, professional digital presence, and effective networking and personal branding skills. Protecting the Howard Brand.*

**Career Exposure & Opportunities: Connecting students to on-campus job fairs, internships, and employment opportunities that support career readiness.*

Campaign #12. Studying Abroad: Let’s Do This!

Leverages campus partners to provide a road map to success when studying abroad. Dispels myths and leverages former students to share the benefits and challenges of living abroad.

Campaign #13. Time for a Checkup.

Ensures that students are clearly tracking well to graduate on-time or early, emphasizing credit and non-credit requirements (professional licensure exams, internships, etc.) for each program. Provides academic recovery options for students who need assistance (summer school, course repeats, etc.)

**Holistic Wellness: Promoting physical, mental, and emotional well-being while reinforcing the importance of self-care and understanding that health is wealth.*

Campaign #14. Reviewing Your Digital Bison Footprint.

Supports students with professionalizing their digital profiles to maximize career and post-graduate opportunities. Reinforces potential short-term/long-term risks and rewards

associated with provocative digital footprints.

Campaign #15. So You Wanna Go to Graduate/Professional School?

Provides in-depth engagement with the ACE Scholars Program office to clearly distinguish how national and international merit awards differ from traditional financial aid. Provides education on fellowships and other awards that are traditionally supported by the ACE Scholars Program.

Campaign #16. We Miss You!

Provides outreach and explores opportunities with students who may have dropped out or stopped out.

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Theme: “Launching Ahead”

Period: Senior through Early Post-graduate Years (1-3 years)

Campaign #17. Apply What You’ve Learned.

Doubles down on career development efforts (career fairs, information sessions, internships, and more) to ensure that students have engaged some form of experiential learning opportunity before graduating while making February career month with additional activities including Resumania.

**Strengthens career development initiatives—including career fairs, information sessions, internships, and related programming—to ensure students participate in meaningful experiential learning before graduation, while elevating February as Career Month with expanded activities such as Resumania and other engagement opportunities.*

Campaign #18. Time for the Final Push!

Reinforces academic and physical wellness practices as keys to minimize “senior dips” that may increase risk of not meeting all graduation requirements. Reviews degree-audit and ensure students are clear on outstanding requirements.

Campaign #19. Yes, You Can Go to Graduate School!

Provides education and confidence boosting preparation to get students aligned with graduate school calendars. Re-introduce the University-sponsored Kaplan test-preparation program.

Campaign #20. It’s Graduation Season!

Provides wrap-around support for students regarding the graduation application, financial and academic clearance, ceremony preparation, and ways to join the alumni association.

** Coordinates the Pre-Clearance and Final Clearance processes by sending graduation information at the end of January and offering a workshop once the graduation application portal opens.*

Campaign #21. Negotiating Offers.

Leverages alumni, human resource professionals, and other experts to share salary negotiating strategies, as well as benefit and supplemental compensation (e.g. options, relocation, etc.) approaches with seniors and other undergraduate students.

In Truth and Service

Office of Undergraduate Studies

**Provide targeted programming to prepare graduating students for Life After College by offering guidance in financial literacy, housing decisions, and strategic career planning. Provides specialized support in salary negotiation while equipping students with resources for navigating domestic or international relocation, strengthening their digital footprint, and practicing professional etiquette to ensure a confident and successful transition beyond graduation.*

Campaign #22. Am I Ready for this Adulthood Thing?

Brings back recent alumni to connect with seniors to share the success stories and how they navigated career and non-career challenges (budgets, managing bills, adjusting to new cities/towns, etc.) after graduation.

Campaign #23. Where Are You and How May We Assist?

Leverages the ACE Scholars Program, Center for Career and Professional Success, and the Alumni Association to administer webinars, post-graduate surveys, merit award support, and career resources to ensure that recent alumni are supported as they navigate new environments.

** Prioritizing professional development by strengthening soft skills, supporting the transition into post-graduation life, increasing awareness of available resources and opportunities, encouraging meaningful networking, guiding students in investing in work-ready attire, and creating intentional moments to celebrate their accomplishments thus far.*

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Additional Campaigns

Campus Engagement

Encouraging involvement in student organizations and clubs to help students acclimate campus culture, build leadership skills, and foster a sense of belonging.

Mentorship & Peer Connections

Creating opportunities for students to connect with peers and mentors who can support academic success and guide career exploration and aspirations.

Financial Literacy & Life Skills

Teaching students how to manage financial aid refunds, budgeting, credit and debt, taxes, employment income, and essential expenses such as rent.

Student–Faculty Engagement

Strengthening relationships between students and faculty to support academic growth, mentorship, professional development, and faculty–student socialization within the academic community.

Exploration is a Plan

Expands early access to academic and co-curricular resources so students can explore a broader range of opportunities at the start of their academic journey. Focuses on building clarity, confidence, and trajectory through action-oriented guidance that help students articulate their academic, professional, and civic interests. Supports students in translating their coursework into future-facing narratives while introducing prestigious opportunities early without students feeling overwhelmed. Reinforces a healthy developmental mindset by normalizing exploration rather than pressuring premature certainty, ensuring students feel empowered to make informed, intentional decisions about their path forward.

Skills Before Scholarships

Emphasizes the development of transferable skills rather than focusing solely on awards, helping students build strengths that are valuable across academic, professional, and civic settings. Prioritizes clear writing to ensure students can express ideas effectively, strong questioning to encourage thoughtful inquiry, and project design to support intentional planning and structured execution. Reinforces impact communication by teaching students to clearly articulate the significance, purpose, and outcomes of their work—empowering them to present their experiences with confidence and clarity in any future context.