

**PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE**  
**Clinton, South Carolina**  
**May 2021**

Presbyterian College (PC) is a four-year, liberal arts College with a graduate program in pharmacy, physician assistant, and occupational therapy – the latter two being recent additions – and is located in a small community in upstate South Carolina. The College is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church USA, and the Synod of the South Atlantic. Its student body is primarily from South Carolina, Georgia, and North Carolina, but students come to PC from all regions of the United States and throughout the world due to its academic reputation. A PC education provides values from differing perspectives, and organizational efforts over the last two decades to embody those values have resulted in a more diverse student demographic profile and enhanced international educational opportunities. While pleased with gains on diversity and international opportunities over time, the College actively seeks a more diverse student body and broader international participation.

Three highly integrated statements are listed below that outline the purpose of PC, the goals that guide the College, and goals for the College's General Education program. Through its cultural and curricular offerings, and in both educational and social opportunities, PC concerns itself with the holistic education of each individual in preparation for civic and vocational participation, in addition to the development of the self. Vocational preparation is experienced and learned in the context of liberal learning and is emphasized in the College's quality enhancement plan, Compass. Civic participation, where the student is encouraged to integrate disciplinary knowledge to solve or manage social and/or environmental issues, highlights involvement in local, regional, and global concerns. The motto of PC is "While we live, we serve," and inherent in that motto is both an acceptance and value of the self and a desire for authentic and vibrant existence. In the parlance of the Judeo-Christian ethic, PC encourages its students to experience life abundantly.

**Mission**

The compelling purpose of Presbyterian College, as a church-related college, is to develop within the framework of Christian faith the mental, physical, moral, and spiritual capacities of each student in preparation for a lifetime of personal and vocational fulfillment and responsible contribution to our democratic society and the world community.

**College Goals That Guide the College in Fulfilling Its Mission**

- To help students gain a basic knowledge of humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences; a special competence in one or more particular areas of study; and an ability to see these studies as part of the larger search for truth.
- To develop in students the ability to think clearly and independently, to make critical judgments, and to communicate effectively in both speech and writing.
- To foster in students an aesthetic appreciation of the arts and literature.
- To acquaint students with the teachings and values of the Christian faith.
- To help students develop moral and ethical commitments, including service to others.

- To help students attain a sense of dignity, self-worth, and appreciation of other persons of diverse backgrounds.
- To encourage in students an appreciation for teamwork and for physical fitness and athletic skills that will contribute to lifelong health.
- To foster in students an appreciation of, and concern for, the environment and natural resources.

### **General Education Goals That Guide the College in Fulfilling Its Mission**

- Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and creatively.
- Students will demonstrate knowledge of human culture and the natural world through study in the natural sciences and mathematics, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, and fine arts.
- Students will be able to communicate effectively.
- Students will understand the complex nature of the global community.

The College engages in a complex and varied assessment program. Assessments occur within day-to-day educational and social activities (e.g., classroom, volunteer services) as well as in specially-focused venues and processes (e.g., Assessment Day, Annual Program Reviews). Assessments are both direct and indirect in nature - they include attention to the cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains. College goals tend to be more indirect in nature. General education and academic program goals, by contrast, tend to be direct and more cognitively focused.

Annual reviews of College goals with graduating seniors correspond to results found in general education and academic program goals, although these self-reported achievements tend to be a little higher than that of the more direct evidence of said achievement.

In the previous administration of the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), arguably one of the best assessments on critical thinking and problem solving on the market today, PC seniors performed at the 85th percentile but recent performance on said assessments has been more modest, yet the school reports learning gains as assessed by the instrument's value-added metric. Moreover, the ETS Proficiency Profile first taken by freshman and then four years later as seniors, reveal gains in critical thinking. In line with critical thinking, PC students also experience increases in ethical reasoning from the freshman to the senior year (as measured by the Defining Issues Test 2). Thus, in terms of cognitive and ethical development, PC students demonstrate gains through their exposure to the PC curriculum.

Most academic programs periodically assess students using national field exams, to which PC students consistently score above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile and higher, and all programs to some degree include general education outcomes in their set of program goals. One notable general education goal is written communication, to which students perform very well on issues related to grammar, syntax, and logic. Current efforts include assignments to improve writing strategies, especially in the development of arguments that reflect interdisciplinarity. A recent College study indicates that freshmen and seniors ably recognize complexity inherent in problems, but are somewhat less skilled in developing interdisciplinary responses. As expected, seniors perform better than freshmen on both recognition and implementation.

### **Retention and Graduation Rates**

The current freshman to sophomore retention rate five-year average is 78%.

The overall six-year graduation rate for Presbyterian College fluctuates from the 60s to 70s percent of students and the current overall six-year graduation rate five-year average is 67%. It is the rare case that a student fails to graduate once reaching the junior year.

To improve the retention rate of both the freshman to sophomore and the sophomore to junior retention rates, the College has designed freshman seminars, and for both sophomores and juniors, a vocational launch course, and a program for first-generation students. Further, PC has instituted an early warning system for the monitoring of student issues so that timely interventions may increase both retention and subsequent graduation rates. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) findings suggests that the College's supportive campus environment facilitates student success.

### **Job Placement and Pass-Rates of Arts and Sciences Graduates**

**Job Placement.** Career & Professional Development collects post-graduate outcomes for every graduating class to determine the variety of paths Presbyterian College graduates immediately pursue after graduation. This data is published in our First Destination report (formerly called First Pursuits). The office collects data from graduates between May and November.

First Destination data for academic years 2015 through 2019 indicated that an average 86% response/knowledge rate was obtained from each graduating class - significantly higher than the nationally reported average of 65% among US colleges and universities.

From that response rate, we obtained a five-year average of 67% of employment and a five-year average of 28% continuing education. Thus, our five year average of achieving positive post-graduate success (employment and continuing education) is 95%.

**Pass-Rates.** The College has a teacher education program in which it offers various teaching specialties. The current pass-rates for the programs are: early childhood education – 100%, elementary education – 100%, secondary school english – 100%, secondary school history – 93%, middle school education social studies – 83%, and middle school education science – 87%.

### **Graduate School of Pharmacy**

The School of Pharmacy at Presbyterian College uses a variety of ways to assess student achievement in relation to the School's mission. Students must successfully complete 145 credit hours of coursework, including 44 credit hours of practice experience. In addition, students must successfully complete a competency-based comprehensive assessment in their third professional year of the program prior to graduation after the fourth year. The average retention rate of students since the opening of the School in 2010 to fall 2019 is 90%. For the cohorts that have graduated, the on-time rate is 85%. The latest data on the average licensure rate of its graduates is 94% and for the same individuals, a 92% employment rate.