Auburn launches search for first ombudsperson

The Office of the Provost is accepting applications from tenured professors at Auburn for the new position of university ombudsperson.

The three-quarter-time position will be for a trial period of two years, starting fall semester. A search committee will begin reviewing applications on June 2.

The position was recommended by the University Senate to provide someone to help faculty and staff with conflict resolution. According to the job description, the ombudsperson’s duties will include “serving as an advocate for fairness and providing impartial and confidential advice, information, intervention, mediation and referrals to ensure that employees receive fair and equitable treatment…”

The ombudsperson will report to the Executive Committee of the Senate, including the provost.

For consideration, a candidate must be a tenured full professor or retired faculty member. The person selected will continue to perform his or her regular duties on the faculty and will report to the ombudsperson.

Trustee nomination goes to last day of session

The University Senate nominated Raymond J. Harbert from Birmingham for an at-large position on the AU Board of Trustees.

If confirmed by the Alabama Senate on Monday, Harbert will join the board immediately and participate at its next meeting. If not, the appointment will remain on hold until the next legislative session.

The committee nominated Harbert to replace Earlton McWhorter from Anniston, a trustee since 2001. McWhorter, a former president pro tempore of the board, completed his term at the end of 2007, but members may serve for up to one year pending Senate confirmation of a successor.

Harbert is chairman and chief executive officer of Harbert Management Corp. He graduated from AU in 1982 with a degree in industrial management. In addition to his business interests, Harbert serves on the board of directors of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra and the Children’s Hospital of Alabama.

The Birmingham-based international business leader has long family ties to Auburn, and Engineering’s Harbert Center is named for his father, John M. Harbert III.
AUM students to take classes in Auburn facilities in 2008-09

Approximately 100 Auburn University Montgomery students will attend late afternoon and early evening classes at Auburn this fall under a pilot program for prospective transfer students.

Under an Auburn Montgomery program called Seamless Admission, the AUM freshmen will participate in a two-year trial period.

Instead of following the common practice of attending a two-year college for a year and transferring into Auburn as sophomores, the select group of AUM students will become acclimated to university-level academic requirements as well as the Auburn campus, he said.

Students may transfer to Auburn from another institution after they have completed 30 hours of academic credit and have at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average. Those students replace some of the approximately 300 AUM students annually who do not return for their sophomore year.

The AUM chancellor said the Montgomery campus does not expect to profit financially from the increased enrollment, especially out-of-state students, who pay three times the in-state tuition. The program could provide a steady pool of capable transfer students, he said.

Four AU faculty members enter new leadership training program

Four AU faculty members have been named Academic Leadership Development Program fellows for the coming academic year by the Office of the Provost under a program developed by the Southeastern Conference Academic Consortium.

The program is part of an effort by consortium member institutions, including Auburn, to offer training to tenure faculty members who are interested in future administrative positions such as graduate program chair, department head or chair, assistant or associate dean or other administrative positions.

The ALDP fellows will attend two workshops during the 2008-09 academic year. The first will be in October at the University of South Carolina, and the second will be in February at the University of Arkansas.

Fynn, who is Mosley Environmental associate professor in Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, is chair of the University Senate for 2008-09 and will become chair of the senate next March. She served as senate secretary in 2005-06.

Facility gain promotion, tenure

The Office of the Provost has released the names of faculty receiving promotion, tenure or both in 2008. Those faculty members are:

- Tenure: William H. Daniels, Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures; Goebena Huluka, Agronomy and Soils; Song-Yul Cho, Mechanical Engineering; Kevin R. Lue, Industrial and Systems Engineering; and Allen H. Smith, Computer Science and Software Engineering.

- Associate Professor and Tenure: Wheeler G. Foshee, Horticulture; Omar A. Oyarzabal, Poultry Science; Jeffrey S. Terhune, Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures; Norbert L. Wilson, Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology; Mark J. Bertus, Finance; Sherri J. Brock, Kinesiology.

- Assistant Professor: Katie Wilder and Charles Martin, AU Communications. Photography: Jeff Etheridge

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Several thousand people, including hundreds of families, attended Family Fun Day at the home of President and Mrs. Jay Gogue on Wednesday. Started 12 years ago as a tribute to Auburn faculty and staff, the annual festival celebrates the successful conclusion of the academic year.

The Alabama Community Healthy Marriage Initiative in AU’s College of Human Sciences was one of five projects featured at the recent White House Compassion in Action Conference highlighting innovative policies, new research and successful public-private partnerships that help to promote and strengthen stable marriages and families.

The April roundtable was hosted by the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Francesca Adler-Baeder, a state extension specialist and associate professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, outlined the model for the Alabama initiative. She noted that the initiative works with numerous partners, including the Alabama Children’s Trust Fund, Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect, eight family resource centers, two mental health centers and the Montgomery chapter of 100 Black Men, a service organization focused on strengthening youth and families.

Ed Brown, president of 100 Black Men, was also an invited guest for the roundtable.

Scenes from Family Fun Day, 2008