

BC3's advantages on display at Oct. 16 open house

Oct. 11, 2019



Butler County Community College graduates are shown before BC3's commencement on Wednesday, May 15, 2019, when the college graduated its largest class of the century. BC3 will hold an open house on its main campus Oct. 16. BC3 will waive its \$25 application fee for those who apply at the open house.

(Butler, PA) Visitors to Butler County Community College's Oct. 16 open house can learn how 70 percent of BC3 graduates are debt-free, how BC3 has the highest salary-to-cost ratio among 43 regional colleges and universities, according to the U.S. Department of Education's 2018 College Scorecard, and why BC3 has been ranked the No. 1 community college in Pennsylvania in three consecutive surveys by Schools.com.

Those who attend the open house can also learn about degree-completion partnerships that allow students to earn a bachelor's degree on BC3's main campus or online, about BC3's flexible course scheduling options that meet students' needs, and about associate degree programs that

enable students to transfer to a four-year college or university or to start a career upon graduation.

BC3 will waive its \$25 application fee for those who apply for admission during the open house, scheduled from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on its main campus in Butler Township.

The open house will be held in Founders Hall. Information sessions will take place in the Succop Theater at 5 p.m. about BC3's Nursing, R.N., program and at 7 p.m. in the Science and Technology Building, Room 200 about financial aid.

BC3's tuition is among the most affordable of 43 regional colleges and universities, according to the U.S. Department of Education's 2018 College Scorecard data.

BC3's 2019-2020 tuition and fees for Butler County students taking 15 credits is \$6,194 less per year than the average for Pennsylvania public four-year institutions; \$8,845 less than Pennsylvania state-related institutions' branch campuses; \$11,725 less than Pennsylvania state-related institutions' main campuses; and \$31,701 less than private institutions.

The Pittsburgh Business Times in January reported that BC3's salary-to-cost ratio – a measurement of graduates' salaries 10 years after commencement for every dollar a student pays to attend the institution – was the highest among those 43 regional colleges and universities.

BC3's top-ranked salary-to-cost ratio means graduates will earn the most compared to what they spend to attend BC3.

Graduate: "I am completely debt-free"

The average student loan debt for the Class of 2018 is \$35,510 in Pennsylvania, the highest among all states except Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Connecticut, according to an Aug. 8 report from LendEDU, a website that provides comparisons for loans, credit cards and other financial products. Two of three graduates from Pennsylvania institutions have student-loan debt, LendEDU reported.

Seventy percent of BC3 graduates are debt-free.

"It is still hard to believe that I have gone through two years of college, and I am completely debt-free," said Mackenzie Craig, of Karns City, who transferred to Indiana University of Pennsylvania after earning an associate degree in criminology from BC3 in May.



Mackenzie Craig, left, of Karns City, and Kirk Gibson, of Butler, graduated debt-free from BC3 in May. Craig earned an associate degree in criminology and Gibson, an associate degree in metrology, the science of precision measurement.

Added Kirk Gibson, of Butler, who graduated debt-free from BC3 in May with an associate degree in metrology, the science of precision measurement: "I have so much more disposable

income,” the lab technician said. “I already have my car paid off. I am starting to look for a house. Even if I wanted to, I could have another car payment.”

The BC3 Education Foundation in 2019-2020 will award about \$217,000 in scholarships.

BC3 offers 37 career programs, 19 transfer programs, and 21 certificate and workplace certificate programs in business, humanities and social science, nursing and allied health, and in STEM.

Public, private and online four-year colleges and universities recognize BC3 credits.

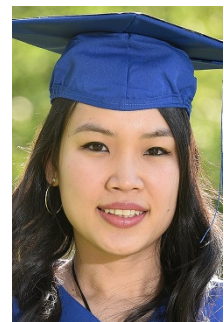
Sixty-seven percent of BC3 students this fall are enrolled in programs that can be transferred to a four-year institution. Students who complete an associate degree at BC3 in one of 12 select programs can transfer to any Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education institution with junior standing.

Representatives from Chatham, Franklin, La Roche and Robert Morris universities; Clarion, Indiana and Slippery Rock universities of Pennsylvania; The Pennsylvania State University and the University of Pittsburgh will be available to speak to prospective students about the ease of transferring BC3 credits into the senior institutions’ bachelor’s degree programs.

BC3’s 500 outgoing transfer agreements are the third-most among the 14 institutions within the Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges, according to the Pennsylvania Transfer and Articulation Center.

A 15:1 student-to-faculty ratio was among the reasons Thuy Tran, of Pittsburgh, said she chose to attend BC3.

“I felt very comfortable going to talk to my professors whenever I had a question or didn’t understand something,” said Tran, who graduated debt-free from BC3 in May with an associate degree in Nursing, R.N.



Thuy Tran, of Pittsburgh, graduated debt-free from BC3 in May with an associate degree in Nursing, R.N.

5 scheduling options available

Traditional and nontraditional students can capitalize on BC3’s 14- and 10-week sessions, and its five-week online Fast Tracks, held consecutively throughout the semester and in which students can take three-credit courses that are among the college’s more than nearly 90 online, hybrid and iTV courses – those taught in a classroom by one instructor but delivered to two separate locations simultaneously using video or web conferencing technology.

High school students attending BC3’s open house can learn how to earn transferrable college credits through BC3’s College Within the High School and College Pathways programs.

BC3's three most recent graduating classes have been its largest of the century. The college's Class of 2019 had 599 graduates; its class of 2017 had 585 graduates and of 2018, 578.

Visitors can RSVP to the open house at bc3.edu/open-houses.