

HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE

Since 1967, College of the Mainland (COM) has expanded access to higher education through associate and bachelor's degrees, workforce certificates and transfer pathways. Rooted in strong community partnerships, COM is proud to be a hub for student success, workforce development and regional growth. These commitments continue to guide the college's focus on meeting the educational and workforce needs of its communities while creating meaningful opportunities for students.

Inception

COM began as a vision of local leaders in the early 1960s and took shape in Oct. 1966 with the formation of the College of the Mainland Junior College District, covering 237 square miles and including the taxing districts of Dickinson, Hitchcock, La Marque, Santa Fe and Texas City. Voters approved a \$2.85 million bond in Dec. 1966, allowing the Board of Trustees to hire a president, faculty and staff.

The first class of 414 students enrolled in Sept. 1967. Classes were initially held in temporary facilities until the permanent campus on 120 acres at Palmer Highway and Amburn Road opened in Feb. 1970. A second bond-funded expansion, completed in 1972, added Fine Arts, Physical Education and Student Center facilities, along with expanded technical and science buildings, further strengthening the college's ability to serve students and the region.

Facility Growth

As enrollment grew and workforce needs evolved, COM continued investing in facilities that support student learning and regional industry. In Nov. 2018, voters approved a \$162.5 million bond following guidance from a 40-member community advisory committee. The bond marked the beginning of Phase 1 of the COM 2025 Master Plan and funded a new three-story STEM building, expanded Allied Health and Nursing programs and introduced Dental Hygiene, Radiologic Technology and Surgical Technology. The bond also replaced the flood-damaged Administration and Enrollment Center with the Administration Building and added the Industrial Careers Building to expand Process Technology, Instrumentation, Electrical, HVAC, Occupational Safety and Health Technology trades programs and the Gulf Coast Safety Institute.

In Jan. 2023, the COM Board of Trustees unanimously voted to call a \$250 million bond election for May 2023 to complete the next phase of the campus master plan. Voters approved the bond, marking Phase 2 of the COM 2025 Master Plan and funding a new Library & Learning Center that will serve as an accessible educational hub for students and the community, a new Public Safety Careers building to house Fire, Criminal Justice and EMS programs and a new Corporate Training Center. The Corporate Training Center provides technical training, leadership development, safety and compliance courses and customized programs designed to meet the evolving needs of employers across the Gulf Coast.

Academic Growth

COM continues to expand academic offerings to meet regional demand and support student achievement. In addition to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing, COM now offers its second bachelor's degree, the Bachelor of Applied Science in Operations Management. High-demand programs span health care, public safety and technical fields.

COM is also strengthening transfer pathways to help students earn an associate degree and continue toward a bachelor's degree at four-

year colleges and universities across Texas, including Texas Woman's University, University of Houston and University of Houston Downtown with additional partnerships in development.

Today, COM continues to build on its legacy by expanding opportunity, strengthening partnerships and creating clear pathways that help students achieve their academic and career goals while supporting the long-term growth of the communities it proudly serves.