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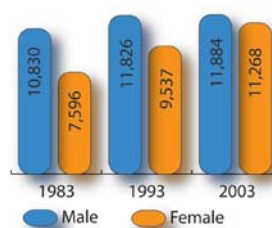
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Source: Planning & Analysis

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AU report

For the faculty and staff of Auburn University

Vol. 36 No. 28



Higher profile

The Auburn University Graduate School, headquartered in Hargis Hall, shown here, will have a higher profile under plans announced by President William Walker and described below. This scene of Hargis in early evening is featured in the calendar "Twilight on the Plains," produced by AU Photographic Services. The calendars are available at the AU Bookstore and at Photographic Services in the L Building.

Vice presidential level

Graduate programs gain larger role

President William Walker has announced the appointment of John F. Pritchett to the new position of vice president for graduate studies.

Walker announced the action in remarks to the Board of Trustees on Nov. 7. The AU president said the change reflects a new emphasis on graduate programs in the emerging plan for university priorities over the next five years. The plan should be ready for presentation to the board in the spring, he added.

"Within that plan, one of the things that I can tell you we are going to stress is graduate instruction and research, particularly in certain high-profile areas," Walker said. The emphasis, he said, will help Auburn meet Gov. Bob Riley's challenge for research universities to increase their contribution to the state's economic development.

"With that emphasis in mind and in consideration of the outstanding service that Dr. John Pritchett has rendered as interim provost for over two and a half years, I am going to elevate the position of graduate dean to vice president for graduate studies for a

period of three years," Walker said. Before the end of the three years, the president and provost will determine whether to make the organizational change permanent or adopt a different structure.

"I believe it is time we begin emphasizing graduate education and research as a potential vehicle for economic development," Walker said. With 3,104 graduate students at AU this fall, the university should make progress toward its goal of 5,000 graduate students within five years, he added.

Pritchett served for the past two years as interim vice president for academic affairs. From 1995-2001, he was associate vice president for academic affairs and dean of the graduate school.

He joined the AU faculty in 1973 and was a department head in the College of Agriculture and later the College of Sciences and Mathematics from 1982-95.

An Auburn graduate, Pritchett earned a Ph.D. in animal physiology and biological chemistry from Iowa State University.

From the President

AU can shape its own future, help build public trust in universities

By President William F. Walker

As higher education administrators in the state understand, the funding crisis facing colleges and universities is not unique to Alabama. Higher education simply is not held in as high regard as it once was by taxpayers across the nation.



Walker

People are now more interested in such issues as elementary and secondary education, health care, prescription drugs for seniors, retirement benefits, defense spending and law enforcement. If higher education is to regain the confidence and respect of the public and our lawmakers, it must quickly adopt and strictly adhere to strong guidelines for accountability of all funds it receives, whether they are public or private dollars.

To demonstrate a return on tax dollars, higher education should be required to publish an annual report card based on institutional benchmarks. Such a report, in my view, could provide objective data that would enable Alabamians to judge how effectively and efficiently institutional missions are being met.

Auburn University also supports a stronger definition of student residency requirements. Without it, Alabama taxpayers are literally subsidizing the education of out-of-state students. This surfaces in budget requests when some colleges and universities complain that their teaching and classroom capacities are overloaded.

There is evidence that shows clearly how a strict enforcement of residency requirements works to the advantage of the institution and the state of Alabama. Auburn has taken the lead in the enforcement of residency standards, and it continues to attract out-of-state students while charging three times in-state tuition rates. The lesson is that if Auburn sets out-of-state tuition to cover the true costs of educating its students, the market answers the question of duplication in programs and institutions. This conclusion may sound harsh, but the economic realities we face are harsher still.

In addition, we must place a moratorium on expansion of any campuses, pending the development of a funding formula that provides each institution with a base level of funding consistent with its mission. Also incentives are needed to promote state priorities, especially economic development.

Accountability measures such as these can move the state a long way toward resolving the issue of mission and funding for higher education. Will measures such as these be painful? The answer is undoubtedly yes. Controlling our spending habits is seldom a pain-free exercise. But can measures such as these succeed? Here the answer is a definite yes,

and Auburn's own experience provides a case in point. We know first of all that state funding for higher education is under tremendous pressure in this state and elsewhere. So, questions of mission and funding are of vital importance.

We know also that there are different kinds of higher education institutions in this state: two-year schools, regional universities and research universities. And we know that these many institutions are asked to accomplish multiple missions. These include the preparation of students for jobs, strengthening the state's economy so that more and better jobs will be available and providing broad basic education for the next generation of professional and community leaders in this state.

Whatever priorities are assigned to this mix of missions, we know that we would like for public higher education to be both accessible and accountable. Accessibility means in part that students have access to programs for which they qualify, and it also means that they can afford the costs of those programs. Accountability refers in part to the efficiency with which we use our resources to provide programs. But it also refers to the academic effectiveness of those programs and the extent to which the state's economy can absorb their graduates.

Finally, we know that where we start the analysis can go a long way toward determining the results. For example, if our starting point is the mission of preparing graduates to fill jobs, then we may have too many institutions and programs because in some fields we are producing more graduates than the state's economy can absorb.

If we begin with the assumption that our current number of graduates is about right, then there is no duplication and we need more funding to do a quality job.

If we focus on the level of public funding and think it is about right, or even needs to be cut, then we clearly have duplication, in which case no one is adequately funded.

So, given those multiple and sometimes conflicting objectives and constraints, where do we begin the process of sorting through the mission, organization and funding of higher education?

In the complex environment of higher education, we would all be well served by a setting forth of missions, peer groups and peaks of excellence for each institution. The result would be in effect guidelines for the allocation of very scarce public resources.

Defining a mission makes it possible to put into place accountability measures that involve both performance and financial efficiency. Auburn's experience demonstrates that this process can be carried out effectively.

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, November 18

- Public Lecture: "Gender, Race and Caste," Subhadra Channa, Fulbright Scholar and visiting professor in anthropology, 12:30 p.m., Foy Exhibit Lounge.

Wednesday, November 19

- Staff Council Seminar: Insurance and benefits, 10 a.m., Foy 208.
- AU Libraries Book Club: Discussing "The Da Vinci Code," 11:45 a.m. and 5 p.m., first-floor systems classroom, Draughton Library.
- Gallery Talk: "Social Activism and AU's 'Advancing American Art' Collection," Museum Curator Catherine Walsh, 2 p.m., Gallery A, Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art.

Thursday, November 20

- Goodwin Lecture: Jennifer K. Pullium, Emory University School of Medicine, "Reproductive Organ Transplantation in the Dog," noon, Greene 121.
- Free admission: Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, 5 p.m.-9 p.m., South College Street at Woodfield Drive.
- Concert: "Sounds of Auburn," performances by bands, ensembles and choral groups sponsored by Department of Music, 7:30 p.m., Student Activities Center.

Monday, November 24

- Next AU Report. Note: This is a change from the previous posting. Deadline for submissions is 4 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 19.
- Thanksgiving Holidays: No classes this week; offices open Monday-Tuesday.

Wednesday, November 26

- Offices close for Thanksgiving holidays.

Monday, December 1

- Classes resume; offices reopen.
- No AU Report on Monday following Thanksgiving holiday.
- Italian Film Festival: "Life is Beautiful," 4 p.m., Spidle 144.
- Concert: AU Singers Fall Show, 7:30 p.m., Auburn High School.



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Staff Council

The past, present and future chairs of the AU Staff Council are, from left to right, Candace Bourne of Pathobiology, immediate past-chair; 2003-04 Staff Council Chair Vic Walker of Clinical Sciences; and Chair-Elect John Varner of AU Archives.



New company to license, market AU technological breakthroughs

Auburn University has signed a licensing agreement formally launching its first commercial development venture under a new technology transfer model.

AETOS Technologies Inc., an Auburn-based firm, has joined with AU to commercialize and market a set of technologies developed by a team of researchers under the direction of Vitaly Vodyanoy in the College of Veterinary Medicine.

The first technology marketed under the agreement will be an ultra high-resolution, dark-field optical microscope that enables observation of living cells in extremely fine detail and in real time.

"We believe that Dr. Vodyanoy's microscope has the potential to revolutionize the dark field optical microscope market, and will be the basis of a highly profitable company," said Chuck Ludwig, AETOS Technologies president and chief executive officer.

"We believe that this new business model has the potential to significantly improve the way university technology transfer can be achieved and greatly enhance the value of its intellectual properties to the university."

Under the agreement, AU holds minority ownership in AETOS Technologies, while accruing a major share in revenues generated. "The model provides a means whereby the university can secure a higher return on its research developments that are commercialized," said Vice President for Research Michael Moriarty. "Auburn owns a 45 percent share

in the company, but up to 60 percent of the revenues generated will flow back to the institution."

AU research administrators worked with Tom Lawrence, a venture capitalist and business development consultant, to launch the new venture. Lawrence says the new Auburn model provides a nontraditional approach to university technology transfer.

"Current university technology transfer has seldom been satisfactory to either the university or to commercial enterprise," Lawrence said.

"Technologies developed through university research typically are funded by contracts and grants. Once the research is complete and the results are published, the technologies rarely have an opportunity for commercial exposure," he said.

"When they are licensed to a commercial developer, the university typically retains rights to a much lower return than what might be possible under a different process," Lawrence added.

The new process does not replace traditional technology transfer, said OTT Director Jan Thornton.

"The traditional tech transfer licensing process still will be used for many of the university's research developments," said Thornton.

"However, when a technology is suitable for this new model, such as having extremely high commercial potential, we will pursue the formation of a venture company to develop and market the technology at a higher value to the university."

Phi Kappa Phi seeks applications for fellowships, awards

The national honor society of Phi Kappa Phi is seeking applications for 60 graduate fellowships and 40 Awards of Excellence in 2004-05.

Presented for first-year, full-time graduate or professional study, the graduate fellowships are worth

\$5,000 each and the Awards of Excellence are for \$2,000 each.

Contact Judith Lechner at lechnjv@auburn.edu or 844-3053 or Phi Kappa Phi headquarters at awards@phikappaphi.org or 1-800-804-9880.



National Register University and Student Affairs leaders on Nov. 7 unveiled a plaque designating Katharine Cater Hall as a site on the National Register of Historic Places. The participants included, from left, Vice President for Student Affairs Wes Williams; former AU presidential assistant Emily Leischuck, a friend of the late Katharine Cater; family representative Thomas Jere Cater; and AU President William Walker.

Public relations/marketing official named communications director

Deedie Dowdle, a 20-year public relations and marketing veteran, has joined Auburn University's Office of Communications and Marketing as director of communications.



Dowdle

Dowdle comes to Auburn from Kennesaw State University, north of Atlanta, after a national search to fill the position. At Kennesaw, she was director of marketing and design services.

"Deedie brings significant talent and enthusiasm to the Office of Communications and Marketing," said John Hachtel, AU assistant vice president for communications and marketing. "Her skills as a team manager and strategic communicator create opportunities for this office to provide a greater range of services to the campus."

As director of communications, Dowdle will oversee the OCM's internal and external communications to a wide variety of audiences, including students, faculty and staff, alumni, the public and the news media.

"I'm looking forward to seeing a unified integration of communications and marketing to comprehensively reflect Auburn's outstanding quality," Dowdle said.

"The communications staff includes some of the most dedicated and talented people I've had the pleasure of working with. They are already initiating and responding to ideas for being a stronger campus-wide creative services resource encompassing writing, reporting, editing, design, printing, broadcast and electronic communication for all our campus constituents," she said.

At Kennesaw, Dowdle guided the creation of an integrated marketing plan for the university which included a new logo, branding and positioning and university-wide identification standards. The plan won a Grand Award from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, District III, that organization's highest recognition. She also served on the University System of Georgia's strategic marketing committee.

Dowdle holds a bachelor's degree in public relations from the University of Alabama and a master's degree in professional writing from Kennesaw State University. Early in her career, she worked at several public relations and advertising firms in the Atlanta area. Before joining the Kennesaw staff, she was director of marketing and public relations for Silver Dollar City Inc., owners of Atlanta-area theme parks White Water/American Adventures and Stone Mountain Park, and at Six Flags Inc.

Sounds of Auburn scheduled for Thursday at Student Activities Center

More than 500 student-musicians will perform during the third annual Sounds of Auburn concert at 7:30 p.m. Thursday at the Student Activities Center.

Under the direction of Department of Music faculty, the free 90-minute concert will feature performances by the Auburn University Concert Choir, Jazz

Band, Symphonic Band, Steel Drum Band, University Singers and AU Marching Band.

Lee Miller, an associate producer for NBC's Today Show, will be master of ceremonies. Miller, a 1999 AU graduate, is an alumnus of the Concert Choir, Vocal Chamber Ensemble and University Singers.

Former GM CEO to visit College of Business

John F. "Jack" Smith Jr., retired chairman and CEO of General Motors Corp., will be the Lower Visiting Executive in Residence at the Auburn University College of Business on Tuesday.

Smith, who retired from the automaker last May after 38 years with the company, has been cited by automotive and financial writers as the man who saved the automaker.

During Smith's eight years as CEO in the 1990s, the corporation launched a major reorganization, improved operating efficiency and increased market share.

GM is the world's largest vehicle manufacturer and employs 340,000 people globally in its core automotive business and subsidiaries.

Today, GM has manufacturing operations in 32 countries and has sales in more than 190 countries.

Smith became president of GM in April 1992 and acquired the title of chief operating officer a month later. Earlier, he was vice chairman with responsibility for international operations.

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