**South Texas College News Center**

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**Top 5 Reasons *Perceptive* Parents Pick STC…**

With a world-class education that’s close to home (and available online 24/7), there are *hundreds* of reasons why parents feel good about sending their children to South Texas College. In fact, narrowing it down to just five wasn’t easy. But across the board, here are the top 5 reasons why parents call South Texas College “number one” when it comes to putting students on the fast track to their futures.

**1. Outstanding Education, Zero Debt**

Higher education without the higher cost? You bet! With some of the most affordable tuition rates in the nation, South Texas College is dedicated to outstanding instruction and helping students graduate with *absolutely zero* debt.

“At South Texas College, students receive a quality education at only a fraction of the cost,” says Mike Carranza, dean of enrollment services. “After more than two decades, South Texas College has established a tradition centered on student success and achievement.”

***Not half bad …***

2 years at STC: $7,980[[1]](#footnote-1)

2 years at UTRGV: $16,264[[2]](#footnote-2)

2 years at the University of Houston: $21,116[[3]](#footnote-3)

2 years at Texas A&M University: $25,016[[4]](#footnote-4)

2 years at the University of Texas at Austin: $21,668[[5]](#footnote-5)

Result: Excellence in education for *way less than half* the price of a university.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Students can even start earning college credit in high school through the Dual Credit program, where tuition, books, and even transportation are *free*.

“I was able to get credit for both high school and college, totaling almost 90 college hours,” says Francisco Cantu, a dual credit graduate who’s gone on to become a construction project manager for the Texas Department of Transportation. “I’m a first-generation student, so that’s a big chunk of money I saved! It was a big help.”

Over the years, *more than 106,000* dual credit high school students have earned college credit — saving families *more than $200 million* with tuition-free college classes.

**2. World-Class Professors Help Students Achieve *More***

For professors at South Texas College, it’s about more than just being the best in the field. With a student-faculty ratio of 22:1, students get plenty of individualized attention and mentorship to earn degrees and launch careers.

“Without my mentors at STC, I don’t think I would have stayed the course and stayed as focused,” says Adriel Madrigal, gene therapy researcher and entrepreneur. “The small class size at STC allowed me to have better interaction with my teachers, and those teachers really believed in me.”

After graduating with honors from STC, Madrigal transferred to the University of Pennsylvania, and he says it’s all because of his professors.

“Faculty at STC made me feel like I could do college,” he says. “I didn’t have that before coming to the college.”

STC’s professors aren’t just the best — they’re dedicated to student success.

“My parents were very supportive, but when it came to finding information, navigating the system, and even understanding what questions to ask, I was on my own,” says STC graduate Juan Barrera about navigating higher education. At STC, his professors gave him the tools to achieve and excel. He specifically credits his math professor Mario Morin with keeping him on track.

“Professor Morin was able to convey information in a way that was understandable, and the concepts were fun to play with and manipulate,” says Barrera.

The math major successfully transferred to UTRGV and eventually earned his master’s from Harvard University with a 4.0 GPA. Now, Barrera has returned to STC as a math instructor, working to inspire future generations to succeed and earn their degrees.

According to Barrera, “It was South Texas College where I figured out who I was, what I could do, and what I was capable of achieving.”

**3. From the RGV to the Ivy League**

Did we say Barrera went to *Harvard*? Yes — you read that right. Students who start at South Texas College go on to universities like Harvard and Yale, kickstarting careers as doctors, lawyers, engineers, artists, and more.

Just ask STC grad Samuel Garcia, best-selling author, political columnist for Forbes, and soon-to-be graduate from Harvard Law.

“I am well aware that I had to compete with these kids who were coming from Houston or Dallas and these massively souped-up high schools,” Garcia says. “But by taking dual enrollment from STC, I was able to get ahead of the curve and adjust to college work while still being in a small classroom setting.”

Yale University is also no stranger to South Texas College grads. Meet Victoria Quintanilla, STC alumna at Yale, pursuing a double major in history and East Asian studies.

Her secret? At STC, she had direct access to faculty mentors that gave her the confidence boost and the educational foundation she needed to make it to the Ivy League.

“I think what's really special about STC is the fact that it gave me the foundation, the soft skills particularly, to really prepare myself for not only college but just regular work life in general,” Quintanilla says.

**4. Putting First-Generation Students *First***

When parents haven’t gone to college themselves, they might not know how to support their children on their journey to higher education — and that’s okay. Many South Texas College professors were the first in *their* families to pursue a college degree — just like 70 percent of STC students.

Take Dr. Anna B. Alaniz, STC alumna and professor, for example. The first in her family to go to college, Alaniz went from being a high school dropout to earning a doctorate. She is living proof that first-generation students can earn their degrees. Alaniz doesn’t hesitate to give her heartfelt support *and* her personal cell phone number to students.

“Most of our students are first-generation college attendees,” Alaniz explains. “They don’t have that person to teach them the college culture, so they get that from us, from the instructors.”

As a teacher in the *Ascender* program, Alaniz helps provide academic, emotional, and community support for Latinx and other underserved community college students. From taking students on university tours to attending the annual motivational conference at the University of Texas-Austin, the professor is dedicated to encouraging students to further their education.

“We’re still a rural community, and we don’t have a lot of people in our community with doctoral degrees,” explains Alaniz, who says she is proud to be a living example that things can change. “For our students to see somebody from the community, a migrant student, a poor student … and then to be here for them… I allow my students to dream that anything is possible.”

STC provides numerous resources to help students succeed in the classroom and in professional fields. New students first get introduced to the college’s resources during the STC First Year Connection Seminar, which showcases the different offices and services that will assist them in their educational journey.

Centers for Learning Excellence, for example, offer academic coaching, tutoring on each campus as well as online tutoring, and workshops that prepare students for academic success. Workshop topics include time management, note-taking tips, exam-taking strategies, and ways to combat anxiety before a test.

When students are ready to find a job or internship, they can visit STC’s [College Central Network](https://www.collegecentral.com/southtexascollege/Index.cfm), which allows students to build an online portfolio, gain career advice, and connect with employers.

Students have many questions, and at STC there is always someone who can provide the answers.

**5. Careers Start Closer to Home**

With eight convenient locations, South Texas College students can attend class close to home, allowing many to commute and save a boatload on room and board. And with 35 fully online degrees and certificates and over 700 online courses to choose from, it’s no wonder that more than 6,000 online students (and counting) are turning to South Texas College for convenient degrees.

“Attending South Texas College, you’re closer to home, and this is a big advantage and money saver,” says Dr. Esmeralda Adame, STC alumna, associate professor and Assistant Dean for the Business, Public Safety, and Technology Division, and mother of future STC grads. She knows firsthand that STC made all the difference in her life.

“I knew education was the way out of poverty and to a better life,” says Dr. Adame, who was a first-generation student in engineering. STC gave her the education she needed to launch her career, and now, she shares that experience with her students — and her family.

Take Adame’s niece, Jessica, who wasn’t sure which degree to pursue until she toured STC’s manufacturing labs. While a student, Jessica Adame landed an internship with a local manufacturing company, and by the time she earned her Advanced Manufacturing degree, she was already employed.

“When she finished her internship with Regal Beloit, they hired her full time,” says Dr. Adame, a proud aunt. “She enjoys working in the manufacturing field.” When it comes to South Texas College, there is no place Adame and her family would rather be.

According to her, “I’m at the College because I believe in what we do! Being a product of South Texas College I’m a vivid example of what STC does! Our vision is regional prosperity offering a better quality of life for students and our community.”

***In-Demand Careers for STC Grads***

*Across the board, STC grads are earning degrees in high-demand industries.*

 *Number of Grads in 2019 Median Salary\*\**

Diesel Mechanics 20 **$30,227-$48,999**

Physical Therapy Assistant 19 **$74,587**

Registered Nursing 253 **$67,954**

Welding 44 **$33,010**

Paralegal 19 **$37,589**

*\*\*Local salary data from Career Coach*

1. https://finance.southtexascollege.edu/businessoffice/cashiers/pdf/estimated-19-20\_web.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.utrgv.edu/ucentral/paying-for-college/tuition-fees/index.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://uh.edu/financial/undergraduate/tuition-fees/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <https://tuition.tamu.edu/?_ga=2.49857125.296794408.1583450076-1363818062.1583450076> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <https://onestop.utexas.edu/managing-costs/cost-tuition-rates/> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Tuition figures may vary slightly based on specific degree paths. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)