



**The South Carolina Transfer and Articulation Center (SC TRAC)
A statewide transfer and articulation system implementation
and integration success story - www.sctrac.org.**



South Carolina wins
PESC 12th Annual
Best Practices award



Improving student access, success, and degree completion with cost-conscious system and institutional productivity solutions

Background



Strategic planning efforts of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education's Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) recognized the need for a coordinated, system-wide solution to support students by helping to create seamless pathways from secondary to postsecondary education, thereby supporting the state's goals of increasing degree completion to bolster workforce

development. A plan of action to address these needs was developed in response to South Carolina's Education and Economic Development Act of 2005.

With 33 public higher education institutions, including three research institutions, ten teaching institutions, 16 two-year technical colleges, and four two-year regional campuses of the University of South Carolina, the state's public institutions collectively serve over 185,000 undergraduate students. In 2008, 15,658 of the students enrolled in public institutions in South Carolina were transfer students, an increase of 9.6 % from the previous year and an increase of 16.8 % from two years prior. In addition, over 11,000 South Carolina high school students take college courses annually.* Focusing attention on the needs of transfer students and how institutions can effectively serve them was central to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education's (SC CHE's) plan.

South Carolina partnered with AcademyOne to develop and implement an ambitious, multi-year project using AcademyOne's state-of-the-art technology and other higher education services to address academic credit portability and help to meet the state's goals.

*Source: Report on the Migration of First-Time Undergraduate Transfer. South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, March 2010

Project Mission & Goals

Handling the increasing volume of academic credit transfer requests and the complex administrative tasks that accompany such requests can prove to be burdensome and costly for postsecondary institutions. "Neither higher education institutions nor students have been insulated from the negative financial effects of the current economic downturn. At the same time, obtaining a college degree has never been more important to individuals and indeed to the nation. Now more than ever, states must do everything possible to eliminate barriers to degree completion and to ensure that students avoid additional expenses and delays. AcademyOne is helping South Carolina implement cost effective technology-based solutions that work for students, institutions, and the state," said Dr. T. Michael Raley, Director of the Division of Academic Affairs and Licensing at the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

The SC Commission on Higher Education sought to provide an integrated, web-based solution with software tools to meet the course articulation and college transfer needs of South Carolina's public colleges and universities and their students. The system that was developed by AcademyOne to meet South Carolina's needs allows institutional autonomy, flexibility, and individual practice in serving

stakeholders while achieving three primary goals to help students:

- **FINISH** a degree faster, thereby saving money and time.
- **MAKE BETTER CHOICES** and avoid taking courses that will not count toward a degree.
- **JOIN THE WORKFORCE EARLIER** and become part of the state's economic engine.

To begin gaining the benefits of an online solution as quickly as possible, a multi-year project plan consisting of three overlapping phases and associated deliverables was developed and deployed.

"From the onset, this system has really assisted transfer students in bringing credits from former institutions. Our AcademyOne administrator has been able to help every student I have taken to see her. One student actually walked away with 15 more credits than were originally granted. The Equivalency Synchronizer makes the system fast, easy to navigate and effective."

Dr. Barbara Chesler Buckner
Associate Provost for Assessment and Accreditation
Coastal Carolina University

Equivalency Map for University of South Carolina-Aiken

This Equivalency Map is an unofficial guide to how your courses may transfer. Other factors that must be taken into consideration are grades received in your original courses and the major you will be pursuing after you transfer. In all instances, final decisions on acceptance of course credit will be made by each individual institution.

Change selected transfer schools Print

Your Course(s)	University of South Carolina-Aiken	University of Carolina-Columbia
Matches for courses taken at Midlands Technical College		
CPT 101 - Intro to Computers (A)	ACSC 101	CSCS 101
MAT 101 - Beginning Algebra (B)	NO TRANSFER	REMEDIA
BIO 101 - Biological Science I (B+)	ABIO 121	BIOL 101
ENG 101 - English Composition I (A-)	AEGL 101	ENGL 101
ECO 210 - Macroeconomics (A)	AECO 221	ECON 221
ECO 211 - Macroeconomics (C)	AECO 222	ECON 221
ART 111 - Basic Drawing I (B)	AART 111	ARTS 111
ART 112 - Basic Drawing II (B)	AART 112	ARTS 111
MAT 111 - College Trigonometry (B-)	AMTH 112	MATH 111
MKT 101 - Marketing (A)	NO TRANSFER	RETL 101
CHM 111 - College Chemistry II (B)	ACHM 112	CHEM 111
GEO 102 - World Geography (A+)	AGRY	GEOG 101
MKT 120 - Sales Principles (A)	NO TRANSFER	RETL 101
Totals:	13 courses 29.00 credits	14 courses 131.00 credits
Overall Totals:	13 courses 41.00 credits	14 courses 131.00 credits

Equivalency Maps - maps completed coursework with courses at transfer institutions

Winthrop University

Founded in 1886, Winthrop University is a public, coeducational, comprehensive teaching university with a student body of more than 6,300 students. The students pursue one of 40 undergraduate or 25 graduate degree programs with more than 100 options and concentrations in the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Business Administration, the Richard W. Riley College of Education, and the College of Visual and Performing Arts. All eligible bachelor's, master's and specialist degrees are nationally accredited. Approximately half of all students live on the historic campus, only a short walk away from classrooms, the cafeteria, art galleries, Dacus Library and the new Lois Rhame West Health, Physical Education and Wellness Center.

Find us on: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube

Address: 715 Oakland Ave., Rock Hill, South Carolina 29733, United States

Transfer Admissions Contact Information: David Rollins, Admissions Counselor, Office of Admissions, 803/223-2191, rollinsd@winthrop.edu

Phone Number: 803-323-2191 or 800-946-8476

Email: transfercounselor@winthrop.edu

Website: www.winthrop.edu

More Information: Equivalencies: 27,625 in-state; 49 Transfer Agreements for accepting courses into this school; 95 Programs; 2,042 Courses

Additional Contacts: International Admissions Contact: Fred Schlingemann, International Student Recruiter, International Center, 803/223-2393, schlingemann@winthrop.edu

Information for Transfer In Students: Accepts Transfers: Yes; Transfer Applications Received: 768 (Fall 2008); Transfer Applications Accepted: 564 (Fall 2008); Percentage Accepted: 73% (Fall 2008)

College Profiles - offer at-a-glance transfer information

Refine Search

Check out the transfer schools which matched your courses.

Institution	View Profile	Matches	Credit*
Carolina-Aiken	View Profile	33	91.00 /100.00
Carolina-Columbia	View Profile	18	49.00 /100.00
Carolina-Beaufort	View Profile	17	48.00 /100.00
Carolina-University	View Profile	16	42.00 /100.00
Carolina-College	View Profile	15	43.00 /100.00
Carolina-College	View Profile	15	42.00 /100.00
Carolina-College	View Profile	14	40.00 /100.00
Carolina-Lancaster	View Profile	14	39.00 /100.00
Carolina-Technical College	View Profile	13	39.00 /100.00
Carolina-Technical College	View Profile	12	37.00 /100.00
Carolina-Sumter	View Profile	11	33.00 /100.00
Carolina-Sumter	View Profile	11	33.00 /100.00
Carolina-College	View Profile	11	31.00 /100.00
Carolina-College	View Profile	10	31.00 /100.00
Carolina-University	View Profile	10	27.00 /100.00
Carolina-Upstate	View Profile	10	31.00 /100.00
Carolina-University	View Profile	8	24.00 /100.00
Carolina-University	View Profile	7	22.00 /100.00
Carolina-Salkehatchie	View Profile	7	21.00 /100.00
Carolina-Lowcountry	View Profile	6	19.00 /100.00
Carolina-Technical College	View Profile	6	18.00 /100.00

Find Transfer Institutions - ranks participating institutions by number of course equivalency matches

Phase I: Implementation

Phase One included the systematic collection of a variety of transfer-related information from institutions and system offices. Easy to access, collaborative web-based tools were provided to institutions so that information could be easily updated and maintained using coordinated and sustainable content management methods.

The specific AcademyOne software tools that were deployed in South Carolina are:

The Course Equivalency Management Center (CEMC), which helps institutions map courses at other institutions to their own courses, records courses in the database as equivalencies, and provides updates.

The Transfer Agreement Management Center (TAMC), enables institutions to publish their transfer agreements, codify them, and promote their agreements to prospective students.

The Transfer Profile Management Center (TPMC), which provides a summary of transfer information. Institutions can promote their programs and services, such as admission requirements and transfer credit information, which are especially relevant to prospective transfer students.

The result is the availability of consistent, accurate, and up-to-date institutional information for students, advisors, and the public.

Phase II: SCTRAC.ORG Portal Development

South Carolina required an electronic web portal to assist students in making better choices about the transfer of academic credit. The web portal supports both students and academic professionals by providing tools that allow students to evaluate how prior coursework will transfer among and between public postsecondary institutions. The South Carolina web portal, www.SCTRAC.org, was launched in Spring 2010.

SC TRAC is a one-stop information source for transfer students and the administrators, advisors, and faculty who support their academic progress. SC TRAC facilitates student transitions between and among South Carolina's institutions of higher education and supports academic professionals who are charged with making and managing transfer and articulation decisions, agreements, and policies. The web portal provides professionals with a trusted source of validated information and an electronic means to coordinate and collaborate with each other across campuses.

SC TRAC makes available a first-of-its-kind online resource that helps to improve student advising and persistence across institutions, helps to provide seamless pathways for adequately prepared students to move directly into institutions of higher education, and fosters student degree completion in the state. The system provides students with a reliable, easy-to-access information resource that assists them in making sound academic decisions and better choices by avoiding taking courses which will not count

toward a degree. Using the site, students can easily:

- **LOCATE** information related to transfer, including application deadlines, requirements concerning the transfer of academic credits, and contact information for institutional transfer officers;
- **ACCESS** individual transfer agreements that exist among the state's public institutions as well as statewide transfer agreements and policies that affect all institutions; and
- **SEARCH** for course equivalencies to determine how courses taken at one institution may transfer to another.

In addition to helping students make better academic decisions, South Carolina's customized transfer and articulation portal enables higher education institutions to display course equivalency and articulation information which helps institutions coordinate articulation efforts with other institutions. The portal also streamlines the publishing of institution-specific information and other processes that supports each institution's programs and course offerings. By using the online system, institutions are able to present their offerings in a consistent framework to serve better the state's college students, high school students who take college courses, and adults who aspire to enter or re-enter postsecondary education.

To help create public awareness and promote SC TRAC, public service announcements and radio advertisements designed to reach the college-going public were developed with the support and assistance of the South Carolina Education Lottery and South Carolina ETV Radio, and began airing in the Spring of 2010. The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, the state's higher education coordinating board, is the agency responsible for managing the SC TRAC implementation.

Phase III: Online Web Services

What makes South Carolina's AcademyOne implementation such a noteworthy success is the sophisticated use of technology to reduce the effort required to maintain a statewide, coordinated transfer and academic data repository in order to provide real-time student guidance and advising services. The project is also an outstanding example of cross-institutional, system-wide collaboration.

Institutional interfaces allow for the connection of institution-

based student information systems to the centralized SC TRAC portal hosted by AcademyOne. Automated connections help students by offering the ability to create a personal account that allows students to manage their coursework, reduce manual entry of data, and improve accuracy in degree planning. Administrative overhead is reduced and time is saved in campus departments by enabling high-quality online, real-time student self-service. The institutional authentication process is supported by the use of a secure private network. Records cannot be altered, and transfer and admissions staff members can be confident that students receive accurate degree planning information through web-based advising and guidance.

Coursework Importer for Student Support

One significant barrier to helping prospective students assess transfer pathways is the lack of access to their academic course history. AcademyOne provides a secure interface, the Coursework Importer, between an institution's student information system and SC TRAC. The Coursework Importer permits a student's academic course history to be imported automatically into the AcademyOne Student Passport, the student's account on SC TRAC. No identifying student information is kept by the system; only the course, year/term taken, and grade received are retained. Once an academic course history is imported to the Student Passport, students have the ability to create Course Equivalency Maps to destination institutions they are interested in attending. Students can update their accounts at any time and can use the system to learn if planned future coursework is transferable as well as to test a variety of "what if" scenarios.

Equivalency Synchronizers Save Time and Money

The Equivalency Synchronizer is an AcademyOne integration tool that automatically accepts many thousands of course equivalencies from an institution's student information system (SIS) and/or degree audit system (DAS) and synchronizes the equivalencies with SC TRAC. Equivalency synchronization eliminates the need for common course numbering, and resolves course and institutional crosswalk coding challenges.



“Access to up-to-date course equivalency information is extremely vital to students, faculty, and staff. It is necessary to have this information in one easily accessible and navigable place. AcademyOne has done a great job with this; SCTRAC.org provides a wealth of knowledge and is easy to use to find information.

The initial setup of the system took some time, but now it is basically maintenance free. I just make sure our database is accurate and the synchronizer maintains the information available on SCTRAC.org. I also appreciate all of the options AcademyOne provides when entering your course information into their system. This flexibility is very helpful since every college has a unique way of entering course information and equivalencies.

AcademyOne has been great to work with. They are extremely knowledgeable and are there when you have questions or need help.”

Taylor Johnston, Transfer Articulation Director, Office of the Registrar, Lander University

What's Next?

The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education strives for continuous improvements to student and institutional service as well as to system productivity. The agency is investigating new and improved ways to use SC TRAC with the software tools and interfaces the system provides. For example, SC TRAC now supports the display of Advanced Placement (AP) exam, International Baccalaureate (IB) exam, and South Carolina Universally Transferable Course credits and equivalencies by institutions in accordance with state policies. Enhanced functionality for students and South Carolina's higher education institutions is added to SC TRAC using suggestions and feedback that are continuously solicited. Outreach to high school counselors will help extend awareness to high school college-bound students who can use the system to discover a world of degree pathways.

Industry Recognition

SC TRAC won the prestigious 12th Annual Competition for Best Practices awarded by the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC). Receiving high praise from the PESC Board Review Committee, SC TRAC was recognized because of its focus on a high risk population (transfer students) through collaboration and use of centralized resources and infrastructure, which have resulted in a robust, statewide solution that streamlines transfer for students.

About AcademyOne

AcademyOne solutions serve the 21st century knowledge-based global marketplace and are used by government, education and corporate sectors to solve data sharing and system interoperability barriers that impede educational progress and productivity, workforce development, and economic growth. AcademyOne solutions provide transparency to allow learners to make educated choices about which institutions and programs best fit their needs by supporting efforts to improve alignment between postsecondary education and employer expectations. The company has developed an award-winning suite of education, career access, content and data systems

solutions which are delivered through web and mobile platforms.

About the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education serves as the coordinating board for the state's public postsecondary institutions. South Carolina has 33 public higher education institutions, including 13 four-year universities, 16 two-year technical colleges, and four two-year regional campuses of the University of South Carolina which collectively serve over 185,000 students. The mission of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education is to promote quality and efficiency in the state system of higher education with the goal of fostering economic growth and human development in South Carolina.

About the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC)

Established in 1997 at the National Center for Higher Education and located in Washington, DC, the Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council (PESC) is a non-profit, community-based, 501 (c)(3) umbrella association of colleges and universities; college and university systems; professional and commercial organizations; data, software and service providers; non-profit organizations and associations; and state and federal government agencies. Through open and transparent community participation, PESC enables cost-effective connectivity between data systems to accelerate performance and service, to simplify data access and research, and to improve data quality along the higher education lifecycle.



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