

BC3: Earn up to 6 credits in 5 weeks

6 courses added to menu during second online Winter Session

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(Butler, PA) Students of Butler County Community College and other colleges and universities can remain on track for graduation or get ahead by earning up to six credits in five weeks during an online Winter Session offered by BC3, which according to the U.S. Department of Education has the most affordable tuition among 42 western Pennsylvania schools.

A selection of 15 courses, six more than in 2017-18, will be available during BC3's second Winter Session, to be held from Dec. 17 to Jan. 21, according to Amy Pignatore, BC3's dean of admissions and the college registrar.

Credits from BC3, the No. 1 community college in Pennsylvania in back-to-back surveys by Schools.com, transfer to public, private and online four-year colleges and universities.

BC3's Winter Session selections are American literature: Colonial and Romantic, American national government, elementary statistics, general psychology, human growth and development, intermediate algebra, introduction to art, introduction to entrepreneurship, introduction to music, introduction to religions of the world, marketing, principles of management, productivity applications, 20th-century world history and world geography.

"Our academic deans really thought through the process of what classes we would offer," Pignatore said. "Our general education courses transfer to other institutions and are equivalent to those that our partner institutions offer. Students have the opportunity to take those at a lower cost."

Sixty-four Winter Session students from nine counties in Pennsylvania and one in Tennessee last December and January earned a total of 210 credits through nine courses, according to Rebecca Smith, BC3's associate director of records and registration.

"An efficient way to spend your time"

"It is totally worth it and I would do it again," said Lacey Rossi, 20, of Youngstown, Westmoreland County, a junior education major at Duquesne University who took BC3's human growth and development course in BC3's first Winter Session.

"I could do it at my own pace over winter break. I ended up finishing it before I went back to school. My professor had it set up so that you could do it at your own pace. Everything was uploaded. And so I did it over the three or so weeks that I had for Christmas break.

“Some students don’t do anything during winter break,” Rossi said, “and I like to be busy. So it is an efficient way to spend your time.”

Jonathan Grim, 22, of New Castle, graduated in May from Grove City College with a bachelor’s degree in accounting and used a course in BC3’s Winter Session to attain the 150 credits needed to obtain a certified public accountant license in Pennsylvania.

“I knew that it would be more affordable than taking it through the school I was at,” Grim said of BC3’s introduction to psychology course. “It was easy to do it on break and online.”

“If I could have taken nine credits ... I would have”

Benjamin Koprivnak, 42, of Mercer, works 40 hours a week as director of maintenance at a juvenile placement facility. He earned six credits – in health science and principles of management – in BC3’s Winter Session toward the BC3 associate degree in business management he plans to attain in December and the promotion he anticipates that will accompany his achievement.

“When the business that I work for asked me to get this degree for a future position, I told them I would do this as fast as I possibly could,” said Koprivnak, who is married, has three stepchildren and hopes to become the facility’s manager.

“I was not wasting any time. I prepared for this. If I could have taken nine credits in the Winter Session, I would have.”

Credit loads are capped at six for the Winter Session.

Online registration for current BC3 students and guest students begins Oct. 29 through the MyBC3 Portal and closes at 11:59 p.m. Dec. 17. Open enrollment for other students begins Nov. 12.

Applications for admission for those who have never applied to BC3, or whose applications were submitted prior to the fall 2017 semester must be completed online by 11:59 p.m. Dec. 12 or in person by 3 p.m. Dec. 14.

Guest students registering for a course that requires a prerequisite should submit an unofficial transcript that lists the name of their home institution.

Tuition and fees must be paid in full online or in person by 3 p.m. Dec. 19 or scheduled classes will be dropped and access to online classes will be unavailable.

Students can visit the BC3 Bookstore to purchase textbooks beginning Dec. 4, or can order online by 3 p.m. Dec. 10 to guarantee delivery for the start of the Winter Session. Students must

also complete a required online orientation by 3 p.m. Dec. 19 before being able to access their class on Blackboard via the MyBC3 Portal.

Online classes can be accessed using Blackboard beginning Dec. 17.

Technical assistance will be available online throughout the Winter Session. BC3's administrative offices will be closed from Dec. 22 through Jan 1.

5 scheduling options each semester

BC3's 14-week spring session begins Jan. 14; and its 10-week session, Feb. 11. BC3 also offers five-week online Fast Track sessions held consecutively throughout the spring semester. Fast Track 1 begins Jan. 14; Fast Track 2, Feb. 18; and Fast Track 3, April 1.

BC3 offers more than 100 online courses. Nine-hundred BC3 students are taking at least one online course during the fall semester, and 281 are taking only online classes.

BC3's menu also includes more than 30 sections of hybrids, which are online classes that require at least four campus meetings; and a variety of iTV courses, in which an instructor's in-class lesson is delivered to separate classrooms simultaneously through various technology.

Five online certificates, in business and in STEM, are offered by BC3. Students in 49 states; Washington, D.C.; Puerto Rico; and the U.S. Virgin Islands can take BC3's online courses.

For more information, visit bc3.edu/winter.