

BC News Releases

BC Undergoes Changes As It Moves To Four Year

B.C. News Release
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As the 1995 academic year begins, Brevard College is on the brink of one of the most exciting academic changes in its 140-year history: the addition of four-year baccalaureate degree programs to the well-established associate degrees that have been its traditional offering for generation of students. Along with this change in academic direction comes a changing of the guard at the top level of Brevard College's academic program, a change that reflects both a commitment to the future and a solid tradition of teachers who have come to the fore and helped lead the College to its stature as one of the most highly-regarded two-year colleges in the nation.

It is from the ranks of professors that the College had drawn its leaders in academic affairs, leaders who have garnered the respect of their peers and college administrators. Foremost among these academic leaders at Brevard College are Dr. Charles Teague, who left full-time teaching to take over for Coleman-West as the college's new Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty. Appointed by Brevard College President J. Thomas Bertrand as Dean of Academic Planning in January, Teague was further promoted to the senior vice presidential post of the College in April.

Coleman-West and Teague, who have been colleagues at Brevard College for almost 12 years, share deep commitment to the traditional Brevard College academic philosophy which emphasizes strong classroom teaching and a dedication to the student as a whole person.

"I approach all students with the intent of demanding the best I can possibly get from them," says Coleman-West. "I will provide a lot of help for them if they don't have the tools to meet my standards, but I always de-

mand their best effort. Brevard College will always be a school for the students who want to learn more than they have in the past and for the students who want to encounter new ways of learning and being challenged."

Teague agrees. "I work to engender in the students a sense of enthusiasm for education," he says, "and that includes not only the content in a course or within my discipline, but also how to learn and new ways to think. I view our students as customers; I am here to serve them and instill in them the spirit of education."

This shared mission, envisioned in the Office of Academic Affairs and implemented in the classrooms of Brevard College, had been the basis for a smooth transition of responsibility in the office of Academic Affairs. Teague and Coleman-West worked together, sharing ideas and responsibilities during the spring 1995 semester until Coleman-West left campus for a year-long sabbatical. She will return as Professor of English in the fall of 1996.

"This past spring semester provided a smooth transition for the College, thanks in a large part to Clara's guidance over the past few years," says Teague. "The process of change can always be unsettling, but I see my role as continuing the stability that Clara has established, as well as developing pride and enthusiasm throughout the College and the Faculty."

Of course, one of the greatest challenges facing Teague is the academic leadership of a college that is in the midst of redefining its mission. The College, currently in a candidacy period for baccalaureate programs in music and art, is continuing to revise and improve its core curricula and associate's degree programs while also developing new programs in environmental studies and outdoor education.

"Building additional baccalaureate programs and leading the College through this period of growth is definitely one of the greatest challenges," says Teague. "We invite students to come and be a part of this growing and dynamic institution, an institution that is on the cutting edge of higher education. We have always had a very strong liberal arts tradition, and although we are leading with the fine arts in baccalaureate programs, we will always stress the liberal arts."

"Change is very positive in this respect," Teague continues. "We are a very fine teaching institution, and we will continue to be. We will not lose sight of our associate's degree programs; in fact, the move to four-year programs will force us to review our associate's degree programs, sharpen our focus on what our niche is going to be, and then concentrate on providing the best education we possibly can. There is always some risk involved with change, but this is the best risk we can take at this time for Brevard College."

Teague credits Coleman-West with laying a solid foundation for this new period of growth and development in the curriculum at Brevard College. "The growth of Brevard College into baccalaureate programs would not be possible without the groundwork laid by Clara," he says. "She really did her homework." He also credits her with her tireless efforts to empower the faculty at Brevard College. "Clara gave flesh and direction to a faculty evaluation system that gives the faculty stability as well as a direct input into curriculum policies. In the process, she provided an atmosphere where the faculty feels free to evaluate the curriculum, excise irrelevant courses and develop innovative courses, all within the context of transferability."

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With fully-accredited four-year programs just around the bend, Teague is excited about the further possibilities for the Brevard College faculty. "As our processors move into teaching at a four-year level in their respective disciplines, they will become innovators who think creatively without the constraints of transfer after two years. I also hope to continue to develop and improve the faculty evaluation system and continue the momentum that had been established in our academic community. The College is poised and ready for baccalaureate programs, and I am excited about leading the faculty into this exciting future."

Despite his enthusiasm for the future as Vice President for Academic Affairs, Teague has one regret: leaving the classroom. "It is difficult to leave the classroom because part of my fulfillment comes from interacting with the students." Teague, who holds an associate's degree from Brevard College, a bachelor's degree from High Point University, and a master's and doctorate degrees from Emory University, has spent much of his professional career in the classroom. Prior to teaching at Brevard College, he spent 12 years at High Point University as chaplain and professor of religion and philosophy.

As for Coleman-West, she cannot wait to get back into her true element: in front of a classroom full of new students. "I won't be dean, and I won't be vice-president, but by putting me back into the classroom, the College has truly given me the ultimate promotion."

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Are you bored? Don't know what to do on weekends? Sick of staring at the walls? We're going to try to change that.

The new name for the social board is Twister productions. Every Wednesday nights we meet in the bottom of Coltrane Commons at 7:00. You're welcome to join us. We have many activities already planned, such as Homecoming weekend, Halloween masquerade dance, and Parents' weekend. We could

use any ideas that you might have, or if you would like to, just come and listen to what is going on.

Pack Place

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Staff Writer

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