

# 2019 Gateway Course Experience Conference

By Chloe McGee  
Staff Writer

On Monday Mar. 19, BC English professors Jessica Tucker and Tina Holland collaborated with Katie McBriar, Junior, and McKayla Robinette, Sophomore, to attend and present at the 2019 Gateway Course Experience Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

The conference is an annual event that spans over the course of three days, which are comprised of, what Holland refers to as, “concurrent sessions” instructed by professors, administrators, and staff from across the country.

Representing Brevard College’s English department, Tucker and Holland arrived at the event on Sun., March 18 and were joined by Robinette and McBriar the next day.

McBriar and Robinette both hold multiple student leadership positions on campus. McBriar serves as the president of both CAB and BC Serves, as well as a student leader and Teaching Assistant (TA) for introductory English courses. Robinette is the president of the Agriculture Club, Resident Advisor (RA) in Beam Dormitory and a Supplemental Instructor (SI) for English 111 and 112 honors classes.

Before attending the conference, the group worked together flipping the traditional model and adapting to 21st century learning. Robinette says that their modernized course focuses on “applicable writing... how to communicate with people.”

The GCE conference is nationwide opportunity, geared towards educators, to

exchange ideas that enhance both teaching and learning strategies for gateway courses — first-year curriculum. Tucker believes that this “makes students’ participation even more significant.” She says that “their perspectives were very helpful to the audience” when the pair explained their roles in remodeling the ENG 111 course.

While this was Tucker’s first time participating, Holland has attended several of these conferences in the past. Holland claims that her trip to Indianapolis for the 2014 Gateway Course Experience Conference is the reason why she now incorporates student leadership positions in her classes. She says that this was an “integral part” of redesigning the 111 course.

Their presentation shared the success in redesigning the school’s ENG 111 course. They revealed just how much improvement was made after the new model was introduced to the curriculum by comparing academic statistics.

“We saw a major decrease in grades of D and F, as well as the withdrawal and incomplete rates,” said Robinette.

When Tucker was enrolled as an undergraduate at Brevard College, Holland taught two of her courses. “I am grateful to work with her now as we address the needs of 21st-century learners,” said Tucker. “What I love about teaching is how I continue to learn new things and address new challenges.”

Their presentation included an interactive activity where audience members pretended as though they were students writing three distinct forms of communication.

As for the feedback, Holland says that the “interest level was really high” and for many in the audience this was a “new concept.”

“Katie and McKayla are outstanding students, leaders, and presenters,” said Tucker. “I am extremely impressed with them, not only for their participation at the conference but also in our classrooms and the ELC.”



Photo by Peter Trench

Photo taken after presenting at the Gateway Course Experience Conference

## Dr. Mo

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sections of willow, alder and dogwood trees and planted them in the stream bank.

“They are flagged because the students are testing a couple of different methods that ecologists use,” Drinkard said. “Some of them have been soaked ahead of time, some have not. Some have had a chemical, a rooting hormone, applied to the area that is going to be below ground.”

The students will go back in about a month to see which of the methods were the most successful.

The pink flags that can be seen near the bridge

by Sims Art Building are a numbering system and each flag has a code that tells which team collected it, what species of tree it is, which tree it was, what kind of treatment it got for soaking and what kind of treatment it got for the hormones.

On Friday, March 29, a troop of Boy Scouts were on campus working with Environmental professors as well as the ECO 245 students to help place the rest of the stakes and it was an excellent opportunity for the campus to work on community outreach.

“I think it would be neat to keep doing some different trials on what is most efficient in creating good establishment for the stakes,” Drinkard said. “We are trying to figure out the best method for here and we will work to continue using that method.”

## Math / Science honors & awards scheduled for Tuesday

Brevard College’s 2019 honors and awards ceremonies will start Tuesday, April 9, when the Math and Science Division will recognize their award recipients at 4 p.m. in the Porter Center’s Scott Commons.

Other ceremonies will take place starting on April 15. More about those will be in next week’s issue of The Clarion.