Equestrians claim another title at Auburn

Laufer named to lead museum of fine art at AU

International society to honor AU professor

Points system changing for athletics tickets

How Auburn Stacks Up

Top half of SEC for bachelor’s degrees in business awarded during 2005-06

Richardson urges support, unity for successor as AU president

In his final State of the University address to the University Faculty, AU President Ed Richardson last week urged the faculty to help his successor achieve a long and successful presidency.

Richardson’s remarks came a week before the Board of Trustees was to consider finalists for the next AU president. The names of finalists are to be revealed on Monday, with an interview schedule to be announced.

The board is scheduled to meet at 4 p.m. Thursday at the AU Hotel to consider and possibly select a new president.

The outgoing president said he expects to leave office at the end of June with the university in its best financial situation in many years and with institutional control soundly vested in the presidency. Both matters had been major issues when he was appointed interim president in January 2004. By last September, when the AU board removed “interim” from the president’s title during the search for his successor, Auburn had overcome both issues and was developing a process to strengthen academics through changes in admissions.

Richardson said the three-year plan he outlined in his first State of the University address had been achieved thanks to the hard work and cooperation of many individuals and all major constituencies.

The goal of year one had been to remove Auburn from probationary status by its accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

The goal for year two had been to establish institutional control of the university in the president. Richardson noted that Auburn’s commitment to centering institutional control in the president, with strong backing from Gov. Bob Riley and Board President Pro Tem Earlon McWhorter, had been a major factor in getting SACS to lift the probation.

“I believe the authority of the president is relatively solid and should well serve the next president,” Richardson said, adding that institutional control...
can be measured by how effectively the president is able to make and follow through with decisions. “The maintenance and strengthening of institutional control require the active participation of all within the university community,” he said. “This participation should be consistent with university goals and objectives.”

Richardson said faculty involvement in governance matters is vital to the success of a new president, but the involvement needs to be active, energetic and broad-based, with many voices, rather than a few, being heard. “The University Academy must continually demonstrate that it has the will and capacity to address the problems of the day,” he said. “If the Academy does not deal effectively with the instructional, programmatic or personnel issues, then you may be assured that this abdication will result in someone else filling the void.”

The goal for year three of his presidency, stated in June 2005, Richardson noted, was to conduct a search for his successor. Repeating one of his first statements as Auburn’s president, Richardson said, his measure for the success of his own presidency will be that the next president has a long and successful tenure. After a series of short-term presidencies, the next president needs to serve eight to 10 years, he added.

Looking at academic quality, Richardson predicted that a commitment by the Board of Trustees to stronger admissions requirements and new procedures, as well as increased funding for scholarships, will lead to significant and rapid increases in the academic qualifications of Auburn’s student body. He said that improvements in overall student quality will help boost AU’s national standing as an academic institution.

Richardson cited several reasons for improvements in Auburn’s finances, which enabled the university to raise faculty salaries to the regional average. He said those factors include a strong state economy, support for AU by the governor and Alabama legislators, cooperative legislative efforts by AU and the University of Alabama, the continuing success of the “It Begins at Auburn” Campaign, sound decisions by the Board of Trustees and past presidents and the financial management skill of Executive Vice President Don Large. He said Rep. Mike Hubbard and Sen. Ted Little were also instrumental in securing additional state funding for Auburn.

Richardson thanked Provost John Hellman for successfully addressing tough academic issues and outgoing University Senate Chair Richard Penaskovic for presenting the faculty leadership’s views, including constructive criticism at times, on many sensitive issues. Penaskovic, in his parting remarks as outgoing chair of the University Senate, said one of the administration’s most significant accomplishments has been the strengthening of the Office of the Provost under Hellman. That office should be a vital asset to the new president, he added.

The outgoing faculty leader said he hopes to see an ombudsman appointed in the upcoming administration and, among proposals for stronger academics, he urged funding for faculty sabbaticals and health insurance for graduate students. The religious studies professor said he would like to see the new president be open, friendly and communicative with the faculty.

Penaskovic said the university community can help the new president succeed if everyone works together and not continue past differences and wounded feelings and recognizes the good as well as the challenges of others. “All parties must open themselves up to ideas with which they disagree,” he added.
Laufer selected as director of museum

Provost John Heilman has appointed Marilyn Laufer to be director of the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, effective April 2.

The appointment is the result of a national search organized by the museum search firm Opportunity Resources Inc., in cooperation with a search committee of university faculty, staff and museum advisory board members.

“Dr. Laufer brings experience in both universities and museums,” Heilman said. “She has the knowledge, talent and background to best position the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art as a premier university art museum.”

Laufer has been a faculty member for 11 years in the Department of Art in AU’s College of Liberal Arts. Since April 2006, she has served as the acting co-director of the Jule Collins Smith Museum, together with Robert Ekelund, Auburn emeritus professor of economics.

She holds a Ph.D. in art history from Washington University in St. Louis. She has more than 25 years experience as a curator and served briefly as interim director of the Sioux City Art Center and as co-director of the Birke Art Gallery at Marshall University.

International symposium to examine life of author

The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures and the College of Liberal Arts at AU will host an international symposium this week on the life and legacy of Arthur Koestler, a 20th century European writer who was one of the first major political observers to sound the alarm over Hitler and Stalin.

The Austrian Cultural Forum in New York is collaborating with the AU college and department in presenting the symposium Thursday-Saturday at Greystone Mansion, on East Magnolia Avenue.

A prolific author and speaker on a variety of political, social and psychological issues, Koestler, who died in 1983, was one of the leading European intellectuals of the past century.

Born in Hungary in 1905 and educated in Vienna, the multilingual writer became a British subject in 1945. His most popular novel was Darkness at Noon, a fictional account of Stalin’s reign of terror in the Soviet Union.

The Auburn conference is drawing scholars from across the United States, as well as Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Bosnia. Columbia University Professor Michael Scammell, author of a forthcoming biography of Koestler, will present the keynote lecture at 4:15 p.m. Thursday.

Bevly to be honored by international society

David Bevly of AU’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering is one of ten professors from around the world who will receive SAE International’s Ralph R. Teetor Educational Award as outstanding engineering educators.

Bevly, a faculty member in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, will receive the award during the SAE 2007 World Congress, April 16-19 in Detroit. Originally known as the Society of Automotive Engineers, SAE now encompasses diverse transportation-related industries.

At AU, Bevly is director of the GPS and Vehicle Dynamics Laboratory; Bevly’s honors at Auburn include the Alumni Engineering Council Outstanding Faculty Award and Alumni Engineering Council Junior Faculty Research Award. He also has received two Young Investigator awards from the Office of Naval Research and the Army Research Office.

His work has been published in a number of journals, including ones from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers and the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

The award honors Ralph R. Teetor, an automotive engineering pioneer who was president of SAE International in 1936. The award is funded by the SAE Foundation, which develops and funds programs and incentives that foster student interest in engineering, scientific and technical education.

Season tickets

continued from page 3

for one year following the ticket holder’s death if that person had purchased tickets the year before. However, since the right to purchase tickets is not transferable, the right does not extend beyond the first year.

The ticket policy is posted online at http://www.auburn.edu/administration/ocia/ticket_policy.pdf. Contact the Office of the Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics at 844-4288.

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