

Earn up to six credits in BC3's first 5-week winter session

Guest students can also stay on track for graduation, get ahead, administrators say

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(Butler, PA) Butler County Community College's first 100-percent online five-week winter session will allow its own and guest students to earn up to six credits through Jan. 22 and remain on track for graduation, or make a spring semester schedule more manageable, according to BC3's dean of admissions.

The college's winter session, to be held from Dec. 18 to Jan. 22, will feature courses in elementary statistics, general psychology, health science, human growth and development, intermediate algebra, introduction to art, microcomputers, principles of management and principles of sociology.

BC3's credits transfer to public, private, state-related and online institutions.

"Students save time by taking these classes during a period where traditionally, no other classes are offered," said Robert Morris, BC3's dean of admissions. "Rather than taking an overloaded course schedule in the spring semester, students can take a winter term course, which should then make their spring semester more manageable. BC3's low tuition rate helps students save money as well."

BC3's tuition is less expensive than that at 24 Western Pennsylvania colleges and universities, the Pittsburgh Business Times reported in January. Seventy-five percent of BC3 students graduate debt-free.

The college's winter session "may also be beneficial for double majors who may be looking to get a class or two completed sooner," said Dr. Nichol Murray, BC3's interim assistant dean of humanities and social sciences, who with other administrators and faculty worked with Dr. Belinda Richardson, vice president for academic affairs, in creating the opportunity for students.

"Some students also like to continue working during the break," Murray said. "While many of our students need that time to pause, some work better when they can keep the momentum going."

More than 300 guest students from more than 30 institutions attended BC3 during the summer of 2016, according to Sharla Anke, BC3's assistant dean of institutional research. Those students represented The Pennsylvania State University, the University of Pittsburgh, Youngstown State University, and Edinboro, Clarion and Slippery Rock universities of Pennsylvania,

Applications must be submitted online by 11:59 p.m. Dec. 13 or in person by 3 p.m. Dec. 15. Online registration through the BC3 Student Portal begins Nov. 13 and closes at 11:59 p.m. Dec. 18. Tuition and fees must be paid in full online or in person by 3 p.m. Dec. 20.

Students can visit the BC3 Bookstore to purchase winter session textbooks beginning Dec. 4, or can order online by 3 p.m. Dec. 11 to guarantee delivery for the start of class. Students must also complete a required online orientation by 3 p.m. Dec. 20 before being able to access their class online.

Students can access their online class beginning Dec. 18 by using Blackboard.

“As long as students have Internet access, they can take the courses from home, or from wherever they may be traveling to during the holiday season,” Morris said.

BC3’s 14-week session begins Jan. 16; its 12-week session, Jan. 29; and its 10-week session, Feb. 12. BC3 also offers five-week online Fast Track courses held consecutively throughout the spring semester. Fast Track 1 begins Jan. 16; Fast Track 2, Feb. 19; and Fast Track 3, April 2.

BC3 on Oct. 24 was selected for the second time as the No. 1 community college in Pennsylvania in consecutive surveys conducted by Schools.com. It was also ranked No. 13 among 117 Pennsylvania colleges and universities in distance education by OnlineColleges.com.

Technical assistance will be available online through the duration of the winter session.

Administrative offices will be closed from Dec. 23 through Jan 1.

For more information, visit bc3.edu/winter.