AU leaders say SACS decision offers new start

AU administrative and faculty leaders say the lifting of probation by Auburn’s accrediting agency last week offers a chance for the university to take a fresh look at the future. “With this episode behind us, it is now time for all of us within the Auburn family to work together and to renew our efforts toward making Auburn everything it needs to be,” said interim President Ed Richardson on Tuesday. He issued the statement after the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools ended the probation it imposed on AU one year earlier. “I am appreciative of the efforts of all those who have worked extremely hard to allow us to achieve full compliance with the SACS standards,” Richardson said.

In ending probation and reaffirming Auburn’s accreditation, SACS agreed that AU had taken steps to address the association’s concerns about university governance. SACS will require the university to issue a report next September describing its progress in implementing changes adopted by the AU Board of Trustees. Those changes came in response to the accrediting agency’s recommendations regarding the board’s code of ethics for trustees and regular evaluation of the president. “We fully intend to provide SACS with every report they request,” said Richardson.

Gov. Bob Riley joined Richardson in presenting Auburn’s case to SACS during the past year and again at the association’s annual meeting. Riley was instrumental in the selection of new members to the AU Board and the appointment of Richardson as interim president in January, and Richardson helped the board develop a code of ethics, new bylaws and changes in operating procedures to comply with SACS standards.

AU to graduate 1,430 on Friday

Auburn will award an estimated 1,430 academic degrees at fall commencement at 2 p.m. Friday in Beard-Eaves-Memorial Coliseum.

AU will award 1,156 bachelor’s degrees, 210 master’s degrees, three specialist’s degrees and 61 doctoral degrees.

The College of Business will award the most degrees with 320, followed by Liberal Arts with 307 and Engineering with 180.

The College of Education will award 110 degrees, Sciences and Mathematics 69, Agriculture 59, Human Sciences 53, Architecture, Design and Construction 37, Forestry and Wildlife Sciences 11, and Nursing 10. Veterinary Medicine and Pharmacy have no graduates for fall semester.

Auburn has awarded more than 200,000 degrees at the main campus since its founding in 1856.
Beyond SACS

(concluded from page 1)

SACS recommendations. “The lifting of probation is an acknowledgement that there has been real change at Auburn University,” Riley said following the SACS announcement.

“Clearing this university’s name with regard to its accreditation status has been my top priority since assuming the interim presidency at Auburn,” said Richardson. “I have been confident all along that we would hear the news we’ve heard today (Tuesday), and I hope we can now move Auburn toward better days.”

Richardson added, “I am convinced that if all Auburn people put aside whatever differences may have existed in the past and concentrate on working together for the common good, this university’s future is filled with promise.”

Alluding to the pending search for a permanent president, Richardson said, “I am further convinced that by working together, we can make Auburn more attractive to the top-quality president this university deserves.”

Willie D. Larkin, chair of the University Faculty, described the SACS probation as a “wake-up call” for the university. “We certainly don’t want to repeat this or place our university at risk — ever again.

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Rewey, president of Fieldstone Consulting. Rewey, a former official of the Association of Governing Boards, reviewed the study by Gray and Mahon and agreed with their findings.

The independent reviews came in response to a recommendation in November from a SACS committee that reviewed the probationary period. The reviews are to be completed by the university’s accrediting agency. The faculty have always known that the university’s future is filled with promise.”

No conflict of interest in business activities of Auburn trustees

External reviews find no conflict of interest in business activities of Auburn trustees

External reviews over the past three weeks sup-

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The second award is for the work of former Auburn Management Scientist Rick Horne did with the Jack-

son Domestic Revitalization Program to recruit an antique mall to the downtown area. Horne also assisted with negotiations that local officials said helped keep the downtown area vital and prosper-

uous. Propositions for filling the mall with vendors are six months ahead of schedule, and revenue generat-

ed is expected to reach $150,000 this year.

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The Alabama Technology Network Center at Auburn has received two awards this fall for outstanding work.

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Twilight calendars
This early evening scene of Nichols Center is among images of Auburn in “Twilight on the Plains,” the 2005 AU calendar produced by Photographic Services. The calendars are available at Photo Services in the L Building, the AU Bookstore in Haley Center, Anders and J&M bookstores and Tiger Rags. For information on ordering calendars by mail, call 844-4560.

United Way surpasses campus, Lee County goals for 2004
AU and Lee County have exceeded their goals for the 2004 United Way campaign. The campus campaign raised $138,515 as of Dec. 7, surpassing its $135,000 goal.

“This is the most contributed by AU in recent history, maybe even the most ever,” said Susie Hall, coordinator of the campus campaign. “We are so blessed to work with employees who care about others in the community.”

The AU effort is part of the Lee County United Way’s 2004 campaign, which raised $977,000, exceeding the county goal by $12,000. United Way contributions are important for many people in East Alabama, Hall said, because the money supports local charities and social services.

Of the money contributed at AU and elsewhere in Lee County, more than 90 percent remains in the local area for services to needy families, the disabled, youth groups, sick or injured persons and others with special needs that are not met through federal or state agencies.

IMG expanding technology training
Auburn’s Instructional Media Group is accepting applications for a new Educational Technology Academy that will be available spring semester.

The program is an expansion of IMG’s popular summer program for faculty and others using technology for teaching and academic support.

The academy offers instruction and assistance in new instruction-related technologies, such as web-based courses, course supplements, PowerPoint presentations and other technologies.

As in the summer program, projects may range from narrowly focused topics to complete changes in course delivery methods.

Faculty, graduate teaching assistants and staff from all academic and support units are eligible for the IMG’s 2005 Spring Academy. Sessions will be from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, Jan. 18 - April 14, except for March 29 and 31.

For more information or to apply, see the web site www.auburn.edu/img/summer_academy/index.htm or contact the IMG at img@auburn.edu or 844-5181.

Engineering dean honored by his alma mater
Larry Benefield, dean of Auburn’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering, was recently inducted into the Via Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering’s Academy of Distinguished Alumni at Virginia Tech.

A faculty member at AU since 1979, Benefield has been dean of the Samuel Ginn College of Engineering since 2000.

Benefield is a 1975 doctoral graduate of Virginia Tech and is a member of the department’s alumni advisory board.

At Auburn, Benefield was major professor to Mark Widawson, a member of the faculty of Virginia Tech’s Via Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.

As an engineering administrator, he has led the college’s efforts to implement an interdisciplinary automotive certificate program in response to the state’s growing automotive industry and coordinated a joint program with the College of Business that integrates business and management practices for undergraduate engineering students.

Under Benefield, the Ginn College of Engineering also established the first undergraduate wireless engineering degree program in the nation.

Forsythe elected president of retailing association
Sandra Forsythe of AU’s College of Human Sciences, has been elected president of the American Collegiate Retailing Association.

Forsythe, Wrangler Professor in the Department of Consumer Affairs, previously served as vice president, secretary, development chair and newsletter editor of the association, which represents educators with special expertise in collegiate retailing.

A member of the Auburn faculty since 1991, Forsythe has conducted extensive teaching and research in consumer behavior and her work has been published in Journal of Retailing, Journal of Business Research, Journal of Applied Psychology and other professional and academic publications.

She is also a former editor of the Clothing and Textiles Research Journal.

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