Changes are coming this year for most non-faculty employees of AU as the university implements a new performance management system for administrative, professional and university staff members.

The new process replaces traditional annual performance reviews with procedures that put increased emphasis on employee involvement in performance appraisal over a 12-month cycle. Human Resources officials say the new process encourages ongoing communication and feedback throughout the year and places more emphasis on personal and career development.

The yearlong process involves two major stages, and many staff members will approach the process both as supervisors of employees in their units and as administrative staff reporting to more senior administrators.

Early in the year, each employee covered under the new system will work with his or her supervisor to define job duties and establish measurement criteria. Near the end of the year, the supervisor will use those criteria to evaluate the employee’s performance. Interim steps are also involved.

Unlike performance appraisals of the past, including ones that supervisors completed for most staff members at the close of 2005, the new system was designed to involve planning, communication and personal and career development activities throughout the year.

AU Human Resources trained nearly 900 supervisors in use of the new performance management system in November and early December. The supervisors, in turn, are responsible for training employees and working with them to define and measure both what the employees do and how they do it. Human Resources will offer additional management training during the year.

Lynne Hammond, assistant vice president for human resources, said AU developed the new performance management system in response to consistent feedback from focus groups in which supervisors and employees questioned the value of the old appraisal process and cited a need for additional tools and resources to measure, manage and improve job performance.

“Everyone involved in the project has tried to be responsive to the needs of the university community...
Theatre to present annual ‘Daunce’ events next week

AU Theatre will premiere its annual ‘Daunce’ celebration of theatrical dance next week with a guest performance by the Athoungian African Dance Theatre troupe at 2:30 p.m. Sunday at Telfair Peet Theatre. Athoungian performances include mask dancers, still walkers and other African dance traditions. The visiting troupe is directed by Samba Diali, an Atlanta-based choreographer and performer from the Ivory Coast.

The AU Theatre Department will then present “Daunce IV” at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 26-28 and 2:30 p.m. Jan. 29 in Peet Theatre. The show is directed by Judi Nelson and anchored by a student ensemble of 12 dancers. “Daunce IV” is an eclectic mix of performance styles, including modern, post-modern and some traditional African dances, featuring music from Bach to Irving Berlin, Tina Turner and the Beatles. The week’s activities will also include classes in performance dance open to the public and taught by New York professionals.

For information on the master classes or for ticket information, contact the AU Theatre box office at 844-4154.

Upcoming Events

- **Tuesday, January 17**
  - **MEETING**
    - University Senate, 3 p.m., auditorium, Broun Hall, agenda at www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate
  - **Thursday, January 19**
    - **MULTI MEDIA PRESENTATION**
      - “Voices of Spirit,” actor and AU alumnus Thom Gosson Jr., 6 p.m, Foley Ballroom
      - **CURATOR’S CHOICE FILM SERIES**
        - ‘Hidden Hands: A Different History of Modernism,’ 7 p.m., JSC Museum

Panel prepares for Fisher report

Eallon McWhorter, president pro tempore of the AU Board of Trustees, last week named a four-person trustee committee to review a report the board recently commissioned on the state of the university.

The committee consists of McWhorter, Sam Ginn, Charles McCrary and Sarah Newton. They will review the report put together by a group led by Fisher, a leading national authority on higher education leadership and organization.

The committee will meet on Feb. 2 to discuss Fisher’s report and consider recommendations based on the report that it will make to the full board, which meets Feb. 3 at AU-Montgomery.

The specific time for the committee meeting, which will also be at AU, has not yet been determined. Fisher’s group conducted interviews of AU faculty, staff, students and alumni and gathered additional information for his report in December. The report, which AU has not yet received, will be made public prior to the committee meeting.

An assessment by Fisher was recommended to the Board by John Kuhle, the Korn/Ferry consultant leading AU’s search for a new president. Kuhle said the assessment was necessary for Auburn to conduct a successful presidential search.
In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, former Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young will join experts on natural disaster readiness in a national teleconference at AU on Jan. 26.

The two-hour teleconference, “Governmental Excellence and Best Practices and Disaster Readiness,” will discuss how governments can better prepare for natural disasters.

Young, a former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, will also be guest of honor and receive an award for humanitarian service at an 11 a.m. luncheon at the AU Hotel.

The teleconference will be broadcast from 3 p.m.-5 p.m. from the AU Educational Television studio, with viewing in Auburn at the AU Hotel auditorium. Universities, government agencies and private enterprises around the United States will also provide televised links to the conference.

“Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath provided ample evidence of the need for government at all levels to have effective plans and fully functional and well-rehearsed response systems in place before a natural disaster occurs,” said Don-Terry Veal, director of AU’s Center for Governmental Services, which is hosting the teleconference.

“It is not enough to develop a plan and hope for the best,” said Veal, who is one of seven panelists for the teleconference. “Our goal is to help government leaders and professionals rethink the way they prepare for and respond to natural disasters.”

Topics include disaster planning and coordination, money and personnel management, communications and infrastructure. Veal said the teleconference will be especially useful for elected and appointed leaders at all levels of government and for educators, students and others interested in governmental excellence in disaster preparedness.

In recent years, Young has served as chairman of GoodWorks International, a consortium of global consultants on economic development in Africa and the Caribbean. At earlier stages in his career, Young was an ordained minister, a civil rights leader, Atlanta mayor and Georgia congressman.

Other panelists for the teleconference include:

- Richard Greene, senior project coordinator and correspondent and columnist for Governing Magazine and the Government Performance Project.
- Sylvester Murray, professor of Urban Studies and public administration at Cleveland State University in Ohio.
- James W. Williams Jr., executive director of the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama.

For more information or registration assistance, contact Maria Folmar at 844-4696.

Elton to lead professional society

David Elton, associate professor of civil engineering in AU’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, has been named president-elect of the North American Geosynthetics Society.

Elton, an AU faculty member since 1985, has been vice president of NAGS since 2002. He holds a Ph.D. from Purdue University.

NAGS is a chapter of the International Geosynthetics Society and is dedicated to the scientific and engineering development of geotextiles, geomembranes and associated technologies.

How Auburn Stacks Up

Sources of entering AU freshmen, 2005

ALABAMA: 3,492
GEORGIA: 725
TENNESSEE: 162
FLORIDA: 160
OTHER: 510

Note: A chart in the Dec. 12 AU Report inadvertently left out two of the top 12 departments with the most student credit hours for fall semester. They were Chemistry and Biochemistry, at no. 6 with 10,112, and Health and Human Performance, no. 10 with 8,046.

Source: Institutional Research and Assessment

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Chinese art

Ritz International Foundation officials David Wu and Judy Kuan join AU representatives in displaying gifts of art to Auburn from Chinese artists Wan Yo Lee and Yuhua Wang. From left are Michael Panhorst of the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, Dean Anne-Katrin Gramberg of the College of Liberal Arts, AU Provost John Heilman, Kuan, Mark Graham of the College of Liberal Arts and Wu.

The AU Early Learning Center, has announced its schedule for the 2006-07 academic year, which starts next fall.

The nationally accredited center, which provides care for preschool children ages 3 and 4, will have two morning classes from 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and a mixed-age afternoon class from 1 p.m.-4 p.m.

Children may attend morning or afternoon sessions, but priority will be given to children who attend both. Groups will be assigned in late February, early March.

The center has made preliminary plans to provide care between morning and afternoon sessions.

Contact Linda Silvern at 844-4696.