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Cofer to Give Flannery O’Connor Lecture October 23 at ABAC

TIFTON – Dr. Jordan Cofer, associate professor of English and head of the Department of Literature and Languages at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, will present a symposium, “The Gospel According to Flannery O’Connor: Examining the Role of the Bible in Flannery O’Connor’s Fiction,” from 6-8 p.m. on Oct. 23. The event will be held on the first floor of Tift Hall in the History Room on the campus of ABAC.
Dr. Erin Campbell, professor of English in the Department of Literature and Languages, will be the moderator for the symposium, which is open to the public and is sponsored by the School of Liberal Arts. Light refreshments will be provided following the presentation.

Cofer earned a very selective spot last summer in the National Endowment for the Humanities Institute for a workshop on O’Connor titled “Reconsidering Flannery O’Connor.” He travelled to Milledgeville with 24 other faculty members from colleges and universities such as Stanford, Duke, Harvard, and the University of Chicago to participate in the four-week program that included lectures, seminars conducted by four leading O’Connor scholars, and a week working with materials available to scholars only through the Georgia College and State University (GCSU) library. He released his first book, “The Gospel According to Flannery O’Connor,” just prior to attending the NEH workshop.

Cofer joined the ABAC faculty in 2009. He earned his B.A. in English at Southwest Baptist University, his M.A. in English from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; and his Ph.D. in English from Texas Tech University. At ABAC, he has served as an advisor for student clubs including the Rural Studies Club and the Reading Club. Cofer has also hosted a radio show, worked with the college’s student newspaper, “The Stallion,” and served as the Director of the Writing Center.

Cofer will be joined in this symposium by Dr. Bruce Gentry, professor of English in the Department of English and Rhetoric at GCSU. Gentry earned English degrees from the University of Arkansas and the University of Chicago. He then attended the University of Texas at Austin, where he earned his Ph.D. After 18 years at the University of Indianapolis, where he
served as chair of the English Department, Gentry joined the GCSU faculty. He was the editor of the “Flannery O’Connor Review” in 2003.

Gentry is the author of the book-length study, “Flannery O’Connor’s Religion of the Grotesque,” published by the University Press of Mississippi. He is the editor of “The Cartoons of Flannery O’Connor” at GCSU and co-editor of “At Home with Flannery O’Connor: An Oral History.” In 2007, Gentry was co-director with John D. Cox for “Reconsidering Flannery O’Connor,” a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute for College and University Teachers that brought 24 college professors to Milledgeville for a month of studying O’Connor’s works. Gentry also co-directed O’Connor conferences in Milledgeville in 2006, 2008, and 2011.

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