Most AU faculty to be paid twice per month with start of 2006-07 academic year

In a change of payroll schedule, Auburn faculty on nine-month appointments will receive their salaries twice per month instead of once monthly starting with the 2006-07 academic year.

Approximately 1,300 AU faculty, including part-time instructors, are affected by the change. The majority will receive their first payment under the new schedule on Aug. 31, following the start of classes on Aug. 16. Nine-month faculty who teach or perform other paid duties this summer will start the new schedule on July 1, with their first payment on July 14, the last working day of that pay period.

Faculty on 12-month appointments and administrative and professional personnel will continue to receive their salaries on the last working day of each month. University Staff personnel will continue to be paid every two weeks in accordance with federal wage and hour laws for employees in their pay grades.

The twice-monthly payments will replace the current schedule of paying nine-month faculty with half a month’s salary in August and again in May sandwiched between eight monthly checks for a full month’s pay. The Business Office is replacing that payment schedule with one providing equalized payments as the university replaces obsolescent financial and human resources records systems with new software.

Executive Vice President Don Large said the Business Office is implementing the new payment schedule in response to concerns expressed by a number of nine-month faculty, who had asked for an alternative to a previously announced plan. That plan would have equalized monthly payments for nine-month faculty over 10 pay periods, but some faculty expressed concerns about its impact on their monthly budgets, as well as potential problems with payment for summer research efforts.

“Our goal was to create a payment schedule that is both simple and fair without creating an unreasonable burden on either the university or the faculty,” Large said.

Fortunately, we were able to work with faculty leaders to come up with a solution that is workable and addresses the major issues that the university faces in putting together a fair and reasonable payment schedule for nine-month faculty,” he added.

Conner Bailey, chair of the University Senate, said the new system will be superior to the earlier plan for equalizing the payment schedule for nine-month faculty. “I appreciate the fact that Dr. Large and his staff listened to the concerns of faculty and made needed adjustments,” Bailey said.

Some nine-month faculty will have to adjust their family budgets when they start receiving their monthly salaries in two payments each month.
AU Nursing School celebrates 25th anniversary with new endowment

The AU School of Nursing is establishing a special endowment as part of a celebration of the school’s 25th anniversary in April. The birthday of the first graduating class is a significant milestone in the history of the school, said Barbara Witt, dean of the School of Nursing. “We are looking forward to celebrating the accomplishments of our graduates and our anniversary in the spring,” she added.

The school’s alumni and friends are funding the endowment through a $25 for the 25th program, through which donors contribute $25 each to a commemorative AU Nursing’s 25th anniversary.

NSF awards grant for study of ethical, social, other effects of nanotechnology research

The National Science Foundation has awarded a two-year, $280,000 grant to a team from three AU colleges and two other universities to study the social, ethical and environmental effects of nanotechnology, a technology that creates super-small materials.

Christine Curtis of the Department of Civil Engineering in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering leads an academic team that also includes James Bradley of the Department of Biological Sciences in the College of Sciences and Mathematics and Frederick Long of the Department of Philosophy in the College of Liberal Arts. Faculty members from AU-Montgomery and Tuskegee University are also participating in the research project.

Nanotechnology involves the development of materials, devices and systems with molecular structures based on the scale of nanometers, one-billionth of a meter, which is many times smaller than anything that can be achieved through microtechnology. The NSF grant will be used to finance the development of a sophomore-level course titled “Ethics of the Nanoscale.” In developing the course, the faculty members will examine the implications of the technology from a broad range of perspectives beyond its engineering aspects.
Barth co-authors book on impact of banking regulation

James Barth, Lowder Eminent Scholar of Finance in AU’s College of Business, has co-authored the book Rethinking Bank Regulation: Till Angels Govern, which was recently published by Cambridge University Press.

Barth teamed with international banking experts Gerard Caprio and Ross Levine on the project, which assembles and presents a new database on bank regulation in more than 150 countries. The book examines the impact of regulation on the operation of banks and assesses the approach to bank regulation recommended by an influential group of international banking officials known as the Basel Committee.

In evaluating the historic debate about the proper role of government in the economy, the authors examine various approaches to bank regulation and analyze the role of politics in determining regulatory approaches to banking.

The authors find that domestic political factors shape both regulations and their effectiveness. Their findings indicate that banking system performance is hampered by restrictions on the entry of new banks, government ownership of banks and restrictions on bank activities.

Caprio is director of operations and policy for the financial sector of the World Bank. Levine is the Harrison S. Kravis University Professor of Economics at Brown University.

The Basel Committee monitors developments in global financial markets for central banks in the world’s 10 largest economies. The committee functions through the Bank for International Settlements, which is based in Basel, Switzerland, and provides economic services to the central banks.

Lamke wins national award for teaching

Leanne K. Lamke of AU’s College of Human Sciences recently received a national award for excellence in teaching in her discipline.

Lamke, a professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, received the 2005 Ernest G. Osborne Award for Excellence in Teaching Family Studies from the National Council on Family Relations. The award recognizes career-long leadership and excellence in the teaching of family studies.

The winner of numerous teaching awards at Auburn, Lamke was one of two inaugural recipients of AU’s Leischuck Endowed Presidential Awards for teaching excellence in 2005.

NASA awards grant to AU, Tech for research

Engineering researchers at AU and Georgia Tech will share a NASA grant for studies that could lead to the next generation of computer chips for the nation’s space program.

Wayne Johnson, Guofu Niu and Fa Foster Dai, faculty members in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering in Auburn’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, are collaborating with researchers at Georgia Tech in a NASA Exploration Systems Research and Technology Program grant.

Auburn’s share of the grant will be $2,375,000 over four years. The research team, led by John Cressler of Georgia Tech is working on mixed-signal circuits that will improve the way electronic systems function in extremely cold temperatures.

The circuits will be able to operate at cryogenic temperatures as cold as minus 382 degrees Fahrenheit. The team will develop, fabricate, package, test and qualify mixed-signal circuits made of silicon-germanium, which are essential to the design of electronics that operate, control, monitor and reconfigure many space systems.

Biggio group to discuss strategies for teaching

The book discussion group of AU’s Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning will meet at Draughon Library on Feb. 7-8.

The discussion group, which is open to all faculty, will examine Alternative Strategies for Evaluating Student Learning: New Directions for Teaching and Learning, edited by Michelle V. Achacoso and Marilla D. Svinicki.

Participants may attend either or both of two discussion sessions: noon-1:30 p.m. on Feb. 7 and 5 p.m.-6:30 p.m. on Feb. 8.

Contact Amy Vaughan at the Biggio Center at 844-8530 or vaughan@auburn.edu to obtain discount coupons for the book, which is available at the AU Bookstore.

How Auburn Stacks Up

2005 retention rate for freshmen at SEC public institutions

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<th>University</th>
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<td>Tenn.</td>
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Source: Institutional Research and Assessment

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