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Improving College Transfer with the South Carolina Transfer and Articulation Center (SCTRAC.ORG) Website – State Launches Web Portal Devoted to the Transfer of Academic Credit among Public Colleges and Universities

Columbia, SC, March 29, 2010 – The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education is very pleased to announce the launch of a web portal designed to improve college course transfer and articulation in the state. This system has been developed by AcademyOne, Inc. of West Chester, Pennsylvania, with the participation and support of all South Carolina public institutions of higher education. The web-based portal will assist students and support college and university staff members by providing online tools that make it easier to transfer academic credit and evaluate how higher education coursework will transfer among South Carolina's public colleges and universities. The web portal, called SCTRAC (the South Carolina Transfer and Articulation Center) can be accessed online at www.sctrac.org.

Developed under the auspices of South Carolina's Education and Economic Development Act, SCTRAC provides a first of its kind online resource that will help improve student advising and persistence across institutions, help provide seamless pathways for adequately prepared students to move directly into institutions of higher education, and foster student degree completion in the state. The system provides students with the information and tools needed to make 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 credit, and contact information for institutional transfer officers;
- access transfer agreements that exist among the state's public institutions as well as statewide transfer agreements; and
- search for course equivalencies to determine how courses taken at one institution may transfer to another.

In addition to helping students make sound academic decisions, the transfer and articulation portal enables higher education institutions to display course equivalency and articulation information that pertains to college transfer and helps institutions coordinate articulation efforts with other institutions. The portal also streamlines the publishing of institution-specific information and other processes that support each institution's programs and course offerings, including requirements for degree completion. By using the online system, institutions are able to present their institutional offerings in a consistent framework to better serve the state's college students, high school students taking college courses, and adults aspiring to enter or re-enter college.

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 180,000 students. Last year, 15,658 students enrolled in public institutions in the state 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 students take college courses annually while enrolled in high school.

Handling the increasing volume of academic credit transfer requests and the myriad of administrative tasks that accompany such requests can prove to be burdensome and costly for postsecondary institutions. “Especially in times of fiscal exigencies such as those South Carolina is experiencing presently, we must implement cost effective practices that yield more efficiency and enable students to make the most effective choices toward degree completion in order to avoid additional expenses and delays,” says Dr. Gail M. Morrison, Deputy Director and Director of the Division of Academic Affairs & Licensing at the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education. According to David K. Moldoff, AcademyOne’s founder and CEO, “states that tackle these trends head-on and develop a coordinated approach to college transfer and evaluation of prior coursework are going to be ahead of the game when it comes to workforce and economic development. The investment will ultimately save money and provide improved service to citizens.”

Public service announcements and radio advertisements designed to reach the college-going public have been developed with the support and assistance of the South Carolina Education Lottery and South Carolina Educational Television and will begin airing immediately.

The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education serves as the coordinating board for the state’s public postsecondary institutions. AcademyOne, Inc., a leader in information technology for higher education, specializes in solutions which address student mobility and academic credit transfer.