SACS body reaffirms Auburn accreditation

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges this week reaffirmed Auburn University’s accreditation.

The approval was announced Tuesday during the SACS Commission on Colleges annual winter meeting in Atlanta.

Following usual procedures for decennial reviews, the Commission on Colleges reached its reaffirmation decision after teams of educators from peer institutions reviewed Auburn’s compliance with the principles of accreditation. Preliminary review was conducted by an off-site team in October 2012, and the second team visited in March to confirm Auburn’s continued compliance with accreditation standards and federal requirements and the university’s plans for enhancing student learning in the future.

“The rigorous review and focus on improvement of the reaccreditation process is healthy for Auburn,” said President Jay Gogue. “It strengthens our academic quality and ensures we’re using best practices across campus. The Auburn Family can rest assured that we’re well-positioned to help future generations reach their hopes and dreams.”

“The reaffirmation is the latest step in an ongoing process in which the university continually reexamines our mission, programs, goals and outcomes over the past decade in order to chart a course for future success,” said Timothy Boosinger, Auburn’s provost and vice president for academic affairs. “Our peers from other member institutions of the SACS Commission on Colleges have provided collegial support throughout this process, and we also thank the Commission staff for their assistance.”

The Auburn provost added, “I would especially like to thank the many faculty and staff leaders who have worked together to help guide Auburn University through this process, as well as Drew Clark and the staff of Institutional Research and Assessment, who provided vital support at every stage. Auburn University is well prepared to serve its students and graduates worldwide and the people of Alabama over the next decade.”

In a major change adopted since Auburn’s previous reaffirmation in 2004, each SACSCOC member institution develops a quality enhancement plan, or QEP, which is then examined as part of the institution’s accreditation process. For its QEP component, Auburn is implementing a program for students to develop professional electronic portfolios, which are collections of digital artifacts such as text, visual materials, sound files and other electronic materials that document the student’s academic growth.

Typically, students begin ePortfolios early in their academic careers and refine them as they progress toward graduation. The ePortfolio program seeks to help students develop a broader academic perspective while producing evidence of a student’s capacity for graduate study or employment, or both.

Speakers in January to discuss early days of integration

As part of Auburn’s yearlong celebration of 50 years of integration, the “Honoring the Past, Charting the Future” Commemoration and Recognition Luncheon and Forum will be Jan. 21 at The Hotel at Auburn University.

The public forum begins at 9:30 a.m. in the hotel auditorium. Participants will include retired U.S. Judge U.W. Clemon, civil rights attorney Fred Gray and four of Auburn’s first African-American students: Harold Franklin, Samuel Pettijohn, Willie Wyatt Jr. and Anthony Lee. The moderator will be William Leftwich, a principal with the LS Strategic Group.

The 11:45 a.m. luncheon is a ticketed event and will feature author, educator and poet Frank X. Walker as the keynote speaker. The Auburn University Gospel Choir will perform at the luncheon.
Gingerbread Village additions
The Hotel at Auburn University has added two new buildings to its Christmas display of the Auburn Gingerbread Village in the hotel lobby. Those buildings are the President’s Home, right foreground, and the Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art, middle right. The new buildings join Cater Hall, Langdon Hall, Hargis Hall, Samford Hall, The Hotel at Auburn University, the Auburn Train Depot, the Auburn University Chapel and the Halliday Cary Pick house, home of the Cary Center, to form the miniature gingerbread village.

Museum adds Warhol photo of ’80s rock singer John Oates wearing a WDE T-shirt

The Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art at Auburn University is the winner of an online auction of an Andy Warhol photograph from Christie’s Auction House, an 8x10 black-and-white image featuring Rock and Roll Hall of Fame 2014 nominee John Oates in 1981 wearing a “War Damn Eagle” T-shirt.

The museum staff, with donations from Auburn alumni and community partners, sought to acquire the photograph, not only to add to its existing Warhol collection of 150 photographs, but also to advance the mission of research, instruction and outreach to the Auburn Family.

The duo of Daryl Hall and John Oates recorded six number one hits and put 34 songs in the Billboard Top 100. Oates visited Auburn in May 1981 with the group on a tour of southern colleges. “When we came to town, we were welcomed by a barbecue place, which was kind of fun, and I recall going to the student store,” said Oates. “I had never heard the term ‘War Damn Eagle,’ but I thought it was really cool.”

Oates said he knew Warhol from living in New York City, along with graffiti artist Keith Haring. “Andy would come to our shows,” Oates said. “I used to go over to The Factory, where Andy did his work, which was kind of an older loft building. It was a very small community, believe it or not. It seems legendary now with the perspective of time. He was always taking pictures.”

Because Warhol was rarely without his camera, Oates said he wasn’t sure exactly when the photograph was captured, but that it was flattering to be part of the museum’s collection. “I have, by accident, become a certain part of art history. Andy was so ahead of his time and prophetic in terms of where the world has gone in making stars. If interest because someone knows me or my music helps generate interest in the university, Andy’s work, or other aspects of the fine arts, then everyone benefits.”

Auburn alumnus L. Nick Davis ’84, attended the Hall and Oates concert at Beard-Eaves-Memorial Coliseum and was part of the museum’s development effort to secure funds for the acquisition of the photograph.

Davis said he was glad to bring the photograph home to the Plains not only for nostalgic reasons, but also to possibly raise awareness of this campus and community asset.

── Charlotte Hendrix

Ceremonies on Saturday

Stan White to address graduating students

Auburn University will award 1,432 academic degrees Saturday, Dec. 14, in Auburn Arena during two fall graduation ceremonies featuring addresses by Auburn alumnus and former athlete Stan White, now an insurance executive and football analyst.

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

White attended Auburn from 1989-1993 and graduated with a bachelor’s degree in mass communication. He was the starting quarterback for four years and set numerous school records, including being the all-time passing leader with 8,016 yards and all-time leader in completions with 659 and attempts with 1,231. He is the owner of Stan White Insurance Agency Inc. in Birmingham and has been the football analyst for the Auburn IMG Sports Network for the last 13 years.

Of the degrees Auburn will award, 1,091 are bachelor’s degrees, 262 are master’s degrees, 75 are doctorates and four are education specialist degrees.

The College of Liberal Arts will award the most bachelor’s degrees with 249, followed by the College of Business with 224. The Samuel Ginn College of Engineering will present 165 degrees; College of Education, 121; College of Sciences and Mathematics, 104; College of Architecture, Design and Construction, 67; College of Human Sciences, 64; College of Agriculture, 62; School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, 22; and Office of the Provost, 13 degrees in Interdisciplinary Studies.

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

Campus Calendar

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11
Final Auburn Report of fall semester

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14
Graduation Ceremonies at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., Auburn Arena

MONDAY, DECEMBER 23
Semester Break Offices closed through Christmas and New Year’s holidays

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2014
Offices Reopen Normal business operations resume

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8
First Day of classes for spring semester
Nursing students at Auburn University and Auburn Montgomery will have the opportunity next spring to work with staff at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., providing care to wounded service men and women.

"With a growing number of service members, veterans and their family members seeking care outside of the Military and Veterans Affairs health systems, it’s imperative for our students to be properly prepared to address their physical, as well as emotional, needs," said Schools of Nursing Dean Gregg Newschwander.

When David Crumbley joined the Auburn faculty in 2012 as an assistant clinical professor, nursing faculty on both campuses had been considering ways to expand the curriculum to include exploring the health needs and challenges of military service members.

A 23-year veteran of the U.S. military, Crumbley had spent four years at the National Naval Medical Center and Walter Reed Army Medical Center, now Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, caring for the wounded and also one year in the Veterans Administration Central Office. There, he was responsible for facilitating partnerships between the Department of Defense, Veterans Administration and civilian agencies to enhance care coordination for the severely wounded, ill and injured warriors.

"I was motivated to do something within my first three months in Auburn and Montgomery," he said. "I was encountering women who were agonizing over the behavioral problems of their sons and husbands who were suffering from traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder. In each case, they didn’t know the warning signs or where to find help until it was too late."

Crumbley decided to contact a former colleague in Bethesda. Commander Michele Kane, the current director of the Centers for Nursing Science and Clinical Inquiry at Walter Reed and a 1992 alumna of the Auburn Montgomery School of Nursing, had worked with Crumbley on several projects affecting the care of wounded soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen.

Between Crumbley and Kane, with assistance from Auburn associate professor Libba McMillan, wife of a former U.S. Air Force pilot, and Auburn Montgomery associate professor Marilyn Rhodes, a retired colonel and 30-year veteran of the U.S. Air Force, a five-year agreement between the schools and Walter Reed was reached this fall.

The first clinical experience is scheduled for spring break 2014. Crumbley said students will spend five days focusing on the different points of care from injury to recovery, rotating through the Intensive Care Unit, surgical inpatient unit, inpatient and outpatient physical therapy, inpatient and outpatient mental health and the Warrior Transition units on base.

"Not only will they meet with the wounded warriors, but they will have the opportunity to meet with family members allowing them to understand the issues they face during this recovery process," he added.

Lt. Col. Kyle Feger, commander of the Warrior Transition Battalion at Fort Benning, Ga., and other members of the battalion staff recently visited with Auburn and AUM students in Montgomery to discuss the continuity of care they offer wounded, ill and injured soldiers and their families. The meeting, which also included presentations from Crumbley and Kane, was meant to show students what they would witness and experience at Walter Reed or Fort Benning.

"We plan to build a partnership with the Warrior Transition Battalion, which will provide our students with a better understanding of those who have suffered the wounds of war," said Rhodes.

– Amy Weaver

International Quality of Life Awards

Auburn University’s College of Human Sciences hosted its 20th annual International Quality of Life Awards ceremony at the United Nations headquarters in New York City on Tuesday. This year’s Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Tim Cook, Apple CEO and Auburn alumnus. Howard G. Buffett, chairman and CEO of the Howard G. Buffett Foundation, was named the IQLA Laureate. Pictured with Auburn President Jay Gogue, left, and College of Human Sciences Dean June Henton, right, are Cook, actress and philanthropist Eva Longoria, Buffett and Rwanda President Paul Kagame.

Holiday ribbons

Paul Barringer ascended to new heights last week as part of a Landscape Services crew that decorated the evergreen arbor vitae in the southeast corner of Samford Park as a Christmas tree for the holidays.
Auburn-engineered training device has roots in cleanup following tornadoes that swept across Alabama in 2011

Auburn University mechanical engineering students in Professor David Dyer’s comprehensive design class take good ideas and help turn them into sleek, customer-ready products. Interestingly, the good ideas can be generated at the most unusual times.

One idea, now a finished product called the SledHammer, originated when a high school football coach helped his neighbors remove debris from their yards after the April 2011 tornadoes ripped across Alabama. Vaughn Maceina, now a strength coach and teacher at Auburn Junior High School, was living and coaching in the Marshall County town of Guntersville.

“Fortunately, our community did not have any fatalities, so we were mainly dealing with property damage,” Maceina said. “I was helping cut fallen trees and then rolling the logs out of the way, when I realized this rolling motion was excellent for building strength in the arms and legs, really the whole body.

“Later, I thought about collecting some logs to try out the method, but that didn’t work because logs were not round enough. They were uneven and had knots and cut branches, so you couldn’t get a smooth motion.”

Maceina and his childhood friend, local attorney Sesie Bonsi, decided to call Professor Dyer to see if he and his students could take the idea and turn it into a training device that could be used by football players and other athletes.

“They did an unbelievable job developing our concept,” Maceina said.

Dyer and his students went to work and made the SledHammer, which consists of either an 18- or 24-inch-diameter PVC cylinder attached by chains to two metal bases with free weights on top. “We wanted something like rolling a log and with variable resistance,” Dyer said.

Three groups of six undergraduates have worked on the project, with the first group working in summer and fall 2012 to make a working prototype. They did drawings, a wooden prototype and a PVC-cylinder model, followed by a full-size, metal prototype.

“We wondered how we could add variable resistance to the cylinder,” Maceina said. “The students had the idea to simply use free weights on two attached bases. The unique design allows the SledHammer to reverse directions simply by pushing it the other way as the core rolls through the sleds and goes the other direction.”

A second group of students took over in 2013 and streamlined the manufacturing process and enhanced the appearance. A third group continues to work on variations of the SledHammer as well as other new fitness products.

“The students enjoy it because there are a lot of challenges in these projects,” Dyer said. “The projects in our comprehensive design classes are very practical, real-world projects, and the students get to work with industrial sponsors who need their assistance.”

Brad Martin, a 2012 Auburn mechanical engineering graduate, was among the first students who worked on the project. “Witnessing the SledHammer project grow from a simple hand drawing to a working prototype gave me a great sense of accomplishment,” Martin said. “The lessons learned about the design process and working to meet an industrial sponsor’s needs were a great base for starting my career as a mechanical engineer.”

Maceina and Bonsi worked with Auburn’s Office of Technology Transfer to obtain patent protection and have started a company, TROUT Fitness, featuring the SledHammer. TROUT is an acronym for toughness, resistance, originality, utility and technology—and it is Maceina’s middle name.

The company has a licensing agreement with the university and has the rights to the co-owned invention. Maceina and Bonsi also worked with Auburn’s Department of Industrial and Graphic Design on brand identity, paint schemes and company logos. The university’s Auburn Technical Assistance Center, or ATAC, part of the Raymond J. Harbert College of Business, assisted with marketing and website construction as well.

“The assistance provided by ATAC and Industrial Design was crucial in help-
ing us develop a brand identity and Internet presence to begin a plan for selling on a larger scale,” Maceina said.

Those marketing and graphic design aspects were made possible by funding from ATAC’s Economic Development Administration, or EDA, grant. “Helping existing and start-up businesses like TROUT Fitness commercialize an innovation is one of our primary roles as an Outreach and EDA University Center,” said David Mixson, director of the EDA University Center, part of the Auburn Technical Assistance Center.

Auburn High School and several other high schools and colleges are using or have used SledHammers as part of their training regimen, as are fitness companies.

In January, Maceina and Bonsi will travel to the American Football Coaches Association Conference in Indianapolis to display the SledHammer in front of thousands of professional, college and high school coaches. Maceina says the SledHammer can be customized with school colors and logos upon request and he adds that it can be used for other training programs such as crossfit.

Charles Martin

Displaying invention
Inventors Vaughn Maceina, left, and Sesie Bonsi, right, worked with Auburn mechanical engineering students to create the SledHammer strength-training device.