In the first report of its kind for any Alabama institution, a survey of faculty satisfaction by a higher education collaborative at Harvard University has found that Auburn University has one of the most favorable working environments for new faculty in the United States.

Auburn scored among the top four institutions in four of seven categories in a recent survey of tenure-track junior faculty at 31 doctoral universities, including Harvard, by the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education at Harvard’s Graduate School of Education. Evaluating responses of faculty in their first few years of employment at each institution, the survey assessed how faculty feel about their careers, colleagues and institutional support.

Tenure-track junior faculty typically have been at an institution for seven years or less.

Auburn's tenure-track junior faculty gave the institution especially high marks for collegiality, policy effectiveness, tenure expectations and clarity and the institutional environment for work and family. Their ratings placed Auburn among the top four institutions in each category.

In addition to the overall picture of satisfaction levels of tenure-track junior faculty, the survey developed detailed data on a variety of questions, examined differences in response by gender and race and differences between expectations and reality encountered by faculty at each institution. Those responses were also compared to the responses from faculty at five other institutions: Clemson, Iowa State, Kansas State, Texas Tech and North Carolina State. On most survey items, Auburn's rating was significantly higher than the average for these five peers.

AU Provost John Heilman said Auburn joined the higher education collaborative at Harvard to identify the needs of junior faculty. He noted that AU has

See Survey of junior faculty, page 2

www.ocm.auburn.edu/au_report/aureport.html

Happy Holidays!
May your holidays be merry, whether they include any combination of Christmas, Hanukkah, Eid Al-Adha, Kwanzaa, New Year's or other religious or secular observances.
Alfa presents its top award to AU president

President Ed Richardson received the Alabama Farmers Federation's highest award last week during the 85th annual meeting of the state's largest farm organization. In presenting the Service to Agriculture Award, Jerry A. Newby, president of the 45,000-member affiliate of the American Farm Bureau Federation, said Richardson had "refocused, re-energized and redefined" the university's role as a land-grant institution.

Richardson has received the AU Board of Trustee's approval to establish an institute of natural resources, an umbrella institute that will include the College of Agriculture, School of Forestry and Wildlife Science, Alabama Cooperative Extension Station, Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, Alternative Fuels Unit, Water Initiative and other environmental units. Richardson said he expects to appoint a vice president for that institute soon, possibly this week. He told an audience of about 1,500 Federation members that the institute is being formed so that "we can all pull together to wrap around one agenda, and that's to promote agriculture." He added, "Once this happens, you are going to see Auburn in a much more responsive posture. Auburn is going to be far more positive in the future than in the past."

Snow days
Snowfall has been a rare and usually welcome event at Auburn during the university's first 150 years. An especially photogenic snowfall was in January 2002, when a sudden storm disrupted the start of the semester and left the newly landscaped Samford lawn looking like a winter wonderland.

The co-acting director of the landscape proposal to rejuvenate the campus' front lawn, which had deteriorated from decades of overuse. Little progress was made, however, until Hurricane Opal came through Auburn in 1995, wreaking havoc across the area and turning Samford Park into a horizontal forest. After downed trees were cleared, AU implemented the landscaping plan.

Upcoming Events 2006

Monday, December 11

FINAL AU Report of fall semester

Friday, December 15

GRADUATION 2 p.m., Board-Eaves-Memorial Coliseum

Friday, December 22

HOLIDAYS AU Offices closed for final days of 2006

Wednesday, January 3

OFFICES REOPEN following holidays

Monday, January 8

FIRST DAY of classes for spring semester

Monday, January 15

HOLIDAY Martin Luther King Jr. Day, office closed, no classes

FIRST AU Report of spring semester, distribution on Tuesday, Wednesday, January 24

FACULTY SEMINAR "Understanding the Learner: A Profile of the AU Student," noon-1:30 p.m., Foy 208; open to all faculty, staff and graduate students; bring your lunch

Thursday, February 1

AU Board of Trustees, time TBA, AUB

Friday, February 2

MEETING AU Board of Trustees, time TBA, AUB

Pioneer of Green Revolution receives Quality of Life Award

A ceremony at the United Nations Building in New York last week, the AU College of Human Sciences presented the 2006 International Quality of Life Award to Norman Ernest Borlaug, who is widely known as the "father of the Green Revolution" in agriculture. Also, the college presented a Liftetime Achievement Award to celebrated golf champion Nancy Lopez Knight. UNICEF Executive Director Ann Veneman and former professional baseball player Ray Knight presented the awards for the college. Alabama Gov. Bob Riley and Auburn University Provost John Heilman also participated.

Borlaug is a distinguished professor of international agricultural economics at Texas A&M University, Medal of Freedom recipient, Nobel Laureate and founder of the World Food Prize. He is credited by the United Nations with advances in agriculture that led to a dramatic increase in food production worldwide during the 1960s.

With a Ph.D. in plant pathology and genetics from the University of Minnesota in 1942, Borlaug spent the next 20 years developing strains of semi-dwarf, high-yield, disease-resistant wheat that he introduced, along with modern agricultural production techniques, to much of the developing world to vastly improve food production. His collective increases in food production have been labeled the "Green Revolution," and Borlaug is often credited with saving a billion people from starvation.

Lopez Knight is one of the most celebrated players in the history of women's golf. She joined the Ladies Professional Golf Association in 1977 and became an overnight sensation. She is a three-time winner of the LPGA Championship, was named the LPGA Player of the Year four times and has been inducted into the LPGA Hall of Fame.

Lopez Knight is married to former professional baseball player Ray Knight, the 1986 World Series MVP. They reside in Alabama, Ga., and are the parents of three daughters, two of whom attend AU. In 2004, the Knights formed "Heartfelt Support," a national organization committed to inspire living a healthy life after a heart attack.

"It is a great privilege to honor Norman Borlaug," said June Henderson, Executive Director of the College of Human Sciences. "As is true for each IQLA Laureate, their work reflects the spirit of the award by promoting the respect and dignity of all citizens around the world."

"We are all most pleased in presenting the 2006 Lifetime Achievement Award to Nancy Lopez for her outstanding achievements in her professional career as well as her efforts to give back to the community."

English professor wins MLA award


Backscheider and fellow recipient W.T. Mitchell, of the University of Chicago, will be honored Dec. 28 in Philadelphia. Among the most prestigious literary awards in the humanities, the Modern Language Association has more than 30,000 members in approximately 100 countries.

The award is named for James Russell Lowell, a leading 19th century literary figure who was the first editor of the Atlantic Monthly and an early president of the Modern Language Association. The MLA presents the award annually to recognize work that is an outstanding example of literary scholarship. Backscheider has five years of experience in teaching and 16 years of experience in scholarship. Her book, published by the University of Chicago Press, is the first major treatment of a large number of English women and women poets, with a particular focus on 18th-century women writers. Backscheider’s book presents the first comprehensive treatment of this topic.

Nancy Lopez Knight is married to former professional baseball player Ray Knight, the 1986 World Series MVP. They reside in Alabama, Ga., and are the parents of three daughters, two of whom attend AU.}

At the 2006 MLA annual conference in Philadelphia, the MLA awards committee’s citation for Backscheider’s book says, “Urging us to defamiliarize, rehistoricize and reenvisage the canons that have excised these works, Backscheider shows us how to read and value a counter-universe of poetic achievement.”

Backscheider, AU’s Phillips-Stevens Eminent Scholar, specializes in Restoration and Eighteenth-century literature, feminist criticism and cultural studies. The Auburn professor has won two Outstanding Academic Book Awards from Choice Magazine, and she received international attention for a book about Daniel Defoe, author of Robinson Crusoe, a member of the University of Edinburgh's Institute for Advanced Studies, and the president of the American Society for 18th Century Studies and has held fellowships in the American Council of Learned Societies, the Rockefeller Foundation for the Humanities and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.

Veterinary professor develops new poultry vaccine to prevent avian flu

Andrew Freear, director of AU’s Rural Studio in the College of Architecture, Design and Construction, has won a major architectural award, the 2006 Ralph Erskine Award, for his leadership of the Rural Studio.

The Ralph Erskine Award is an international award presented every three years by the Ruth and Ralph Erskine Nordic Foundation. The award, established in 1988, places special emphasis on architecture to benefit underprivileged and deprived groups in society.

Freear said the award has special significance because of its namesake and its attention to housing needs of the poor. “Ralph Erskine was a great architect. This acknowledges our work in a global context. It shows that good architecture can be provided for everyone in society, even the poor.”

“Andrew Freear has established himself as one of Auburn’s very best faculty,” said Dan Bennett, dean of the College of Architecture, Design and Construction. “The leadership he has shown in moving our Rural Studio forward has brought both national and international acclaim to the university.”

Bennett added, “The Erskine Award is certainly an honor that is well-deserved and is significant international recognition, not just for his accomplishments, but also for his labor on behalf of those in our culture who are disadvantaged.”

Freear served as co-director of the Rural Studio from 2002-06 and recently became director. Freear taught for five years at the University of Illinois-Chicago before coming to Auburn and received degrees from Polytechnic of Central London and the Architectural Association, London.

Rural Studio head wins major award for architecture to benefit the poor

AU will award approximately 1,495 academic degrees at fall semester commencement at 2 p.m. Friday in Beard-Eaves-Memorial Coliseum.

AU will award, 1,156 bachelor’s degrees, 249 master’s degrees, two specialist degrees, and 88 doctorates.

The College of Liberal Arts will award the most degrees, 314, followed by the College of Business, 284, and the College of Engineering, 121.

The College of Education will award 119 degrees, the College of Sciences and Mathematics 116, the College of Human Sciences 68, the College of Agriculture 61, the College of Architecture, Design and Construction 45, the School of Nursing 18 and the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences 10.

How Auburn Stacks Up

Percent of seniors who have worked on projects with classmates outside the classroom*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>AU</th>
<th>NSSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Often</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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* U.S. averages are from the 2006 National Survey of Student Engagement.

Source: Institutional Research and Assessment

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