PC and Greenville Technical College sign transfer bridge agreement

Presbyterian College President Robert E. Staton and Greenville Technical College (GTC) President Dr. Keith Miller signed a transfer bridge agreement during a ceremony at GTC Monday, Nov. 30, 2015.

The agreement is designed to enhance the transfer of students from GTC to PC. The collaboration is intended to serve students by providing program support and services which facilitate the transfer process and prepare and assimilate students desiring to matriculate to PC.

It is intended for first-time college students who are recent high school graduates, who intend to eventually enroll as a student at PC, and who meet the minimum GPA requirement of 2.50. PC will accept the Statewide Articulation Agreement of 86 courses approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education for transfer from two- to four-year public institutions.

“As educators, it is our responsibility to help students reach their academic goals,” said Brian J. Fortman, PC dean of enrollment. “Our bridge agreement with GTC gives them a clear direction and path to completing their bachelor’s degree, provides a variety of scholarship options, and welcomes students into the PC community immediately.”

PC Registrar and Director of Records Kendra Woodson said, “Careful consideration was given when analyzing courses at both institutions, in order to provide a pathway for students to obtain a bachelor’s degree in four years. Each course was evaluated on an individual basis and its role in the PC curriculum.”

Students who choose to participate in the transfer program will receive a waiver of their application fee at GTC and PC. Students will also receive special consideration for additional scholarships as available from the institution or other resources. Students will also be assigned an admissions counselor or student mentor to help guide them through the transfer process.

Additionally, students will be offered the opportunity to participate in identified PC programs.

See “Bridge” on page 2.
Dr. Terry Barr Celebrates His 28th Year at PC

Dr. Terry Barr has been an English professor at PC for 28 years, and he continues to appreciate the journey whereby he came to Clinton, S.C. "PC gave me a chance. I applied to 100 jobs coming out of grad school, and PC offered me a position. I knew when I saw the job description that if I got any job, it would be the one at PC," Dr. Barr said.

Dr. Barr’s academic interests are numerous, as he teaches courses in English, film, and creative writing, including Holocaust literature, introduction to Southern film, and creative writing: creative nonfiction. While he suggests that he could have easily seen himself teaching history or political science as well, he cites the imagination on which literature is built as his reason for teaching English.

When asked about his teaching style, he suggested, “Sometimes I think I’m still winging it. But really, my only plan is to ask about certain passages in the works--how they hit the students. I select these passages because of the ways they move me. I’m still like the underdog I used to be: wanting to discuss literature because I still cannot believe that someone could write such truths about the world and about our inner lives.”

Dr. Barr offers three memories as his favorites from his 28 years at PC, including the three weeks his family spent with PC students in Oxford during the summer of 2001. “I remember best that the skies there didn’t turn to night until 10 p.m.,” he said. “Also, watching students interact with my daughters was rewarding in ways I can’t explain.” He also remembers fondly the finest oral presentation he has heard given by PC student Catherine Gettys on William Faulkner’s Absalom, Absalom! during his first year of teaching. He said, “I literally felt chills at how good that presentation was.”

Finally, he mentioned his most recent creative nonfiction class, a class in which students tell their own stories through personal essays in an attempt to create works that bear their own personal stamp, as being "exceptional beyond my expectations. The final readings showcased a collective talent that truly enriched me," he said.

In regards to his interests outside of the classroom, Dr. Barr mentioned his eclectic music taste that includes artists such as Patti Smith, Vampire Weekend, and Charley Rich, as well as his love for Crimson Tide football and walking his dog Max.

When asked what his time at PC has meant to him, Dr. Barr offered the following words: “PC has given me every opportunity I could have wanted to teach what I want, to grow as a teacher, and to continue to figure out what I want to teach and be. Where else could I have been able to offer such new areas for me like Southern film and creative nonfiction but at a place that is secure enough with its identity to allow me to grow? Loyalty works both ways, and that’s what I appreciate most about these almost 30 years.”

Written by Erika Gotfredson, a senior English major from Duluth, Ga.

and events while still in attendance at GTC. This could include free admission to sporting events, and access to campus and cultural events.

“We are really excited about this agreement,” said President Staton. “We believe there is a lot of opportunity for a partnership that will benefit both of our institutions. This is an exciting step for all of us.”

President Miller said, “We are pleased to join with Presbyterian College in providing a clear and seamless path for students to move from GTC to PC. Students following this path have the benefit of a strong academic foundation, scholarship opportunities, and support from both institutions as they progress toward a bachelor’s degree from Presbyterian College.”

An additional component is an articulation agreement with the PC School of Pharmacy, Pharm.D. program. The agreement states that students who complete PC School of Pharmacy pre-pharmacy requirements at GTC and have a 3.0 GPA will automatically be guaranteed an interview and considered for acceptance by the Admissions Committee at the PC pharmacy school.

“Part of our document is providing avenues for students to come to PC, be a part of our Pre-Pharmacy Club at PC, take tours, see what goes on at the campus, and sit in on a class. We are willing to do whatever we can to help make that happen” said Dr. Cliff Fuhrman, dean of the Presbyterian College School of Pharmacy.

A PC representative will participate in Transfer Tuesday/Thursday in the Greenville Tech Planning and Transfer Headquarters (PATH) center at least once a semester. The PATH Center assists students in preparing their path to transfer by providing them information, resources, and academic planning services for a smooth transfer process. The next scheduled Transfer Tuesday/Thursday is TBD.

For more information contact PC admissions at 864-833-2820.

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Written by Erika Gotfredson, a senior English major from Duluth, Ga.
The Christmas at Presbyterian College concert is always one of the biggest events the college puts on each year, and this year will be no different. “A Celtic Christmas,” the title of this year’s concert, harkens back to PC’s ancestral highlands and continues with this theme in its song selections and musical compositions, which will feature music from mostly Celtic and Scottish cultures, as well as music characteristic of those cultures.

Dr. Porter Stokes, the Barksdale Chair of Music, the chair of the music department, and the director of choral activities, is responsible for putting on the annual Christmas at PC concert. In an interview, he described the developmental process of this event, which begins in December shortly after the last concert has ended.

Each year the Christmas at PC concert differs in theme and stage setup, though oftentimes themes are inspired from lines in Christmas carols. “Why would we want to do the same thing over and over again?” Stokes said. By trying to make each year really different from the last, Stokes said that it would keep people (and the performers) interested and wanting to come back.

In early February and March, the theme and music selections are decided upon and later finalized in late May to early June, to allow for students in August to begin preparing for the Christmas concert.

Also in August, the technological aspect of the concert takes place, such as determining lighting on stage and setting up projectors that will display animations that coincide with the music being performed. The projectors especially aid with the annual performance, which tends to last about 75-80 minutes, by keeping audience members visually stimulated as well as aurally.

Stokes said that the program also incorporates musical pieces that allow audience members to stand up and participate in the concert. Audience participation, coupled with the visual images and aural tones of the choir members, bells, and orchestral music, helps make the Christmas at PC concert a fully engaging experience to get one in the holiday spirit.

Great time and effort goes into the production of the Christmas at PC concert each year. After musical pieces are determined and then organized into a program and the technological aids for the concert are put in place, students in the PC choir, orchestra, and handbells ensembles rehearse for at least four hours each day in the week leading up to the concert’s opening night.

All this time and effort pays off in the end, though, with the weekend performances of the Christmas at PC concert. For Stokes, the Christmas at PC concert is a reflection of the college, providing an “aural moment like the visual one” that Neville Hall gives when one looks down the West Plaza.

Yet the annual concert is not only a good image for the college, but is also a great provider of outreach and service to the community through its contribution of fine arts content. “It contributes to the quality, or the fabric, of life,” Stokes said. A culmination of students’ learning and hard work, a year’s worth of planning, and the interweaving of music, art, and energy, the Christmas at PC concert proves itself to be a concert worth experiencing year after year.

Tickets to see “A Celtic Christmas” are available for purchase online on the Music Department website through presby.edu, and will also be available two weeks prior to the concert for purchase at the box office in Belk Auditorium. “A Celtic Christmas” runs from Dec. 4-6, with Friday and Saturday performances beginning at 7 p.m. and Sunday’s performance beginning at 3 p.m. For more information, contact Beverly Davis at bdavis@presby.edu.

Written by Allison Cooke, a junior English major, media studies, journalism track minor from Winnsboro, S.C.