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SOUTHERN STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESS RELEASE



Pictured above is Professor Jeff Wallace

Southern State Professor invited to present at International Conference in Romania

Southern State Community College Professor Jeff Wallace has been invited to present at the Appalachian/Carpathian International Mountain Conference in Romania October 15-18, 2024.

A current resident of Cincinnati, Wallace has served as a faculty member at Southern State since 2009 teaching general studies and English courses. "Teaching at Southern State is my dream job," notes Wallace. "My goal has always been to help people, specifically people from my area and culture, and Southern State is the perfect place to do that," he says.

Wallace first learned of the international conference from the Appalachian Studies Association (ASA), which he is a member of. The ASA, formed in 1977 and headquartered at Marshall University in West Virginia, works to promote and engage dialogue, research, scholarship, education, creative expression, and action among a diverse and inclusive group of scholars, educators, practitioners, grassroots activists, students, individuals, groups and institutions. It is through this association that Wallace's submission was recognized and selected.

During the conference, a variety of topics will be explored including the impact of coal and gold mining on mountain communities, cultural preservation, folklore, critical representations of mountain cultures in literature and arts, creative writing, literary readings, eco-criticism, creative place-making, sustainable agriculture and forestry, ecological tourism, economic diversification, as well as general reflections on Appalachian and Carpathian culture.

Wallace's proposal, "Echoes of Tradition: Uninterpreted Readings of Three Folk Tales from Appalachia and Romania," was selected and will be included in the conference line-up.

"Reading folk tales from different cultures consecutively allows participants to explore the unique cultural expressions, values, and beliefs embedded within these narratives," Wallace states. "It provides insights into the diversity of human experiences and how cultural heritage is preserved and transmitted through

storytelling,” he adds.

Conference-goers will consider and discuss how historical events and cultural developments influenced the creation and transmission of folk tales over time. They will compare themes, motifs, characters, narrative structures, and cultural contexts. The contributions of Wallace’s work will enrich these discussions and increase the knowledge of all participants.

Southern State’s Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Erika Goodwin commends Wallace for his work. “Professor Wallace has a passion for Appalachian culture and history. His expertise in this area makes him an excellent selection for this international conference. I congratulate Professor Wallace on this impressive level of scholarship. His experience shows in the classroom and on his study abroad trips,” says Dr. Goodwin.

Wallace plans to use this experience at Southern State to help build bridges and understanding between cultures among his students. “While our region of Appalachia and Romania are very different places, there are some important places of overlap: the rural natures of both communities, the extractive and exploitive industries that have profited off of both, and even the stereotypes that my students, and myself, have had to face. Anytime we can see ourselves as others see us is important,” comments Wallace.

Professor Wallace will teach an American Literature course this fall and Composition 1101.

This experience also helps him lead the Study Abroad Program at Southern State. Students enrolled in this program will travel to Spain and Morocco in May 2025. Those interested are encouraged to contact Wallace now at jwallace@sscc.edu.

Southern State Community College’s fall semester begins August 26 and registration is underway. To view the fall semester schedule that Southern State will be offering, please visit <https://www.sccc.edu/academics/class-schedules.shtml>.

For additional questions, or to learn more about Southern State, please call 1-800-628-7722 or visit www.sccc.edu today.

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