

LC increases in-person instruction in summer and fall

Laredo College's fitting slogan of "taking it to the next level" rings truer than ever with a phased return to campus, beginning with hybrid and in-person instruction starting in the summer and continuing in the fall. Students will have more options to choose from for face-to-face, hybrid and online courses that best suit their needs.

The college provides students with a wide selection of available academic, technical and vocational programs. We will be offering more to students, more choices of class delivery methods, more financial aid opportunities and more options to create a degree or certificate completion plan that aligns with their career aspirations.

"We are back, even though we were never truly gone since we continued offering face-to-face classes in select health sciences, technical and vocational programs," Laredo College President Dr. Ricardo J. Solis affirmed. "Over the past year, our college community has been diligently working and preparing to welcome back students to our campuses. We are excited to get an early start with increased in-person courses in the summer as we prepare for the ultimate in-person instruction experience in the fall."

Laredo College's rigorous academic standards have remained intact despite recent events. Since the pandemic started, the college has garnered multiple accolades and distinctions, being recognized as a high-caliber institution of higher education. LC was ranked as the top community college in Texas by BestColleges.com.

This top ranking is in addition to our Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) Program being named one of the #1 programs in the nation and our designation as the community college with the state's lowest graduate debt.

LC has a proven track record of quickly adapting to changes, as witnessed by our seamless transition to online learning. We are now in the process of shifting back to face-to-face classes. As part of this gradual transition back to an on-campus experience, college libraries and learning centers are hosting "Walk-in Wednesdays" this spring. Every Wednesday from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., students can stop by to use a computer, study or seek in-person tutoring without scheduling an appointment. They will have to call once they get to the door to be escorted in and undergo COVID-19 protocols.

Health and safety

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Laredo College has been proactive in its efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus and keep students, employees and the community-at-large safe, beginning with the creation of the Health and Safety Operations Center (HSOC).

The center has been a critical part of our health and safety strategy. The highly trained staff has been especially effective

in preventing the transmission of the virus throughout our campuses. There have been no cases where a student has been infected as a result of taking on-campus classes.

HSOC will continue its mission of keeping the Laredo College community safe. Part of their primary duties will be making arrangements for testing and vaccine administrations, conducting contact tracing, cleaning and disinfecting, providing personal protective equipment, ensuring that proper signage is posted throughout our campuses and other activities and operations vital to ensuring the health and safety of all college members.

President Solis commended the entire Laredo College community's coordinated efforts. They have all worked closely with local, state and national health authorities to create a plan for the college's full return to campus while continuing strict enforcement of health and safety protocols to keep everyone safe.

"Our success in mitigating the spread of COVID-19 is a direct result of a mix of collaborative strategic planning, bold leadership and impeccable execution by our Board of Trustees, administrators, faculty and staff. They have done an outstanding job under strenuous circumstances. Together,



we have reconceptualized what on-campus instruction and interactions will look like in the era of COVID-19," Dr. Solis said. Students can rest assured that their safety is of utmost priority. Although health and safety protocols will be clearly outlined on student handbooks and syllabi, HSOC staff will be available to answer any COVID-19 and other safety and health questions through their call center. Faculty and staff are also being trained to assist students and ensure that safety measures are followed.

Moreover, the health and safety team has been working with faculty and administration to coordinate class schedules to avoid large groups in the hallways and give staff ample time to clean and disinfect. Classroom and building capacities will be monitored and limited, while high-traffic areas where large crowds might congregate will be blocked off. HSOC will also conduct routine building assessments to ensure students remain socially distant.

Additionally, Laredo College has testing sites at both campuses—the Gateway Community Health Center clinic at the South Campus and a Curative location at the Ft. McIntosh Campus—offering free testing services for LC employees and students.

Laredo College celebrated National Library Week

Librarians worldwide joined forces to embark on an annual celebration that lasted an entire week. Laredo College was delighted to commemorate our very own staff whose services extend far beyond the historical buildings at both campuses.

Following this year's theme, "Welcome to your library!" the Harold R. Yearly Library and the Senator Judith Zaffirini Library celebrated National Library Week by welcoming students to learn about the extensive opportunities both libraries offer.

The celebration began with numerous positive messages and tokens of appreciation for LC librarians in celebration of their commitment, dedication and for continuing to meet the needs of those who use the library by expanding and adapting through adversity during this unprecedented year. LC also celebrated their value by showcasing amazing photos, videos and graphics through social media platforms.

Not only was LC excited to showcase their exemplary employees, but the employees themselves hosted numerous activities for students to enjoy. Some of the activities included workshops and interactive virtual events.

"Librarians were beyond excited to celebrate with the Palomino community. They are also educators that prepare others for lifelong journeys of knowledge," LC President Dr. Ricardo J. Solis said.

April marked another year where the 15 LC library employees, who have a combined 202 years of experience, will continue to offer bibliographic instruction and quality services to the community.

Laredo College Libraries Director Cynthia Rodriguez stated that the services and resources that our libraries offer are critical to the students' past, present and future academic success.

On behalf of each member of our Laredo College Library staff, we would like to welcome you to your library!



April was Community College Month!

April is Community College Month, and Laredo College joined this celebration to help increase awareness of the importance of community colleges and the direct impact that these institutions have on the economic development of a specific region. Community colleges around the nation allow many people to transform their lives through training and affordable quality education. Laredo College is not an exception to this; our graduates obtain the necessary skills and training needed to join the workforce or transfer to a four-year university.

"Colleges are the root that impacts education significantly and the city's economic development," LC President Dr. Ricardo J. Solis said. "We must continue to provide services to a diverse population and prepare our community with excellent academics, workforce training and innovative courses that are constantly evolving."

Our college is an exemplary model of how a community college positively impacts the lives of our students and our community by offering affordable and quality education for everyone. LC offers a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), diverse associate degree programs, one-year degree programs and various certifications. These high-quality, accredited programs are a staple of our extensive and convenient online, hybrid and on-campus curriculum, which is available for everyone in our community.



Making a difference in many students' lives, LC is ranked the #1 community college in Texas, the #1 higher education institution with the lowest graduate debt and the #1 nursing program in the nation. Employees' passion, commitment and dedication have made LC a world-class institution of higher education. The Laredo College Board of Trustees has provided their unwavering support, which has made these successes possible.

LC's administration has broken all barriers by continuously collaborating with various entities at the local, state, national and international levels. These partnerships have led to more opportunities for our students and the South Texas region.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Laredo College continued preparing capable professionals to enhance the South Texas region's economic growth and competitiveness. It is vital to LC that, despite any circumstances, the institution adapts and allows students to continue progressing with their degree plans and academic success.

Laredo College invited the community to learn about its history, achievements, services and academic opportunities. This annual celebration aimed to motivate and encourage individuals to begin a community college career at an institution like Laredo College.