Auburn to become smoke-free campus under new policy

Auburn University will become a smoke-free campus under a policy that takes effect Aug. 21. In doing so, Auburn joins nearly 1,200 colleges and universities in the United States in recent years to ban smoking on campus.

The policy, which moves the boundaries for smoking of tobacco products to the campus periphery, was recommended by the Campus Health and Wellness Committee and representative bodies and authorized by President Jay Gogue. In addition to students, faculty and staff members, the policy will apply to everyone on campus, including consultants, contractors and visitors.

For the past year, smoking has been prohibited within 25 feet of all university buildings and facilities; previously smoking had long been banned in campus buildings. On Aug. 21, the smoking prohibition will be expanded to cover all university grounds, university-owned vehicles and property leased to or managed by the university with the exceptions of:

- Controlled research, or educational, theatrical or religious ceremonial purposes, with prior approval from the dean or director responsible for the facility.
- Privately owned vehicles on campus and locations outside of the Auburn University campus perimeter.

Remaining exterior ashtrays for cigarette butts in currently designated smoking-allowed areas on campus are being removed, with some ashtrays relocated to the campus periphery for smokers to extinguish their cigarettes or other tobacco products as they enter campus. Littering the campus with remains of disposable tobacco products is prohibited.

Under the policy, adherence is designated as the responsibility of all students, faculty, staff and visitors of Auburn University. All students, faculty, staff and visitors who are in violation of this policy will be expected to comply by discarding their tobacco products.

Facility and property managers will regulate enforcement of this policy, including but not limited to, posting appropriate signage. Any concerns about and/or violations of the policy will be brought to the attention of the individuals responsible for the operation of the university facility in question and/or the supervisor responsible for the work area.

The Campus Health and Wellness Committee will

Committee named to lead search for new vice president for student affairs at Auburn

Norman Godwin, associate dean for academic affairs in the Harbert College of Business, will chair a search committee to identify Auburn University’s new associate provost and vice president for student affairs.

The position becomes vacant July 26, when Vice President for Student Affairs Ainsley Carry, who came to Auburn in June 2009, departs for the University of Southern California.

Auburn President Jay Gogue has appointed Jon Waggoner to serve as interim vice president for student affairs while the national search is conducted.

“Jon will use his student leadership experience and business acumen to ensure we have a seamless transition,” said Gogue.

Waggoner, who will not be a candidate for the permanent position, is an Auburn graduate who served in a number of leadership roles as a student, including Student Government Association president. He is an attorney in Auburn’s legal office overseeing corporate transactions and an adjunct faculty member in the School of Accountancy. Waggoner also advises the War Eagle Girls and Plainsmen and speaks to campus groups about leadership, diversity and student involvement.

“Auburn has perhaps the best campus experience in the nation, and I’m excited to do my part supporting and encouraging students as the search is conducted,” said Waggoner.

Members of the search committee will represent stakeholders and campus governance groups, including students, deans, faculty and staff.

Gogue said he expects to name someone to the new position prior to the fall 2014 semester.

Expressing appreciation to the departing vice president for his service, Gogue said, “Dr. Carry and his staff were committed to making the Auburn student experience as enriching as possible. He will do well in his career, and we wish him all the best.”
Fashion industry website ranks Auburn program among top 15 in the South

The Apparel Merchandising, Design and Production Management program at Auburn University has recently been ranked among the region’s best by a website devoted to researching fashion programs across the country for students seeking information about fashion programs and careers.

According to the writers, designers and researchers behind www.fashion-schools.org, Auburn is ranked second in the Top 15 Fashion Schools in the South. Auburn’s Apparel Merchandising, Design, and Production Management program is offered through the Department of Consumer and Design Sciences in the College of Human Sciences.

“These rankings provide great recognition for Auburn’s program quality and are already serving as a valuable recruitment tool for our programs,” said Carol Warfield, head of the Department of Consumer and Design Sciences.

To prepare its rankings, the website team examined more than 200 schools across the country with fashion programs on the basis of academic reputation, admission selectivity, depth and breadth of the program and faculty and geographic location to cities considered industry meccas.

In its description of Auburn, it credits the Department of Consumer and Design Sciences for its undergraduate and advanced degree options, its 10-week professional internship requirement and the option of students participating in the semester-long Joseph S. Bruno Auburn Abroad in Italy program.

The website team also placed Auburn seventh in its rankings of the Top 75 Fashion Merchandising Schools in the U.S. and 20th in the Top 75 Fashion Design Schools in the U.S.

Panel formed to seek new associate vp for research

John Mason, Auburn University’s associate provost and vice president for research, will initiate an internal search this summer for the position of associate vice president for research.

The position will become vacant following the departure of Carl Pinkert, who will join the University of Alabama as its vice president for research Nov. 1.

Frank Bartol, associate dean for research and graduate studies in Auburn’s College of Veterinary Medicine, will chair the search, which Mason says will begin Aug. 16 as faculty and students return from summer break.

“There are many talented individuals on our campus that will be strong candidates for this position,” said Mason. “I look forward to the recommendations from the search committee as they seek the best-qualified candidates.”

Members of the search committee will represent stakeholders and campus governance groups, including the University Senate, faculty, Student Government Association, deans and other administrators, Mason said.

Pinkert joined Auburn in 2006 and has served as associate vice president for research since 2009. In 2011 he was named a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

“Dr. Pinkert has been very effective in working across Auburn University to enhance our research enterprise. His coordination efforts with the various academic units and respective faculty have likewise advanced our scholarly and interdisciplinary initiatives,” Mason said.

Mason said he expects to name Pinkert’s replacement by Oct. 1.

— Amy Weaver
Faculty, students increasingly helping improve communities

By Royrickers Cook, assistant vice president for University Outreach

Over the years, I have often heard “we have to focus; we can’t address every issue and be all things to all people.” This, of course, is an appropriate caution against spreading program resources so thin that impact is diminished.

However, as a land-grant state university with a mission to serve the public as a whole, where do you draw that line? What communities will be ignored; which of the pervasive issues facing our state shall we fail to address?

One of the nation’s leading outreach and engagement scholars, Hiram E. Fitzgerald, insists universities must take the opposite approach–look at issues holistically and respond collectively.

Dr. Fitzgerald is Michigan State University’s associate provost for University Outreach and Engagement, and current president of the Engagement Scholarship Consortium, a national higher education coalition dedicated to advancing outreach scholarship and civic engagement. According to Dr. Fitzgerald, “Today’s biggest issues are interconnected; we cannot hope to be effective in solving the challenges facing society if we only address one facet of a problem at a time.”

Dr. Fitzgerald, as well as I, believes that universities must leverage strategic partnerships in the community. As “publish or perish” was long the accepted reality in higher education, he says it is today more “partner or perish” for universities to be effective in community outreach. Dr. Fitzgerald also stresses that to tackle big societal problems head on, universities will have to “fully” engage their campuses–drawing on the resources of every department, and the expertise of every faculty member.

I am pleased to say community engagement is alive and well at Auburn University. As a land-grant institution, we have a long history of extension and public service work in communities across the state. But it is the call to be “fully engaged” that resonates presently at Auburn. Our just-completed institutional strategic plan includes a major priority for Auburn to “become a national model of public engagement” and to “create stronger synergies” for outreach and Extension work in our academic community.

Significantly, within Auburn’s Handbook criteria already exist and encourages faculty engagement to be documented and counted for consideration in tenure and promotion. University Outreach – as well as Extension and many of Auburn’s schools and colleges – offers grants and other project support for faculty engagement. The tools for engagement are all here for our use. However, we have to seek ways for all faculty members to be fully engaged, not just those already affiliated with the various outreach units on campus. As we like to say at Auburn, we need to be “All In,” especially as it relates to community engagement.

We can always do more to strengthen our university’s engagement. Department chairs and faculty can incorporate meaningful outreach assignments into work plans and still uphold their research and instructional commitments. Academic departments can include outreach initiatives into their strategic planning and seek interdisciplinary collaborations with other campus units on key issues. For example, Auburn already hosts a number of successful collaborations on hunger and food security, as well as K-12 issues.

I believe Auburn can be a fully engaged leader for solutions to societal issues. We can mount that “all in” effort through comprehensive faculty outreach.

* * *

Editor’s Note: Outlook 2018 is a new, periodic series offering perspective on the role major programs play in achieving goals outlined in Auburn’s Strategic Plan, as recently updated for the period 2013-18.

Gossom to speak at graduation

Thom Gossom Jr., the first black athlete to graduate from Auburn University, will be the guest speaker during the university’s two summer graduation ceremonies Saturday, Aug. 3, in Auburn Arena.

The 10 a.m. ceremony will include the colleges, schools and programs of Architecture, Design and Construction; Engineering; Forestry and Wildlife Sciences; Interdisciplinary Studies; Liberal Arts; and Sciences and Mathematics. The 2 p.m. ceremony will be held for the colleges and schools of Agriculture; Business; Education; Human Sciences; and Nursing. The ceremonies can be viewed live through the university’s website at www.auburn.edu/graduationlive.

Gossom, a native of Birmingham, is an actor, author and communications consultant. He has appeared in numerous feature films and television shows and he chronicled his role in collegiate football history in his memoir, “Walk-On: My Reluctant Journey To Integration.”

He earned his bachelor’s degree in mass communication in 1975 at Auburn, where he was the first black athlete to walk on and earn a football scholarship in the Southeastern Conference. Gossom started three of his four seasons and lettered at wide receiver from 1972-1974. He later earned a master’s degree in communication from the University of Montevideo.

Auburn will award 1,277 academic degrees during the graduation ceremonies, including 794 bachelor’s degrees, 362 master’s degrees, 98 doctorates and 23 education specialist degrees.

The College of Liberal Arts will award the most bachelor’s degrees with 209, followed by the Raymond J. Harbert College of Business with 134 and the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering with 102. The College of Human Sciences will present 92 degrees; College of Architecture, Design and Construction, 53; College of Education, 51; College of Sciences and Mathematics, 49; School of Nursing, 47; College of Agriculture, 33; School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, 12; and Office of the Provost, 12 degrees in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Auburn University has awarded more than 285,000 degrees since its founding as East Alabama Male College in 1856.

— Charles Martin
Auburn vp for alumni affairs elected to national association’s board of directors
Debbie Shaw, vice president for alumni affairs, has been elected to the Council of Alumni Association Executives national board of directors at the summer conference held in San Francisco.
CAAE is an organization of chief alumni officers from large research universities in North America. Shaw previously served as president of the Alumni Professionals of the Southeastern Conference.

Three in Engineering receive William F. Walker Teaching Awards for Excellence
Three faculty members in the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering have been awarded William F. Walker Teaching Awards for Excellence.
Lewis Payton, associate research professor of mechanical engineering and director of the Design and Manufacturing Lab, received the superior award, while Mark Byrne, the Daniel F. and Josephine Breeden Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering, and Steven Gross, associate professor of aerospace engineering, were awarded merit awards.

The William F. Walker Teaching Awards, named in honor of the former engineering dean and Auburn University president, were created to recognize and motivate outstanding achievement of faculty members who educate engineering students at Auburn.

Walton appointed to Alabama’s new Shellfish Aquaculture Review Board
Gov. Robert Bentley has appointed Bill Walton, an Alabama Cooperative Extension System fisheries specialist and Auburn University assistant professor of fisheries and aquaculture, to the state’s newly established Shellfish Aquaculture Review Board.
The seven-member board was created this spring by the Alabama Legislature.

Adhikari cited as engineering society’s top young researcher for 2013
BioSystems Engineering Assistant Professor Sushil Adhikari has been named the top researcher under the age of 40 in the 8,000-member American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers.
The organization presented its 2013 New Holland Young Researcher Award to Adhikari July 24 during its annual international meeting in Kansas City, Mo., citing him for outstanding bioenergy and biofuels research program. Among Adhikari’s areas of research are biomass gasification and pyrolysis and hydrogen production from biological materials.

Since coming to Auburn in 2008, Adhikari has led or participated in scientific investigations supported by more than $25 million in grants from highly competitive funding agencies. At Auburn, he has received two College of Agriculture Dean’s Grantsmanship Awards and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station Director’s Research Award – Junior Researcher.

Bratcher receives award from the American Meat Science Association
Christy Bratcher, an associate professor in the Department of Animal Sciences, has received one of three 2013 Distinguished Achievement Awards from the American Meat Science Association in recognition of her scientific skills in muscle foods research and technology that contribute to the animal products industry and the AMSA.
Bratcher, who joined the faculty in 2008, was honored in June at AMSA’s 66th Reciprocal Meat Conference in Auburn.
Bratcher’s research has focused on meat quality and food safety, with an emphasis in industry-related applied research. She is faculty adviser to the Lambert-Powell Meats Lab and Auburn’s Collegiate Cattlemen & Cattlewomen organization and is a core faculty member of Auburn’s Foods Systems Institute.

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