

Enrollment up 34% in BC3's Winter Sessions

Students can earn up to 6 credits in 5 weeks online over holiday break

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(Butler, PA) Butler County Community College's five-week online Winter Session will offer 16 courses that can help BC3 and guest students complete prerequisites for spring classes, lighten semester courseloads to accommodate other commitments, or remain on schedule for graduation, BC3 administrators and former Winter Session students said.

Students can earn up to six credits during BC3's Winter Session between Dec. 16 and Jan. 20, according to Amy Pignatore, BC3's dean of admissions and the college registrar, and possibly at a cost that is more affordable to those who attend other institutions.

Dante Greci, of Butler, a senior at Clarion University of Pennsylvania pursuing bachelor's degrees in accounting and data analytics, enrolled in a 2018-2019 BC3 Winter Session that drew 86 students, an increase of 34 percent over the first BC3 Winter Session in 2017-2018.

Greci said he chose BC3 to earn six Winter Session credits – in elementary statistics and in introduction to religions of the world – because of BC3's affordability.

"College is very expensive and anything to alleviate that is helpful," said Greci, who has taken 10 BC3 courses, many of them online. "I took the courses at BC3 because they were more affordable, and they seemed to fit my schedule much better."

Added Karli Drewencki, of Butler, a senior at Indiana University of Pennsylvania pursuing a bachelor's degree in registered nursing who took BC3's introduction to religions of the world course in the 2018-2019 BC3 Winter Session: "It's more affordable to take classes at BC3. That's the main reason I took it through BC3, and it decreased my courseload over the spring and fall semesters."



Dante Greci, of Butler, a senior at Clarion University of Pennsylvania pursuing bachelor's degrees in accounting and data analytics, has taken BC3 courses in general psychology, sociology, speech, introduction to music, business calculus, health, macroeconomics and microeconomics – and in elementary statistics and in introduction to religions of the world during BC3's 2018-2019 Winter Session.

BC3's credits "so much more affordable"

Pignatore also attributes the increase in BC3 Winter Session enrollment to the accessibility of earning BC3 credits online.

“Students can work at their own pace,” Pignatore said. “Some of the courses are structured in that a student has to complete assignments at certain times. The benefit is most students take three credit hours and that’s the one class they are focused on for five weeks. Then they are done. Those credits are taken care of. Now they may need to take only 12 credits in the spring if they have other commitments.”

Taking BC3’s marketing course during the 2018-2019 Winter Session will help Michael Trauman, of Zelenople, “expedite” the pursuit of his bachelor’s degrees in accounting and economics at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio.

“I could take a certain class that wasn’t super convenient to take here (at Kent State), and transfer those credits,” Trauman said. “The BC3 credits are so much more affordable. That’s just a no-brainer. From the affordability standpoint, it just makes sense.”

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. BC3’s credits transfer to public, private and online four-year colleges and universities.

Tuition and fees for BC3’s 2019-2020 Winter Session cost \$195 per credit for students who live in Butler County, \$295 per credit for students who live in other Pennsylvania counties, and \$395 for out-of-state students.

Grenci has also taken other BC3 courses in general psychology, sociology, speech, introduction to music, business calculus, health, macroeconomics and microeconomics; Drewencki, in elementary statistics; and Trauman, in biology, principles of nutrition and introduction to philosophy.



Karli Drewencki, of Butler, a senior at Indiana University of Pennsylvania pursuing a bachelor’s degree in registered nursing, has taken elementary statistics at BC3 – and introduction to religions of the world during BC3’s 2018-2019 Winter Session.

Online option draws BC3 students from 17 PA counties, 4 states

Students from Armstrong, Erie, Lawrence and Mercer counties were among those who earned 288 credits in BC3’s 2018-2019 Winter Session, according to Becky Smith, BC3’s associate director of records and registration.

BC3’s menu of 16 Winter Session courses includes American literature: Colonial and Romantic; general psychology; intermediate algebra; introduction to art; introduction to music; introduction

to religions of the world; health science, human growth and development, marketing; principles of management and world geography.

Credit loads are capped at six for the Winter Session.

Online registration through the MyBC3 Portal for current BC3 students and guest students begins Nov. 4. Open enrollment for new BC3 students or new BC3 transfers starts Nov. 18. Registration closes at 11:59 p.m. Dec. 16

More than 885 students are taking at least one BC3 course online in the fall 2019 semester as of Oct. 25, BC3 administrators said. Of those, 287 are taking only online BC3 courses and live in Armstrong, Butler, Jefferson, Lawrence, Mercer and 12 other Pennsylvania counties and in Ohio, Texas and New York.

BC3 also offers five-week online Fast Track sessions held consecutively throughout the fall, spring and summer. A selection of six courses is available in the fall 2019 semester's Fast Track 3, which starts Nov. 4 and ends Dec. 9.



Michael Trauman, of Zelenople, a senior pursuing bachelor's degrees in accounting and economics at Kent State University, Kent, Ohio, has taken BC3 courses in biology, principles of nutrition and introduction to philosophy – and in marketing during BC3's 2018-2019 Winter Session.

5 scheduling options each semester

BC3's 14-week spring session begins Jan. 13; and its 10-week session, Feb. 10. BC3's spring 2020 Fast Tracks start Jan. 13, Feb. 17 and March 30.

BC3 will offer 82 sections of 69 online courses in the spring semester, according to Ann McCandless, BC3's dean of educational technology. Students can also earn online credit certificates of achievement in accounting skills, business skills and human resource management specialist; workplace certificates online in Microsoft Office specialist and in basic manufacturing; and a certificate in management of applied technology.

Students in 49 states; Washington, D.C.; Puerto Rico; and the U.S. Virgin Islands can take BC3's online courses.

For more information on BC3's Winter Session, visit bc3.edu/winter.