

ACADEMIC MASTER PLAN

2024-2027



COM
College of the Mainland®

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Who We Are.....	4
Our Structure	5
College and Community Demographics	6
Community College Impact.....	8
The Plan	8
Serving Our Students	9
Serving Our People.....	11
Serving Our Community.....	12
Data-Informed Decision Making and Continuous Improvement	21
Enhancing Academic Program Review	21
Conclusion	22
References	23

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

College of the Mainland's (COM) 2024–2027 Academic Master Plan (AMP) presents a strategic vision focused on expanding access, enhancing student success and aligning academic programs with industry needs. The prior AMP laid a strong foundation by broadening workforce training and modernizing facilities to better support learning. Building on recent achievements and addressing community needs, this plan prioritizes data-informed decision-making, innovative academic support and strategic partnerships to prepare students for successful careers or further education.

The College of the Mainland Academic Master Plan for 2024-2027 aims to:

- Expand instruction and student services in alignment with COM's mission, vision, values and strategic priorities as a comprehensive community college.
- Support enrollment, persistence and student completion/transfer for both degree- and non-degree-seekers.
- Strengthen partnerships with K-12 schools, colleges and universities, businesses and government organizations.
- Promote continuous improvement through evidence-based teaching and learning practices.
- Enhance college planning for curriculum development, course scheduling, resource allocation, technology upgrades, facilities, revenue diversification and service expansion.
- Analyze the post-completion performance of both transfer and workforce students, using data on career placement, continued education and earnings as key measures of institutional effectiveness and student success.
- Define strategies to achieve AMP goals.

WHO WE ARE

College of the Mainland (COM) plays a vital role in serving the educational and workforce development needs of Texas City and the broader Galveston County area. Established in 1966, COM provides critical training programs that align with the needs of regional industries such as healthcare, public service, petrochemical technology and engineering while also preparing students for academic transfer to four-year institutions. The College's ongoing facility improvements, supported by both the 2018 and 2023 bond projects, ensure that students have access to modern learning environments that foster both career readiness and higher education aspirations. Through partnerships with local independent school districts—including Dickinson, Hitchcock, Santa Fe, Texas City, Friendswood ISD and parts of Clear Creek ISD—COM offers dual credit and early college programs, allowing high school students to earn college credit while preparing for university transfer or workforce training programs.

The College of the Mainland (COM) service area encompasses a diverse industry base, including petrochemical manufacturing, healthcare, maritime and port operations, aerospace, logistics and public service. The region is home to major employers such as refineries and chemical plants along the Gulf Coast, hospitals and medical centers, the Port of Texas City and NASA's Johnson Space Center. Additionally, growing industries in construction, education and emergency services create ongoing demand for a skilled workforce. These sectors drive the local economy and require well-trained professionals to support expansion and innovation.

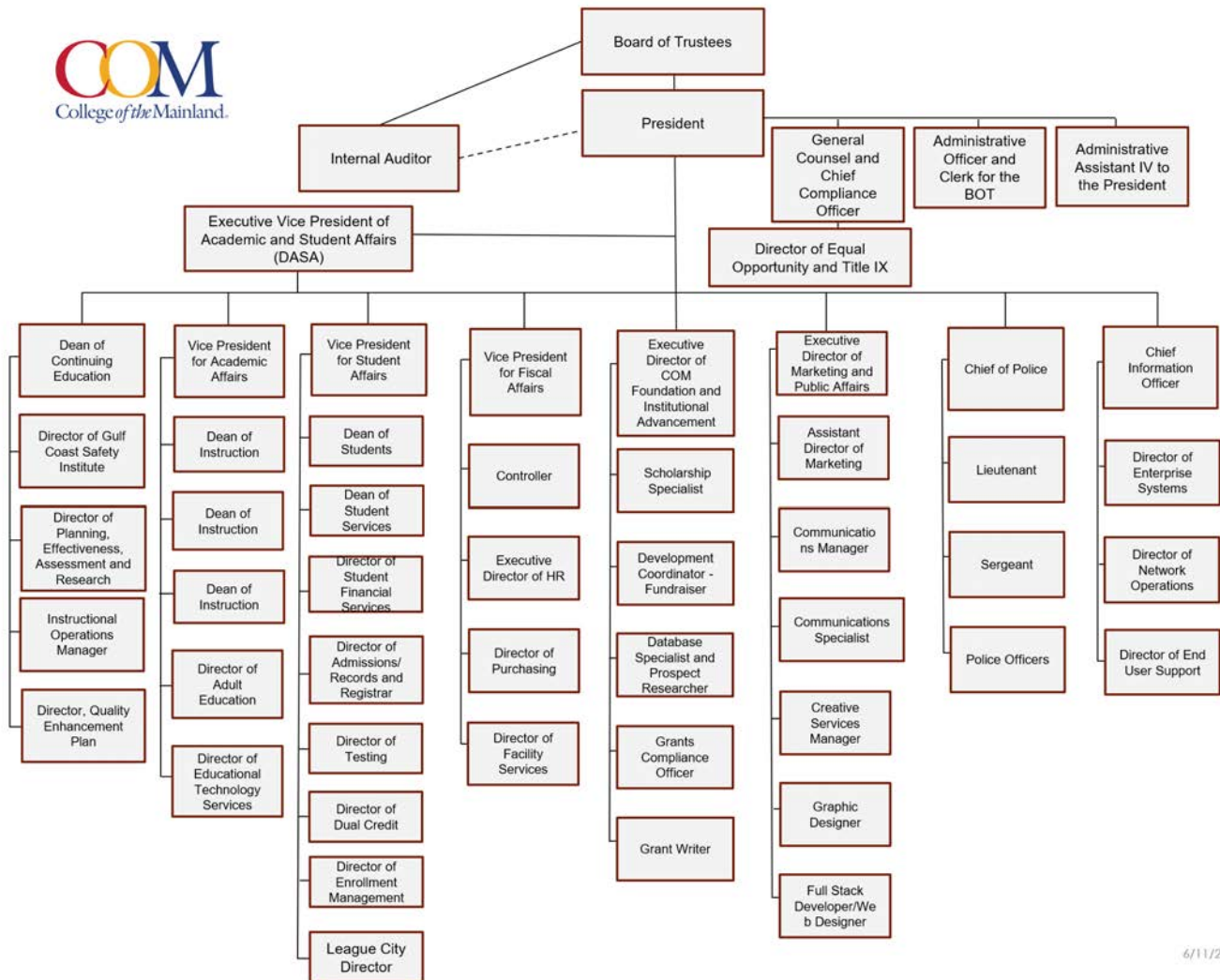
COM's commitment to workforce development is evident in its investment in new and expanded facilities that directly support industry needs while also strengthening academic pathways for students planning to continue their education. The new Public Safety Careers Building will enhance training opportunities for law enforcement, fire protection and emergency medical services, ensuring that first responders are well-equipped to serve the community. Furthermore, the new Corporate Training Center will provide dedicated space to support industry and community partners by offering customized training

opportunities. At the same time, the new Library & Learning Center has been designed to offer expanded classroom space for social and behavioral sciences, English and humanities disciplines. Additionally, it features a large auditorium and enhanced study areas, benefiting both students and the broader community.

Beyond its role as an academic institution, COM serves as a hub for community engagement, economic development and university transfer preparation. With a strong emphasis on academic excellence, COM provides students with the coursework and advising support needed to seamlessly transfer to universities, ensuring they can continue their education and achieve their long-term career goals. The combination of workforce training, university transfer programs and modernized facilities underscores COM's dedication to meeting the evolving needs of students, employers and the local community, making it a cornerstone of opportunity, growth and innovation for the residents of Texas City, La Marque, Dickinson, Hitchcock, Santa Fe, League City, Friendswood (partially), Bacliff and San Leon.

OUR STRUCTURE

Below is the College's organizational chart visually depicting leadership roles, departmental relationships and reporting lines, helping faculty, staff and stakeholders understand their responsibilities and points of contact. It also aids in planning by showing how different units collaborate to achieve institutional goals. This structure enhances communication and promotes operational effectiveness across the institution.



6/11/2025

COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

The analysis below of student demographics and economic disadvantage—defined by eligibility for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), which provides free or reduced-price meals to low-income families—across local Independent School Districts (ISDs) is essential for shaping the College’s academic programs and student support services. Furthermore, examining median household income and bachelor’s degree attainment rates within the service area provides valuable insights into the educational and economic challenges prospective students face. Understanding these trends enables COM to develop targeted initiatives that support college access, affordability and completion, particularly for underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students.

Tables 1.1 and 1.2 present student demographics and economic disadvantage statistics across local Independent School Districts (ISDs) for the 2023–2024 academic year. Statewide, 62.2% of Texas public school students were classified as economically disadvantaged, a figure exceeded by half of COM’s service area and 75% of the College’s taxing district. Table 1.3 further highlights COM’s diverse student population, showcasing enrollment trends over the past three years.

Table 1.1 Independent School District demographics (Source: Texas Education Agency – <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/adhocrpt/adste.html>)

2023-2024	District	African American	Hispanic	White	Asian	Other
Texas City ISD	Tax District	29.2	46.7	18.4	0.4	5.3
Hitchcock ISD	Tax District	37.9	36.3	21.3	0.6	3.9
Dickinson ISD	Tax District	15.2	52.6	26.9	1.8	3.5
Santa Fe ISD	Tax District	1.3	27.3	68.3	0.61	2.5
Friendswood ISD	Service District	1.8	21.5	64.8	6.6	5.3
Clear Creek ISD	Service District	7.7	34.8	43.5	8.6	5.4

Note: The city of La Marque is in Texas City ISD.

Table 1.2 Statistics in local Independent School Districts (Source: Texas Education Agency – <https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/adhocrpt/adstc.html>)

2023-2024	District	Percent Economically Disadvantaged	SAT Average Score
Texas City ISD	Tax District	82.8	948
Hitchcock ISD	Tax District	82.6	914
Dickinson ISD	Tax District	66.5	965
Santa Fe ISD	Tax District	52.4	1030
Friendswood ISD	Service District	13.22	1175
Clear Creek ISD	Service District	37.3	1138

Table 1.3 COM three-year enrollment trends

Term	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	Race Unknown	Mult-racial	Total
Fall 2022	1,759	666	1,639	142	23	2	118	135	4,484
Fall 2023	1,870	733	1,845	141	23	2	187	160	4,961
Fall 2024	1,929	916	2,071	146	30	8	212	186	5,498

Data Source: COM CBM001/OC1 Fall 2022, 2023, 2024 Accessed 01-31-25

The tables illustrate COM’s diverse student population, while Figure 1.1 below highlights the correlation between degree attainment and median income underscoring the College’s vital role in fostering its students’ upward mobility and financial success. The figure also demonstrates additional support for the need for an Academic Master Plan that serves as the blueprint for the College to enhance our current programs and services and develop vital pathways to completion, via credit and continuing education pathways.

Figure 1.1 Median household income and bachelor’s completion in service area
(Source: U.S. Census Bureau)



COMMUNITY COLLEGE IMPACT

Since the 1970s, community colleges have played a crucial role in workforce development, offering occupational certificates, degree programs and transfer pathways to four-year institutions under an open-admissions policy. As noted by the data below, community colleges are key contributors to higher education and workforce development (Ma & Baum, 2016). In the U.S.:

- Over 50% of new healthcare professionals and nearly 80% of first responders graduate from community colleges (College Board, 2008).
- More than half of all African American, Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic and Native American undergraduates attend community colleges.
- Almost 46% of bachelor's degree earners attended a community college at some point in their education.

The broad mission of a community college can confuse some students who are unsure if their pathway is to find employment or transfer to a four-year institution (Beach, 2011). Community

colleges recognized this ambiguity and began to address this through guided pathways. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and several partners began work on the Guided Pathways Project in 2015 (American Association of Community Colleges, n.d.). The project aimed to increase student completion of high-quality credentials, transfer and job

attainment in high-value career areas. The project endeavored to meet these goals by providing clear pathways through four dimensions – clarify paths to students' end goals, help students choose and enter a pathway, help students stay on a path and ensure that students are learning

(American Association of Community Colleges, n.d.). As a result, this project set a foundation to uniquely position community colleges to meet the expectations of the state and federal government. COM has recommitted to the Guided Pathways Project through the College's QEP, Commit to Complete. COM is committed to:

- Establishing clear academic and career pathways that provide students with structured course sequences, transfer guidance and embedded credentials.
- Creating program maps for both full-time and part-time students to ensure flexibility and efficiency in degree completion.
- Utilizing meta-majors to help students explore academic options while staying on track toward degree attainment.
- Ensuring advisors and faculty receive training on how to use technology to monitor and guide students toward completion.
- Developing an institution-wide data dashboard that tracks enrollment, retention and graduation trends, ensuring data transparency and accountability across all departments.

By implementing these strategies, College of the Mainland will create a sustainable, student-centered academic experience, improving persistence, retention and completion rates while aligning with workforce demands.

THE PLAN

This plan positions COM as a leading comprehensive community college, dedicated to accessibility, academic success and workforce readiness. College of the Mainland is committed to creating clear pathways that empower students to achieve their academic and professional goals. This commitment is demonstrated through continuous improvement in student onboarding, expansion of flexible learning models—including fully online programs, short-term and micro-credentials, and credit for prior learning—and strengthened strategic partnerships with ISDs, business and industry leaders and higher education institutions.

“...community colleges are key contributors to higher education and workforce development.”

Many individuals from across the College and community we serve worked collaboratively to develop this plan. During the Fall 2024 semester, input was gathered by Academic Affairs deans, Student Affairs, Educational Technology, Office of Planning, Effectiveness, Assessment and Research (OPEAR) and Continuing Education to develop the foundational information for this document. In Spring 2025, the College solicited input, feedback and recommendations from the Board of Trustees, COM faculty and staff. The plan was further disseminated to students, businesses and community partners for input and feedback. Input and feedback from key stakeholders were reviewed and incorporated into the final version of this AMP.

SERVING OUR STUDENTS

To support academic achievement and improve retention, completion and transfer, the 2024–2027 Academic Master Plan emphasizes streamlined pathways and comprehensive support services. The initiatives and strategies identified in this section center around a strengthened Guided Pathways framework, defined meta-majors – a broad academic pathway that groups related fields of study under a general area of interest and holistic academic support structures. By focusing on reducing excess credits and accelerating time to completion, COM is committed to equipping students with clear, efficient paths to reach their educational goals. Additionally, COM will enhance student success and retention through well-defined academic and workforce pathways, robust support systems and proactive interventions.

Improve Student Enrollment and Onboarding

COM has improved the enrollment process but must continuously refine onboarding procedures—including application, advising, testing, financial aid, orientation and registration—by committing to:

- Implement a Customer Relations Management System (CRM) to strengthen recruitment efforts and streamline the entire student journey, providing a more personalized and efficient experience for each student population.
- Develop career focused pathways with “credit for prior learning” that emphasize “career

progression,” connecting adult and continuing education on-ramps to credit certificate and degree programs.

- Provide early and on-going career guidance and exploration to students beyond the point of initial registration to support students’ long-term academic and professional goals.
- Establish “easy to understand” meta-majors and clearly defined pathways to completion.
- Ensure meta-majors minimize extraneous credits when students change programs laterally and within a given meta-major.
- Leverage technology for a seamless experience by using data-informed insights and technology to simplify and automate the enrollment process, improving accessibility, reducing barriers and ensuring a smoother onboarding experience from start to finish.

Enhance Online Learning and Accessibility

COM will empower faculty by creating a more dynamic and supportive online learning experience for students. Additionally, COM will enhance student access and ensure compliance with accessibility standards, fostering an inclusive learning environment through initiatives such as:

- Designing user-friendly interfaces for COM’s learning management system (LMS) and related systems to address the needs of COM’s diverse population of learners, such as:
 - o Clear, intuitive navigation minimizes confusion and helps students locate coursework, assignments and resources quickly.
 - o The incorporation of videos, transcripts and interactive elements to support diverse learning styles and varying levels of digital literacy.
- Partnering with Student Affairs to provide training on using digital tools effectively, ensuring all students can fully engage with online and hybrid courses.

These measures will align with COM’s commitment to empowering all students to succeed.

Expanding Experiential Learning and Workforce Preparation

In alignment with COM's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), Commit to Complete, the College endeavors to embed more work experience into instruction through experiential learning. Experiential learning is essential for equipping students with the skills and experiences needed for career success. Experiential learning provides hands-on, real-world learning experiences that allow students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings. By emphasizing learning through direct experience, we can foster industry-relevant skills and enhance students' understanding of workplace dynamics and current trends. Furthermore, experiential learning enhances outcomes for all students—whether workforce-bound or transfer-focused—by fostering critical thinking (Bhuttah et al., 2024; Miettinen, 2000). Experiential learning encompasses a range of activities, including internships, apprenticeships, research projects, co-ops, volunteering, field experiences and hands-on projects. COM will increase the frequency and quality of experiential learning opportunities while streamlining access to them.

By focusing on immersive experiences, such as simulations, workshops and project-based learning, continuing education courses can also provide opportunities for professional growth beyond traditional academic pathways. This approach is especially valuable as it bridges theoretical knowledge with practical application in a dynamic and flexible environment.

To achieve this, the College will:

- Offer student participation in career exploration events through experiential and service learning.
- Implement comprehensive support systems that include financial assistance, mentorship programs and partnerships with diverse industries to ensure all students can participate.
- Increase paid employment opportunities for students like apprenticeships, cooperatives, internships and clinicals.
- Expand partnership opportunities between COM programs and business and industry.

- Ensure implementation of effective advisory committee processes to support student learning and provide a highly skilled workforce for our local community.
- Provide workshops, peer mentoring and resources to equip faculty with the skills needed to design and facilitate effective experiential learning opportunities.
- Increase frequency and quality of field experiences and academic research opportunities.
- Leverage shared resources in simulation technology tools like 3D virtual dissection software (e.g., Anatomage) to teach continuing education Allied Health students about human anatomy. These experiences provide skill acquisition in a practical, interactive environment to prepare for careers or further education in healthcare through Continuing Medical Education (CME).

Strengthen Transfer Pathways

Additionally, the College will provide clear transfer pathways by:

- Expanding embedded tutoring and supplemental instruction to support student success in key gateway and corequisite courses like Math and English.
- Developing co-enrollment programs with colleges and universities.
- Creating programmatic transfer maps to our top transfer institutions.
- Partnering with four-year institutions to offer courses on COM's campus allowing students to complete their bachelor's degree at COM.
- Providing clearly defined stackable pathways from continuing education to credit.

Broaden Degree and Credential Opportunities

Lastly, COM will expand academic offerings to meet industry demands and student needs by:

- Creating additional Bachelor of Applied Arts and Science (BAAS) programs to provide cost-effective four-year degree options.
- Developing new workforce programs based on labor market data.

- Exploring micro-credentials and short-term certifications for upskilling and reskilling the workforce.
- Expanding distance education with fully online and hybrid programs.
- Enhancing military and veteran support services, including credit for prior learning and career-aligned pathways.
- Strengthening the Honors Program by providing rigorous coursework, research and leadership development.
- Improving Adult Basic Education (ABE) pathways by integrating Texas High School Equivalency (GED), ESL and workforce preparation programs into structured credential pathways.
- Utilizing student feedback to refine course schedules and improve instructional support.
- Identifying benchmark courses to track instructional quality and student performance in subsequent courses.
- Monitoring post-completion student performance to measure institutional success for both transfer and workforce students.

Through these strategic initiatives, COM is committed to enhancing student success, expanding educational opportunities and strengthening regional workforce development.

SERVING OUR PEOPLE

In today's rapidly evolving educational landscape, supporting and cultivating outstanding faculty is essential for the success of higher education institutions. To achieve teaching excellence, colleges must invest in faculty development, provide robust support systems and create a culture that values and rewards effective teaching. Both individual educators and institutional leadership play vital roles in this endeavor. Therefore, the College will:

- Enhance faculty training programs focused on effective teaching strategies, student engagement and discipline-specific workshops, particularly for 8-week and hybrid courses.
- Establish a comprehensive mentoring program for new faculty, facilitating integration into the

institution and promoting professional growth.

- Create spaces for faculty to discuss barriers to student success and share effective strategies for overcoming challenges.
- Create professional development programs that empower faculty and staff to identify and implement process improvements.
- Promote a mindset of innovation and adaptability, encouraging departments to pilot new approaches to teaching, learning and student support.

In collaboration with Academic and Student Affairs leadership, Educational Technology Services (Ed Tech) will offer workshops, webinars and on-demand resources focusing on:

- Effective use of educational technology tools for student engagement.
- Strategies for designing hybrid and online courses to maximize learning outcomes.
- Best practices in integrating emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Augmented and Virtual Reality (AR/VR).

To maximize student success in hybrid and online learning, COM will prioritize faculty development focused on optimized course delivery. EdTech, in collaboration with the faculty-led Distance Education Committee, will identify, pilot and implement LMS enhancements that demonstrably improve student engagement, accessibility and effective online pedagogy. Potential tools include gamification modules, integrated communication platforms, accessibility checkers and analytics dashboards. The Distance Education Committee will also play a key role in developing and promoting best practices for online teaching.

Additionally, EdTech and Student Affairs will partner to develop and integrate engaging, accessible multimedia resources within the LMS, focusing on streamlined student onboarding and comprehensive support services. This collaboration will produce accessible video tutorials, interactive guides and virtual workshops covering essential topics such as LMS navigation, financial aid access, advising connections and campus resource utilization. This proactive approach empowers students with

the knowledge and skills to thrive in online and hybrid learning.

COM is committed to leadership development as it ensures the continuous growth and sustainability of institutional excellence. By cultivating strong leaders at all levels, COM can foster a culture of innovation, collaboration and student-centered decision-making. Effective leadership development programs equip faculty and staff with the skills needed to navigate complex challenges, drive institutional improvements and mentor future leaders. Investing in leadership development also enhances employee engagement and retention, strengthens succession planning and promotes a shared vision for academic success. The College will:

- Implement a structured succession planning program to identify and develop future leaders within the college. This initiative will include mentorship opportunities, leadership training and career development pathways to ensure continuity in key roles and institutional knowledge retention.
- Establish a comprehensive training program for newly appointed supervisors to enhance their leadership, communication and management skills. The training will cover essential topics such as performance management, conflict resolution, employee engagement and institutional policies to support their transition into leadership roles effectively.

Through these professional development opportunities, faculty and staff will be empowered to enhance their instructional practices, streamline processes and drive innovation. Educational Technology Services will also provide ongoing support through one-on-one consultations and technical assistance, ensuring continuous growth and adaptability in teaching and learning.

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

COM is vital in supporting our community by collaborating with businesses, government agencies and community organizations to identify workforce gaps and create relevant training programs. By

developing programs and short-term training in high-demand fields, we can empower individuals in our community with skills that lead to well-paying jobs while boosting the local economy. COM is uniquely positioned to provide students with flexible scheduling, affordable tuition and support services, ensuring access for working adults and underserved populations.

Identifying New Programs

As a vital educational institution in the Gulf Coast region, the College prioritizes programs that provide students with opportunities for a family-sustaining wage. COM has identified a family sustaining wage for the community we serve based on the MIT Living Wage Calculator (2025), as \$36.26 per hour or an annual income of \$75,420. COM is committed to aligning its academic programs with the demands of the local labor market to ensure graduates can secure stable, well-paying careers. To identify potential awards and credentials, the College relies on two key data sources. The first is LightCast, a labor market analysis software that provides insights into workforce trends. The second is the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's High-Skill High-Growth Occupations (HSHG) list, which highlights credentials of value in the community and supports strong career trajectories, as outlined in HB8.

In addition to labor market demand and wage potential, several other factors impact the development of new academic programs, including:

Facilities and Equipment Requirements – Ensuring adequate infrastructure and technology to support new programs.

Funding Needs and Sources – Securing financial resources to sustain program operations.

Ability to Recruit Qualified Faculty – Hiring instructors with the necessary expertise and credentials.

Federal and State Policy and Regulations – Complying with accreditation standards and legislative mandates.

Community Impact – Evaluating how new programs contribute to regional economic and workforce development.

By considering these factors, the College ensures that its programs align with industry needs and provide students with meaningful, high-quality educational opportunities that lead to well-paying, in-demand careers.

Bachelor's Degree

COM is exploring the launch of a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) in Operations Management to provide a seamless pathway for students in technical fields to complete a four-year degree and access family-sustaining wages. Many Associate of Applied Science (AAS) graduates face challenges transferring credits to traditional

bachelor's programs due to misalignment with standard degree requirements. This program offers flexible entry points, allowing students from healthcare, industrial careers, information technology and business to apply their existing credits without losing progress.

The BAAS in Operations Management

equips students with leadership, management and communication skills essential for career advancement while meeting labor market demands for high-paying jobs. With a focus on economic mobility, COM is committed to developing programs that support stable, well-paying careers and address local workforce needs. Its flexible structure makes higher education more accessible, particularly for working professionals seeking leadership roles.

“COM is committed to developing programs that support stable, well-paying careers and address local workforce needs.”

Based on the data presented in Table 1.4, the College will explore the development of a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) in Operations Management to meet the growing demand for skilled professionals in this field. Table 1.5 further supports this initiative, listing Operations Managers as a high-skill, high-growth occupation in the Gulf Coast region. Both data sources identify General and Operations Managers as the fastest-growing management roles, emphasizing the need for educational programs that prepare students for career advancement. While the data also highlights other career fields with higher wage opportunities, the Operations Management program reaches a broader audience by offering a versatile skill set applicable across multiple industries.

Because Texas community colleges have a limited number of bachelor's degree offerings, COM is partnering with four-year institutions to develop co-enrollment and 2+2 pathways. Additionally, the College will collaborate with four-year institutions for students to complete their bachelor's degree close to home by offering partner institution courses on the COM campus. Some pathways identified for this initiative are education, criminal justice and business. These initiatives enhance regional workforce development, address industry needs and increase access to higher education. By expanding bachelor's degree options, COM provides a seamless transition for students beyond an associate degree. These partnerships reflect COM's commitment to student success and the local community's educational advancement.

Table 1.4 Fastest Growing Occupations – Bachelor's Degree – Galveston, Brazoria, Harris Counties
(Source LightCast)

Occupation	2024 Jobs	2034 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2024- 2034)	% Change	2023 Median Hourly Earnings
Registered Nurses	55,874	61,955	6,080	11%	\$45.51
General and Operations Managers	90,759	95,246	4,486	5%	\$49.27
Software Developers	17,939	21,981	4,042	23%	\$61.80
Medical and Health Services Managers	10,578	13,494	2,916	28%	\$53.25
Financial Managers	13,581	15,605	2,024	15%	\$80.63
Accountants and Auditors	24,235	26,140	1,905	8%	\$39.88
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	9,417	11,059	1,642	17%	\$30.73
Human Resources Specialists	15,376	16,879	1,503	10%	\$30.82
Management Analysts	9,192	10,602	1,410	15%	\$43.08
Project Management Specialists	26,625	27,936	1,311	5%	\$47.32
Computer and Information Systems Managers	10,437	11,708	1,271	12%	\$80.16
Business Operations Specialists, All Other	13,912	15,131	1,220	9%	\$38.66
Data Scientists	4,674	5,860	1,186	25%	\$47.87
Construction Managers	13,029	13,928	899	7%	\$48.64
Logisticians	5,245	6,021	776	15%	\$35.18
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	4,250	5,010	760	18%	\$28.21
Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	7,315	8,065	750	10%	\$25.38
Computer Systems Analysts	8,872	9,602	730	8%	\$55.48
Computer Occupations, All Other	10,643	11,363	720	7%	\$50.94
Managers, All Other	9,913	10,608	696	7%	\$66.66

Table 1.6 2023 High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations Excerpt: Management – Bachelor's Degree
(Source: Gulf Coast Workforce Board – https://www.wrksolutions.com/documents/individuals/faj/highskillprofile/high-skill_high-growth_occupations.pdf)

Management Occupations	2020 Jobs	2030 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2020- 2030)	% Change	2021 Median Hourly Earnings
General and Operations Managers	56,142	68,281	12,139	21.6%	\$46.80
Marketing Managers	4,592	5,450	858	18.7%	\$61.23
Computer and Information Systems Managers	6,190	7,372	1,182	19.1%	\$76.66
Financial Managers	12,690	16,251	3,561	28.1%	\$73.10
Industrial Production Managers	4,360	5,233	873	20.0%	\$60.67
Purchasing Managers	2,036	2,424	388	19.1%	\$62.01
Human Resources Managers	2,918	3,481	563	19.3%	\$61.17
Construction Managers	19,223	23,445	4,222	22.0%	\$47.58
Architectural and Engineering Managers	5,445	6,480	1,035	19.0%	\$79.69
Medical and Health Service Managers	9,282	13,369	4,087	44.0%	\$49.93

Associate Degree and Short-Term Credentials

Based on the data presented in Table 1.7 and 1.8 below, there is a clear opportunity for the College to expand its existing medical imaging programs by offering a Diagnostic Medical Sonography pathway. This expansion would address the growing demand in the healthcare sector for qualified sonographers and provide students with a specialized career path in medical imaging. Additional identified opportunities to branch from the AAS Radiologic Technology Program for growth include:

- Offer a Limited-Scope Radiologic Technology training program. This program could also include additional training and certification opportunities in medical assisting, phlebotomy and EKG technician partnering with COM's current programs.
- Partner with our local Independent School Districts, which offer Imaging Programs, to offer a step-up program. This program allows high school students who graduate with a Limited-Scope Radiologic Technology license to step into a 12-month program to achieve Full-Scope Radiologic Technology licensure, certification and registration. Seek Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) accreditation for this program.
- Offer advanced modality didactic training through COM's continuing education department (24 hours of education). Courses could include CT, MRI, Mammography, Bone Density, Breast Sonography, Cardiac Interventional Radiography, Vascular Sonography and Vascular Interventional Radiography.
- Offer advanced modality programs (didactic and clinical courses) leading to advanced modality certification by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (12-month program). Courses could include CT, MRI, Mammography, Bone Density, Breast Sonography, Cardiac Interventional Radiography, Vascular Sonography and Vascular Interventional Radiography.
- Offer a one-year full-time intensive Nuclear Medicine program for Registered Radiology Technologists who wish to earn a Nuclear Medicine credential (CNMT and/or RT (N)).

Additionally, the data reveals a regional need for engineering technology programs. These fields are experiencing significant workforce shortages and present a valuable opportunity for the College to diversify its offerings and meet the needs of local industries.

Table 1.7 Fastest Growing Occupations – Associate Degree (Source: LightCast)

Occupation	2024 Jobs	2034 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2024- 2034)	% Change	2023 Median Hourly Earnings
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	7,411	8,652	1,241	17%	\$29.31
Veterinary Technologists and Technicians	2,555	3,067	512	20%	\$18.32
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	4,240	4,723	483	11%	\$37.71
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	8,050	8,530	481	6%	\$16.83
Physical Therapist Assistants	1,608	2,037	429	27%	\$37.18
Respiratory Therapists	2,635	3,036	401	15%	\$38.28
Dental Hygienists	1,620	1,954	334	21%	\$44.50
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	1,787	2,109	321	18%	\$40.25
Web Developers	1,350	1,564	213	16%	\$45.75
Occupational Therapy Assistants	1,060	1,260	200	19%	\$35.34
Medical Equipment Repairers	1,659	1,846	187	11%	\$24.50
Web and Digital Interface Designers	904	1,091	187	21%	\$39.79
Computer Network Support Specialists	3,149	3,288	139	4%	\$27.89
Engineering Technologists and Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other	3,523	3,647	124	4%	\$35.61
Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	1,028	1,133	106	10%	\$22.33
Magnetic Resonance Imaging Technologists	717	821	104	14%	\$42.06
Life, Physical, and Social Science Technicians, All Other	1,252	1,355	103	8%	\$25.52
Chemical Technicians	2,750	2,843	93	3%	\$43.55
Environmental Science and Protection Technicians, Including Health	752	844	92	12%	\$23.37
Morticians, Undertakers, and Funeral Arrangers	342	398	56	16%	\$14.98

Table 1.8 2023 High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations Excerpt: Associate Degree
 (Source: Gulf Coast Workforce Board – https://www.wrksolutions.com/documents/individuals/faj/highskillprofile/high-skill_high-growth_occupations.pdf)

Occupations	2020 Jobs	2030 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2020- 2030)	% Change	2021 Median Hourly Earnings
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	9,453	11,608	2,155	22.8%	\$28.55
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	7,882	9,896	2,014	25.6%	\$13.80
Dental Hygienists	3,401	4,405	1,004	29.5%	\$36.49
Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	4,541	5,458	917	20.2%	\$30.23
Calibration Technologists and Technician and Engineering Technologists	4,169	5,069	900	21.6%	\$28.36
Architectural and Civil Drafters	3,335	3,884	549	16.5%	\$28.97
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	1,757	2,288	531	30.2%	\$37.04
Geological and Hydrologic Technicians	2,517	3,042	525	20.9%	\$36.77
Physical Therapist Assistants	1,443	1,955	512	35.5%	\$34.57
Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technologists and Technicians	2,943	3,437	494	16.8%	\$35.72
Industrial Engineering Technologists and Technicians	1,786	2,210	424	23.7%	\$29.57
Web Developers and Digital Interface Designers	2,036	2,417	381	18.7%	\$32.36
Civil Engineering Technologists and Technicians	1,914	2,229	295	15.3%	\$29.14
Electrical and Electronics Drafters	1,515	1,805	290	19.1%	\$29.45
Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	1,369	1,648	279	20.4%	\$22.60
Mechanical Engineering Technologists and Technicians	1,282	1,545	263	20.5%	\$29.19
Mechanical Drafters	1,776	1,950	174	9.8%	\$31.83

Continuing Education

COM is uniquely positioned to respond to the rapidly evolving knowledge and skills required for careers in our region. Several key factors contribute to this adaptability:

- **State-of-the-Art Facilities:** Community support through recent bond projects has provided modern facilities and equipment, enabling COM to offer high-quality, short-term skills training aligned with industry and community needs.
- **Industry Partnerships:** Workforce programs collaborate with local businesses to develop targeted upskilling programs that address workforce demands.
- **Educational Pathways:** COM works closely with ISD partners, community leaders and industry stakeholders to create dynamic dual credit programs, leading to workforce credentials and four-year college transfer opportunities.

Short-term credentials are essential to workforce development, especially in high-demand fields like logistics and healthcare (see Tables 1.9 and 1.10). These credentials often serve as a first step on a career pathway, providing individuals with the skills needed to enter the workforce quickly. Although starting wages may fall slightly below the family-sustaining threshold, they typically meet the self-sustaining wage identified by Workforce Solutions—\$19.65 per hour or \$40,880 annually. More importantly, these credentials offer industry-recognized training that improves employability. They lay a strong foundation for gaining work experience, increasing earnings over time and pursuing further education or advanced certifications to support long-term career advancement and financial stability.

With the region's extensive port network—including the Port of Galveston, Port of Texas City and Port of Houston—there is a high demand for skilled professionals in transportation, warehousing and logistics. Creating stackable credentials in these fields provides accessible, industry-aligned training, equipping individuals with relevant certifications, hands-on experience and expertise in supply chain technologies. These programs will strengthen the region's competitive advantage, attract businesses

and support economic growth by ensuring a skilled workforce.

The development of short-term credentials for Patient Care Technicians (PCTs) addresses workforce shortages at regional healthcare institutions, including the Texas Medical Center in Houston and UTMB in Galveston. With increasing demand for skilled healthcare professionals, developing a PCT program will provide flexible, affordable training in essential areas like phlebotomy, electrocardiography and basic patient care. Graduates can earn industry-recognized certifications, ensuring they are job-ready to meet immediate staffing needs in hospitals, clinics and long-term care facilities.

COM's state-of-the-art facilities and strong employer partnerships position the College as a leader in micro-credential development. By collaborating with industry leaders and workforce development boards, COM can design flexible, responsive programs that address labor market needs. These initiatives help workers gain relevant competencies, keep businesses competitive and drive economic growth across the region.

Table 1.9 Fastest Growing Occupations – Short-Term Credential (Source: LightCast)

Occupation	2024 Jobs	2034 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2024- 2034)	% Change	2023 Median Hourly Earnings
Health Practitioner Support Technologists and Technicians	15,856	17,945	2,089	13%	\$20.82
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	9,636	10,652	1,015	11%	\$28.65
First-Line Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers	12,360	13,103	743	6%	\$28.21
Computer Support Specialists	14,508	15,201	693	5%	\$27.22
Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers	7,564	8,102	538	7%	\$36.17
Food Service Managers	5,350	5,886	536	10%	\$32.81
Medical Records Specialists	3,838	4,332	493	13%	\$22.39
Miscellaneous Health Technologists and Technicians	4,078	4,565	486	12%	\$25.09
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	5,975	6,304	329	6%	\$48.25
Miscellaneous Health Practitioners and Technical Workers	833	997	164	20%	\$30.87
Health Information Technologists and Medical Registrars	694	827	132	19%	\$37.57
Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics	4,611	4,728	118	3%	\$21.68

Table 1.10 2023 High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations Excerpt: Short-Term Credential
(Source: Gulf Coast Workforce Board – https://www.wrksolutions.com/documents/individuals/faj/highskillprofile/high-skill_high-growth_occupations.pdf)

Occupations	2020 Jobs	2030 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2020-2030)	% Change	2021 Median Hourly Earnings
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	47,719	57,614	9,895	20.7%	\$22.85
Medical Assistants	17,241	22,245	5,004	29.0%	\$17.67
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	13,656	15,939	2,283	16.7%	\$24.48
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	8,761	10,651	1,890	21.6%	\$23.60
Food Service Managers	5,997	7,762	1,765	29.4%	\$29.06
Computer User Support Specialists	12,474	14,156	1,682	13.5%	\$23.26
Medical Dosimetrists, Medical Records Specialists, and Health Technologists	7,545	8,956	1,411	18.7%	\$21.33
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	3,784	4,547	763	20.2%	\$48.97
Surveying and Mapping Technicians	3,142	3,747	605	19.3%	\$22.55
Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Programmers	928	1,405	477	51.4%	\$29.58
Health Information Technologists, Medical Registrars, and Surgical Assistants	898	1,106	208	23.2%	\$30.52

Implementation Strategy

To strengthen workforce readiness and expand educational opportunities, the College will take a strategic, data-informed approach to program implementation. As part of this initiative, COM will launch the BAAS in Operations Management and a short-term Radiography Technology credential in Fall 2026, followed by the Engineering Technology program in Fall 2027. Additionally, the College will develop a new bachelor's degree program in 2027, guided by real-time labor market data and industry feedback to ensure relevance to evolving workforce needs. The implementation timeline for the BAAS in Operations Management is as follows:

Activity	Date
Operations Management BAAS Program Development	Summer 2025
Curriculum Committee Approval	August 2025
SACSCOC Prospectus Submittal	September 1, 2025
Board Approval	September 2025
THECB Submittal	September 2025
BAAS Program Marketing Strategy Planning	Fall 2025
Course Development	Fall /Spring 2025
SACSCOC/THECB Approval	Winter 2025
BAAS Program Marketing	Spring 2026
Operations Management BAAS Start	Fall 2026

To further support lifelong learning and career advancement, the College will expand continuing education offerings with a focus on flexibility, responsiveness and industry alignment. This includes micro-credentials, short-term training programs and industry-recognized certifications in high-demand fields such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Project Management. By leveraging employer partnerships and labor market insights, continuing education will offer customized, cutting-edge programs that serve as fast-track solutions for skill development and workforce upskilling, ensuring students and professionals remain competitive in a rapidly changing job market.

DATA-INFORMED DECISION MAKING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

COM is committed to enhancing student success and retention through a data-informed approach. Moving forward, the Office of Planning, Effectiveness, Assessment and Research (OPEAR) will expand its monitoring of key performance indicators (KPIs), including retention, graduation, course success and transfer rates. Regularly analyzing these metrics will inform strategic improvements, ensuring that student support initiatives are targeted and impactful.

To foster a culture of continuous improvement, faculty and advisors will receive enhanced data reports and participate in regular presentations that provide actionable insights. A transparent, institution-wide data-sharing framework will empower all stakeholders to make informed decisions that align with COM's strategic goals. Additionally, structured feedback mechanisms will be implemented to collect input from students, faculty and advisors, ensuring that academic and student support services remain responsive to evolving challenges and opportunities.

ENHANCING ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

As part of COM's commitment to academic excellence, the Academic Program Review (APR) process will be strengthened to ensure ongoing program evaluation and improvement. Future APR initiatives will establish a structured review cycle that enables the assessment of program effectiveness, track progress and align academic offerings with institutional goals and workforce demands. These reviews will focus on identifying strengths, addressing challenges and adapting programs to meet industry and educational trends.

Key performance indicators—including enrollment trends, retention rates, completion times and faculty contributions—will serve as the foundation for evaluating program success. Additional assessments will examine curriculum relevance, student learning outcomes, resource allocation and co-curricular opportunities. By synthesizing quantitative data with faculty and stakeholder insights, COM will develop targeted strategies to refine curriculum, enhance instructional quality and strengthen student pathways. These initiatives will ensure that COM remains responsive, innovative and well-positioned to support student achievement and workforce readiness in the years ahead.



CONCLUSION

COM is dedicated to providing accessible, high-quality education that meets the evolving needs of students, industries and the community. Through state-of-the-art facilities, strategic partnerships and a guided pathways framework, COM equips students with the skills necessary for academic and professional success. With a strong emphasis on workforce-aligned programs, dual credit opportunities, micro-credentials and seamless transfer pathways, the College prepares students for meaningful careers while driving regional economic growth.

COM continuously refines its programs through a data-informed, student-centered approach, enhancing retention, completion and transfer rates. By integrating technology, experiential learning and career-focused pathways, the College bridges education and workforce development. Expanding initiatives such as stackable credentials, short-term certifications, Bachelor of Applied Arts and Science (BAAS) programs and co-enrollment agreements with four-year universities ensures students have clear, efficient pathways to career advancement and further education. Additionally, robust dual credit partnerships with local Independent School Districts enable high school students to earn college credits, accelerating their transition to higher education and the workforce.

A commitment to faculty development and instructional excellence further strengthens student success. Investments in faculty training, mentorship and innovative educational technology foster continuous improvement, creating engaging learning experiences. Expanded university partnerships provide greater access to academic advising, joint enrollment and structured transfer pathways, streamlining students' transition to four-year institutions while minimizing credit loss. Dual credit programs continue to be instrumental in easing the college transition, allowing students to gain early exposure to higher education and reduce barriers to degree completion.

Looking ahead, COM will enhance its role in workforce education, university transfer and community engagement. By expanding industry collaborations, strengthening student support services and enhancing articulation agreements, the College remains a key driver of economic mobility and workforce development. Through continued investment in dual credit programs and partnerships with K-12 schools and higher education institutions, COM is committed to equipping students with the skills, credentials and academic foundation needed to thrive in an evolving economy.

REFERENCES

- American Association of Community Colleges. (n.d.) About Us. Retrieved on December 1, 2022, from <https://www.aacc.nche.edu/about-us/>
- American Association of Community Colleges. (n.d.) AACC Pathways Project. <https://www.aacc.nche.edu/programs/aacc-pathways-project/>
- American Association of Community Colleges. (2019). Guided pathways: Planning, implementation, evaluation. <https://www.pathwaysresources.org/wpcontent/uploads/2020/01/PathwaysGraphic-10-23-19.pdf>
- Beach, J. M. (2011). Gateway to opportunity? A history of the community college in the United States. Stylus Publishing, LLC.
- Bhuttah, T. M., Xusheng, Q., Abid, M. N., Sharma S. (2024). Enhancing student critical thinking and learning outcomes through innovative pedagogical approaches in higher education: The mediating role of inclusive leadership. Scientific Reports, 14, 24362.
- College Board. (2008) Winning Action Agenda for Community Colleges. National Commission on Community Colleges. <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/professionals/winning-the-skills-race-action-agenda-community-colleges.pdf>
- College of the Mainland. (n.d.a). Our history: Inception. <https://www.com.edu/about/history.html>
- College of the Mainland. (n.d.b). Our mission and goals. <https://www.com.edu/about/mission.html>
- Community College Research Center. (2021). Community college transfer: Policy fact sheet. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/community-college-transfer.pdf>
- Complete College America. (2012, December). Guided pathways to success: Boosting college completion. <https://completecollege.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/CCA-College-GPSFINAL-December-2012.pdf>
- Ma, J. & Baum, S. (2016) Trends in community colleges: Enrollment, prices, student debt and completion. The College Board. <https://research.collegeboard.org/media/pdf/trends-community-colleges-research-brief.pdf>
- Miettinen, R. (2000). The concept of experiential learning and John Dewey's theory of reflective thought and action. International Journal of Lifelong Education, 19(1), 54–72.
- Texas Association of Community Colleges. (n.d.). Texas success center: Talent strong Texas pathways. <https://tacc.org/tsc/talent-strong-texas-pathways>
- Texas Education Agency. (2024). Enrollment in Texas public schools, 2023-24. Retrieved from <https://tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/school-performance/accountability-research/enroll-2023-24.pdf>
- United States Census Bureau. (2023a). Quick facts: Galveston County, Texas; Galveston city, Texas. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/galvestoncountytexas,galvestoncitytexas/PST045223>
- United States Census Bureau, (2023b). Quick facts: Texas City, Texas. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/texascitytexas/PST045223>

