

BC3 plans for a flexible fall semester

Instructional delivery will range from face-to-face to online options, transition to remote Nov. 23

June 17, 2020

(Butler, PA) Butler County Community College is planning for a flexible fall semester by delivering credit-course instruction through face-to-face, remote, blended or online formats, BC3 President Dr. Nick Neupauer announced to the college's board of trustees Wednesday.

BC3 also announced Wednesday that it will freeze tuition and fees for the upcoming academic year at 2019-2020 rates, and that the college's main campus in Butler Township and its five additional locations will begin operating in an expanded capacity July 6 under Gov. Tom Wolf's green-phase reopening plan with regard to COVID-19.

BC3's fall 2020 semester will include five sessions.

The college's 15-week session begins Aug. 24 with courses delivered through one of the flexible scheduling formats until Nov. 23, when courses transition to remote instruction for the following two weeks. Finals week begins Dec. 7 and examinations will be held through a remote format.

Face-to-face courses are traditional in delivery, with students and instructors within classrooms or labs, or physically attending clinical or practicum training. Remote instruction includes video conferencing, email and Internet-based learning management system formats. Blended instruction features regularly scheduled face-to-face meetings and remote instruction. Online instruction includes the use of video conferencing, Internet-based learning management system formats and other web-based applications.

Members of BC3's faculty have the option to indicate their preferred teaching format for the fall semester.

College officials are finalizing what will be a maximum percentage of face-to-face instruction.

BC3 will also continue this fall to offer four fully online credit sessions, with a 10-week option that begins Sept. 21, and with three five-week Fast Tracks that start Aug. 24, Sept. 28 and Nov. 2. Finals in the four online credit sessions will be held online.

Tuition and fees for BC3 students from Butler County this fall will remain at \$170 per credit, and for BC3 students from other Pennsylvania counties, at \$270 per credit, for face-to-face, remote and blended instruction courses.

All students will be charged an additional \$25 per credit for an online course. A lab fee of \$35 will be charged for certain courses.

The college June 1 began a yellow-phase reopening plan for employees with regard to COVID-19 and according to guidelines defined by the governor.

Beginning July 6, BC3's main campus and its additional locations in Armstrong, Butler, Jefferson, Lawrence and Mercer counties will operate under the governor's green-phase reopening plan guidelines. Access to buildings on BC3's main campus and at its additional locations will be open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Occupancy within the buildings will be limited according to state guidelines.

All employees, students and visitors must follow current requirements and guidelines as defined by the governor, the state Department of Health, the state Department of Education and the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Those requirements and guidelines include the wearing of masks or face coverings and the maintaining social distancing.

Noncredit face-to-face courses and trainings offered at BC3 by the college's Workforce Development division can resume July 6, as well as clinical trainings for certain credit healthcare programs.

The college's noncredit adult literacy program July 6 will begin to offer instruction in face-to-face, online and hybrid formats, and BC3's noncredit Lifelong Learning division will resume face-to-face courses this fall.

Noncredit courses and trainings at BC3 will be held under the governor's green-phase reopening plan guidelines and, for fire and EMS training, under the guidance of appropriate regulating authorities. Noncredit BC3 courses and trainings offered at locations other than BC3 will operate under the location's requirements.

BC3 continues to closely monitor requirements and guidelines provided by state and national governing agencies. Additional information may be announced at a later date.