**South Texas College**

CBE Marketing Piece – June 2020

**The Most Affordable Bachelor’s Nationwide … in Your Own Backyard**

Are you of the opinion that *college tuition* shouldn’t rival the cost of a new *Tesla*?

In 2019, student loan debt charged to an all-time high, outpacing both credit card and auto loans. On average, borrowers now owe $28,650 by the time they earn a degree, and in some cases, college debt can run as high as $200,000. And unlike the lithium-ion cells that power Tesla’s highest-priced Model S, that’s unsustainable.

South Texas College believes that higher education should be *accessible*, not exclusive. Students graduate with little or even *zero* debt, and according to OnlineCollegePlan.com, STC is the *number one institution in the entire country* when it comes to affordable online bachelor’s programs.

And a budget-friendly bachelor’s is just the *beginning.* You can also earn your degree *faster* and with *more* *flexibility.* At STC, grads are ditching the high price tag of higher ed with top-notch degrees for less money, less time, and even less *hassle.*

The secret is Competency-Based Education (CBE), where students apply their work experience to earn college credit, demonstrating mastery of the material with assessments and self-paced tests before moving ahead. When students finish a class before the fourth week of the term, they can immediately replace it with a new one — at no extra cost.

For a flat fee of $850 per seven-week accelerated term, STC students are invited to take as many classes as they can successfully complete, doing coursework 100 percent online and on their own time. Textbooks are provided at no extra cost, and outstanding support is available 24-7 with the click of a smartphone or device.

With competency-based education at South Texas College, higher education *doesn’t* have to come with higher debt.

*[Breakout: benefits]*

**Bachelor’s Program Earns ‘Straight As’: *Affordable, Accessible & Accelerated***

**Same Expectations, Less Expense.**

Earning a bachelor’s degree should mean earning a living wage, right away. But with college debt canceling out the higher starting salaries of so many university grads, it can take *years* to unlock potential earnings.

Fully accredited and with regular external reviews to ensure excellence, STC offers the same high-quality bachelor’s degrees available at a university. The difference? *Their cost won’t take years to clear.*

At South Texas College, tuition includes all books, and the entire program costs less than $9,700. Meanwhile, students already holding associate degrees can complete the program for less than $4,500. Compare that to $6,439, the national average for just a *single* semester of college, *not* counting course books and materials.

Don’t forget: Debt avoided *now* is salary earned *later*. At STC, it’s good to be *debt-free!*

**College Is for *Everyone.***

What do full-time employees, single parents, veterans, active duty military, returning students in their 60s, and new learners in their 20s have in common? They all have a place at STC!

At South Texas College, 62 percent of students are the very first in their families to go to college. It’s a feeling that STC faculty *understand* – because many were first-generation college students themselves. It’s part of what makes STC a supportive place, where individuals can build confidence and new careers with the support of a welcoming academic community.

Student support at STC is customized to fit your needs. Academic coaches are here to help every step of the way, from registration to graduation. By phone? By *Zoom*? By text or email? Whatever works!

In STC, you’ve found your place.

**Finish the Race … at Your Own Pace**

Choose *fast*. Choose *flexible*. Your path to a bachelor’s degree is entirely up to *you*.

Some students with an associate degree take as little as one year to complete their program, while most take up to three. With the help of an academic coach, you can customize your bachelor’s degree program to fit your work, family and social schedule. Whether you’re looking to race ahead or keep it slow and steady, your STC instructors will support you *every step of the way*.

Competency-based education (CBE) courses are flexible and convenient. If you finish a class early, you can tackle the next course during the same term for no additional fee … and walk for that diploma way ahead of schedule.

It’s true! In fact, the BAS in Organizational Leadership program has graduated more than 700 students in the past five years, with nearly *95 percent* earning their degree in *three years or* *less*.

Welcome to a *bolder* bachelor’s degree experience, where you can put your military, professional, and educational training and expertise to *work* … and receive college credit!

**Student Support Is *Always On.***

For a college experience you can take with you – anywhere, *anytime* – look no further than South Texas College. All of STC’s CBE bachelor’s programs can be finished online, so whether you’re local, remote, or active military stationed abroad, you always have the power to accelerate your educational goals. And talk about dependable: Even amid the chaos of the COVID-19 health crisis, STC’s bachelor’s programs reported *zero* problems continuing classes.

Stuck on a 3 a.m. study block? No problem. Night or day, on Zoom, phone, and email, you can get the help you need. From 24-hour support with academic tutors to library services, we’re here for you. STC also has an extensive inventory of quality educational resources online, including easy-to-use databases, Career Services, Counseling and Student Disability Services, and so much more.

Most of all, at STC, you’ll find professors who understand what you are going through and are committed to guiding you through challenges.

“We have a lot of empathy,” says Dr. Emma Miller, Organizational Leadership Program Department Chair and Assistant Dean of Bachelor Programs. Like many of her students, Miller was the first in her family to go to college, and she understands the unique challenges that they face.

“We tell our students, ‘We know what you’re going through — we have been there ourselves.’”

*[Breakout: highlight different programs]*

**In-Demand Degrees**

Among the first three community colleges in the state to offer bachelor’s degrees, STC boasts four in-demand CBE programs to facilitate successful futures.

**Computer & Information Technologies**

Because computers touch virtually every industry, the need for tech experts is booming across businesses large and small. With a Bachelor of Applied Technology in Computer & Information Technologies (BAT-CITP), STC grads are landing rewarding careers in government agencies, hospitals and health care agencies, academic institutions, and more.

STC’s BAT in Computer & Information Technologies was ranked second among the nation’s most affordable online bachelor’s programs by [OnlineU.org](http://OnlineU.org). Best of all: 71 percent of our students graduate in *three years or less*.

**Hiring in Texas…**

• *Computer and Information System Manager:* Opportunities expanding by a substantial 19% rate annually; workers earn an average of $148,390.

• *Computer Network Architect:* Expanding by 13%; workers earn $118,880.

• *Database Administrator:* Expanding by 18%; workers earn $99,080.

**Technology Management**

Technology is the backbone of our modern economy, and with a Bachelor of Applied Technology in Technology Management (BAT-TMGT), students gain the skills they need to move ahead in the competitive job market. Grads become successful managers and leaders by employing a wide variety of business, finance, technology and human resource development skills.

Beginning in Fall 2015, the BAT in Technology Management was the first bachelor’s degree program at South Texas College. The program has already produced over 700 graduates, about 85 percent of whom finished this degree in three years or less.

**Hiring in Texas…**

• *Management Analyst:* Opportunities expanding annually by a blistering rate of 21%; workers earn $86,240 annually, on average.

• *Logistics Manager:* Expanding by 17%; workers earn $94,870.

• *Administrative Services Manager:* Expanding by 18%; workers earn $92,470.

**Medical & Health Service Management**

STC students follow their passion for helping others with degrees in Medical & Health Service Management (BAT-MHSM). Grads go on to land entry- and mid-level management positions in health care and medical facilities, providing their valuable expertise in a variety of fields, including health care management, finance, medical records and privacy. Join our 330 grads and counting, 85 percent of whom have completed this degree in three years or less.

**Hiring in Texas…**

• *Medical and Health Services Manager:* Opportunities expanding by a staggering 30% annually; workers earn $97,540.

• *Administrative Services Manager:* Expanding by 18%; workers earn $92,470.

• *Operations Manager:* Expanding by 19%; workers earn $99,080.

**Organizational Leadership**

The Bachelor of Applied Science in Organizational Leadership (BAS-OL) was the first collaborative competency-based degree in the state of Texas. This program prepares the leaders of tomorrow and helps grads move up the career ladder. Students learn critical workforce skills to open up opportunities in business, government, non-profit, educational organizations and more.

In 2017, the Bachelor of Applied Science in Organizational Leadership program was named an *Example of Excelencia!* by the Excelencia in Education organization. More than 700 students have earned this degree in the past five years, and nearly 95 percent earned their bachelor’s in three years or less.

**Hiring in Texas…**

• *Financial Manager:* Expanding by a monumental 30% annually; workers earn $128,630.

• *Management Analyst:* Expanding by 21%; workers earn $86,240.

• *Human Resource Manager:* Expanding by 19%; workers earn $117,920.

*\*Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook–Texas.*

*[CBE]*

**Brighter Futures Are as Easy as *CBE*…**

According to a broad study by the American Institutes for Research, between 68 and 99 percent of CBE students sampled were adult learners, with 70 percent having some prior college experience. CBE students also enjoyed higher completion rates.

Nationwide, students in CBE programs spend less money, take less time to earn their degrees, and have better rates of completing their degrees, according to Inside Higher Ed.

The students who benefit most from CBE degrees are military service members, working adults, returning students, and those looking for a career-oriented degree, according to Affordable Colleges Online.

*[Student Highlights]*

**STC Alumni Are *Going Places*…**

**Sabrina Mendoza**

*Sabrina is a recent graduate from the Bachelor of Applied Science in Organizational Leadership program, who finished her degree in just two years, graduating magna cum laude.*

“I was a single mom, so I was trying to save pretty much any way that I could. I really liked the fact that it was online because I was still working… It gave you that flexibility, especially for someone in my situation.

“I probably would have taken two classes in a regular semester, but instead, I was able to take four, which would be like a full-time student — but because I’m working and I have my kid, that would have been hard for me to do.”

**Mario Jaramillo**

*Mario became a Business Coordinator for the Environmental Health & Safety Department at Texas A&M University after earning his Bachelor of Applied Technology in Technology Management at South Texas College in Fall*

*2015.*

“The bachelor program at South Texas College has instilled the core values and discipline that built a strong foundation to succeed in my professional career.”

**Daniel Elizondo**

*Daniel is a Senior Financial Analyst for South Texas Health Systems and a 2017 graduate of STC’s Bachelor of Applied Technology in Medical & Health Services Management program.*

“Coming back to school was a very difficult decision; however, STC made it very easy, and it has been a wonderful and rewarding experience. Now, after obtaining my degree, I have been able to expand my professional horizon.”

**Cynthia R. Hernandez**

*Cynthia is a Graduate Admissions Advisor at National American University and an alumna of the Bachelor of Applied Science in Organizational Leadership class of 2016.*

“The transition from my associate degree to the bachelor program was rather smooth. The academic coaches, advisors and student success specialists were very helpful in assisting with the transition and offering support throughout the program.

Earning my bachelor’s degree in Organizational Leadership from South Texas College has been one of the most important decisions I have made.”

**Rogelio Gonzalez**

*Rogelio is a Technology Teacher for the Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District and a 2009 graduate of STC’s Bachelor of Applied Technology in Computer & Information Technologies.*

“With the knowledge and skills gained from the Bachelor of Applied Technology in CIT, I was able to greatly expand and improve my technical and programming skills and apply them at an enterprise level.

“Overall, the CIT Program has created the opportunity for me to grow as a professional and to share my knowledge with others.”

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