

SECTION IV

*Educational
Program*



O.D. Smith Hall

Section 4 Educational Program

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4.1 General Requirements of the Educational Program

All aspects of the educational program **must** be clearly related to the purpose of the institution.

Auburn University is in compliance.

All aspects of its educational program are clearly related to the purpose of the institution.

Educational programs and policies and educational support services are guided by the University's Vision and Mission Statements approved by the Board of Trustees on March 20, 1997. These Statements, defined by the University's land grant traditions, focus highest priority for resource allocation to undergraduate education and to the provision of graduate programs in areas of need and importance to the state and beyond. These Statements articulate the University's commitment to instruction, research, and outreach. (See **Section II** for suggested revisions to the Vision and Mission Statements.)

The curriculum review and approval processes ensure continued consistency with the Vision and Mission Statements. These processes, which require review and approval at the Department, College or School (Graduate Council), and University levels before presentation to the Board of Trustees and the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) are described thoroughly in **Sections 4.2.3** and **4.3.1**.

An additional effort underway to reflect on and refine the mission and goals of the University began with the creation of the Directions Group on September 18, 2001. This Group, consisting of Board of Trustees members, administrators, faculty, and staff, has dealt with three basic questions as they apply to the areas of athletics, communication, enrollment and diversity, facilities and services, funding sources, instruction, outreach, and research:

- Where does Auburn want to go; what does it want to be?
- How much will it cost?
- Where will we get the money?

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001

Websites

Alabama Commission on Higher Education Policy and Procedures

<http://www.ache.state.al.us>

Directions Group

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/directions/>

Minutes from Directions Group Meeting, September 18, 2001

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/directions/sept18minutes.html>

Vision and Mission Statements

http://frontpage.duc.auburn.edu/gradschl/public_html/AUCUPSv2/mission.asp

The institution **must** provide a competent faculty, adequate library/learning resources, and appropriate computer resources, instructional materials/equipment and physical facilities.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It has a competent faculty, adequate library and learning resources, and appropriate computer resources, instructional materials, and equipment, and physical facilities.

The qualifications of Auburn University faculty are discussed in **Section 4.8**. Auburn's educational programs, including students, resources, and instruction, are monitored by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, which approves all academic programs. Furthermore, the quality of educational programs and instructional resources is reviewed systematically as part of each program, College, or School accreditation cycle. Altogether, programs across 10 academic Colleges and Schools at Auburn are reviewed by over 30 accrediting bodies.

Auburn University also provides resources for research and scholarship. Auburn's Libraries (Ralph Brown Draughon Library, Library of Architecture, Design, and Construction, and Charles Allen Cary Veterinary Medical Library) contains over 2.2 million bound volumes, 1.4 million government documents, and 134,000 maps. The Libraries also receives over 19,000 serials and 150 newspapers. According to the Association of Research Libraries, Auburn ranked as one of the top 100 libraries in 2000. (See **Section 5.1** for more information about the Libraries.)

Computer and other technological resources also support Auburn's educational programs. In 1998, Auburn University was listed as one of the most wired universities by *Yahoo! Internet Life* and *Net Life* magazines. (See **Sections 5.2** and **5.3** for more information about instructional support and information technology at Auburn.)

Sources of Information

Websites

Academic Program Accreditation at Auburn University, Office of Planning and Analysis
<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/accred.htm>

Alabama Commission on Higher Education Policy and Procedures
www.ache.state.al.us

Association of Research Library Statistics
<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/cgi-local/arlb主/>

Libraries Information
<http://www.lib.auburn.edu/info.html>

■ The student enrollment and financial resources of an institution **must** be sufficient to support an effective educational program.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It has sufficient student enrollment and financial resources to support an effective educational program.

In 1989, the Board of Trustees adopted a policy, which it reconfirmed in 2002, that the target enrollment for Auburn University is 20,000 undergraduates plus 5,000 graduate students or 25,000 overall student enrollment. In the mid-1990s, the 21st Century Commission established a growth target of 1% increase in enrollment per year. Current enrollment is about 19,600 undergraduates and 2,700 graduate students, and the University administration projects that the institution can grow until reaching 25,000 enrollment, with most of the growth in the graduate area. Each year the Office of Admissions evaluates current enrollments and then uses the 1% growth formula as a guideline for admitting freshmen and transfer students. ACHE viability standards influence enrollments in programs and Departments. Over the past several years the University has reduced the number of programs not meeting ACHE viability standards. Further, the Board of Trustees has policies that, in general, require enrollment to be consistent with good academic practice and small enough to permit interaction between instructors and students in classes. Departments routinely make decisions about enrollment ceilings in courses or in majors. These decisions can be shaped by factors ranging from accreditation criteria to lab spaces.

State funding and tuition make up two of the three funding sources for Auburn University. The

Alabama legislature allocates state funds, and the Board of Trustees approves tuition. The University budget is decided by assessments of the supply side and the demand side of financial resources. Deans and Vice Presidents survey the units that report to them and out of this input develop budget requests for the next fiscal year. Budget requests are normally connected to priorities set forth in the goals of the 21st Century Commission and in College and School Comprehensive Plans. These requests go to the Office of the Provost. In 1999 and 2000, budget hearings took place in which Deans and Vice Presidents met as a group and individually presented their priorities. The third funding source is private funding, grants, and contracts.

The Executive Vice President oversees the budget offices and the budgetary and accounting processes of the University. The budget is assessed continually, but with special scrutiny when the priorities for the coming year are formulated. The Executive Vice President works closely with the University Budget Advisory Committee to assess anticipated revenues and seek counsel on the priorities for new monies. In the late spring or early summer, the Executive Vice President prepares the budget proposal for the Board of Trustees. During the process of preparing the budget, the Executive Vice President consults with the University Budget Advisory Committee and discusses the budget priorities with the President. The President makes the final decisions about the budget proposal before it is presented to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees approves the budget either as presented or directs it to be revised. The University also provides additional funds to seven Peaks of Excellence programs.

Over the past five fiscal years (1996-97 to 2000-01), the University's total revenues have increased by 35%, from approximately \$382 million to \$515 million. Over this time, end of the year fund balances have increased by 36%, from approximately \$79 million to \$108 million.

Auburn University recently had its bond rating increased to Aa(3) by Moody's. This rating, which reflects the financial stability of a University, is higher than the ranking held by any other University in Alabama. Further details concerning the financial resources of Auburn University are provided in **Section 6.3**.

Sources of Information

Document

Auburn University Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports, 1991-2001 (See **Section 6.3.1**)

Interview

John Heilman, Senior Presidential Assistant, April 2002

Websites

Board of Trustees

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/trustees/>

Executive Vice President

http://www.auburn.edu/administration/exec_vp/

Issues and Answers: The University's Response on Financial Management

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/trustees/pages/facts.html>

In addition, the institution **must** ensure appropriate levels of student achievement and equivalent quality of programs regardless of method of instruction or location of program.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It ensures appropriate levels of student achievement and equivalent quality of programs regardless of method of instruction or location of program.

Auburn University uses a variety of delivery systems in meeting the needs of students on campus and throughout the state and nation. Regardless of the location or delivery system, the courses are equivalent in levels of student achievement and quality. Faculty members assigned to distance

education courses and programs have the same profile (expertise, experience, rank) as faculty assigned to resident classes. Additional information regarding qualifications of faculty members who teach distance education courses is provided in **Sections 4.5** and **4.8.2.4**. Students also have access to University services regardless of method of instruction or location of the program. For example, the Libraries Homepage has a link for distance education students.

All courses at Auburn University, regardless of the delivery system or location, must meet the same general requirements and undergo the same approval process. This process includes approval by the appropriate Departmental, College or School, and University Senate Committees. Graduate courses are reviewed by the Graduate Council and then forwarded to the University Curriculum Committee for consideration. Undergraduate courses go directly from the College or School Curriculum Committee to the University Curriculum Committee. Faculty members who teach on campus courses and distance learning or outreach courses report to academic Deans and Department Heads or Chairs. Documentation of faculty credentials and review of faculty performance are handled by each College and School. All classes, whether on campus or part of a distance learning program, are evaluated by students at least once a year.

Sources of Information

Documents

Comprehensive Policies for Distance Learning Education Programs and Courses
(Reviewed and approved by the Provost Council, April 4, 2002)

Distance Education Course Development, Review and Implementation Procedures
(Approved by the Provost Council, April 4, 2002)

Interviews

Richard Alekna, Director, Distance Learning and Outreach Technology, September 26, 2001

David Wilson, Associate Provost and Vice President for University Outreach,
September 10, 2001

Websites

Auburn University Comprehensive University Planning System: AUCUPS 2002-2004
http://frontpage.auburn.edu/gradschl/public_html/AUCUPSv2/default.asp

Libraries Distance Education Services
<http://www.lib.auburn.edu/disted/>

4.2

4.2 Undergraduate Program

4.2.1

4.2.1 Undergraduate Admission



General admission policies **must** be established by the governing board on recommendation of the administration.

Auburn University is in compliance.

General admission policies are established by the Board of Trustees on recommendation of the administration. According to the *Faculty Handbook*, the University Senate is “advisory to the President...having primary concern for the general academic policies of the University, including those involving...standards and student academic affairs.” Faculty input regarding admission policies is provided by the University Academic Standards Committee (the Provost or his designee as ex-officio, the Registrar as non-voting and continuing, and nine faculty members). This Committee studies policies governing scholastic standards for all students seeking admission to the University, continuation in residence, and graduation and makes recommendations to the University Senate. The Senate makes recommendations to the President, and, if approved, these recommendations are then

brought to the Board for approval. Changes in admissions standards are then approved by the Board of Trustees. In particular, the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees plays a role in this process. General admission policies are published under the section Academic Policies in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. These admission policies are also published on the University website.

Sources of Information

Document

Board of Trustees Policy and Procedures Manual,
By-laws, G9-G10, G12, and C30-C31

Websites

Auburn University Admission Information

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/admissio/admisreq.html

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 2, Article 4, Section 8: Committees

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 8-10

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

The board **is responsible** for deciding the size and character of the student body.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Board of Trustees Policy and Procedures Manual sets an enrollment plan that caps enrollment at 25,000 for the main campus, with the mix being 80% undergraduate and 20% graduate. Specific admission policies are outlined in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. The implementation of admission policies is carried out by the Undergraduate Admissions Office, which is supervised by the Director of Admissions.

Sources of Information

Document

Board of Trustees Policy and Procedures Manual, Enrollment Plan, C3-C4

Websites

Auburn University Admission Information

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/admissio/admisreq.html

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 2, Article 1, Purpose; Preface, 2. Organization; and Article 4, Section 8, Committees

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Implementation of specific admission policies, however, is the responsibility of the administration and faculty of the institution. The unit responsible for administering the policies **must** be clearly defined

Auburn University is in compliance.

All undergraduates are admitted to Auburn University through the Office of Admissions, a unit of the Division of Enrollment Management Services within the Office of Student Affairs.

Two years ago, Auburn formed a University Enrollment Management Committee. The charge of the Committee is to review the current undergraduate enrollments and make recommendations for future enrollments. Committee members include faculty, administrators, and representatives from the Office of Admissions.

Source of Information

Interview

John Fletcher, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management Services

■ In those institutions in which various subdivisions maintain separate admission requirements there **must** be institution-wide coordination of all admission policies and procedures.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It does not have separate subdivisions that maintain separate admission requirements. Colleges and Schools may have their own criteria for advancing into a specific program, but such criteria are not part of the initial admissions process for the University. Only the Graduate School, the College of Veterinary Medicine, and the School of Pharmacy have separate admission procedures.

Sources of Information

Interview

Doyle Bickers, Director of Admissions, August 15, 2002

Websites

Division of Student Affairs

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, Pharmacy 87, Veterinary Medicine 99,
Graduate School 101-02

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

■ Admission policies **must** be consistent with the educational purposes of the institution. They **must** include qualitative and quantitative requirements that identify students who demonstrate reasonable potential for success at the institution.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The University's stated general educational purpose is to provide: "...high quality undergraduate education including a comprehensive general education." To achieve its purpose to provide a high quality education for undergraduates, the University has qualitative and quantitative admission requirements to identify students who have a reasonable potential for success at the institution. Through its admission process, Auburn University is effective in identifying students who have potential for success as exemplified by its graduation rate. Auburn's cumulative six-year graduation rate for the 1994 Freshman Cohort was 66.8% This graduation rate compares favorably with the national average of 54.1% for all institutions and 66.5% for highly selective institutions.

Listed in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*, quantitative requirements include ACT or SAT scores, high school GPA, and demonstrated proficiency in English (if English is not the native language). For non-traditional students, quantitative requirements may include the USAFI General Educational Development Test. The minimum quantitative requirements for admission are as follows:

- Freshmen – ACT score of 16 and a 3.0 high school GPA, or ACT score of 17 and a 2.5 high school GPA, or ACT score of 18 and a 2.0 high school GPA. Each admitted student must have completed a core of high school courses.
- Transfers – Transfer students must have a college GPA of 2.5. Additionally, transfers with less than 32 transferable hours must meet freshman requirements. Transfers with 32 hours or more must have completed four core courses to include at least some requirements in English, mathematics (pre-calculus algebra), history, and a laboratory science.

These minimum quantitative requirements were set with input from a variety of groups, including faculty, administrators, and Trustees.

Contingent on court approval, Auburn University is implementing an Automatic Admission policy whereby students who have an ACT of 22 or higher or an equivalent SAT score and have earned a high school GPA of 3.00 or higher will be admitted on a rolling basis until the University reaches its enrollment goals.

Qualitative requirements include criteria for consideration of students who provide cultural, economic, or geographic diversity or if they possess particular outstanding talents. For example, minority students who meet the current minimum admission standards will be automatically admitted until the University reaches its enrollment goals.

Sources of Information

Documents

Memorandum from John T. Fletcher, Assistant Vice President of Enrollment Management, August 16, 2001

Interview

Doyle Bickers, Director of Admissions, August 15, 2002

Websites

Auburn University Withdrawal and Graduation Rates, Entering Freshman Cohorts, Selected Years, 1988-2000

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/withdraw.htm>

Six-Year Graduation Rates from the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange

<http://tel.occe.ou.edu/csrde/gradrate2.htm>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, Academic Policies, 8-9

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

An institution admitting students with deficiencies in their preparation for collegiate study **must** offer appropriate development or remedial support to assist these students. Diagnostic testing **should** be an important element of the developmental or remedial program.

Auburn University is in compliance

Special Admission, for persons who do not meet general admission requirements, may be allowed for individuals who are judged to have potential for success. The special admission process is conducted through the Admissions Office. As noted above, in the Automatic Admission policy, cultural diversity, economic diversity, geographic diversity, and particular outstanding talents are considered in special

admission. Prior to acceptance, the staff in the Office of Admissions seeks the input of the College or School in which the prospective student has expressed interest.

Although Auburn University generally does not admit students who do not meet minimum standards, it provides academic support services for students who need assistance beyond what is available in the classroom. Developmental support services are available through the Division of Student Affairs and through some Departments. Administered by the Division of Student Affairs, the Student Success Center consists of four major program areas—Academic Support Services, Career Development Services, Freshman Year Experience, and Student Counseling Services. The objective of the Student Success Center is to provide programs and activities that promote the academic and personal success of students that lead to higher retention and graduation rates. Within the Student Success Center, Academic Support Services supplies individual academic counseling, study skills help, supplemental class instruction, and special provisions of national tests.

Some academic Departments also provide support services for students. Two developmental courses are offered through the Department of Curriculum and Teaching to give underprepared students assistance with reading, writing, and mathematics. The English Center, administered by the Department of English, provides assistance in reading and writing for students enrolled in Freshman Composition and Great Books courses and other courses on campus.

The Department of Mathematics tests incoming freshmen attending Camp War Eagle (96% of incoming freshmen) to identify those who need a college algebra class (Math 1000) before taking the Math Core Courses.

Sources of Information

Documents

Memorandum from John T. Fletcher, Assistant Vice President of Enrollment Management,
August 16, 2001

Interview

Doyle Bickers, Director of Admissions, August 15, 2002

Websites

Auburn University Withdrawal and Graduation Rates, Entering Freshman Cohorts,
Selected Years, 1988-2000

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/withdraw.htm>

Six-Year Graduation Rates from the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange

<http://tel.occe.ou.edu/csrde/gradrate2.htm>

Student Success Center

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/

Tiger Cub, Student Success Center, 20-21

<http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, Academic Policies, 8-9

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Each institution **must** regularly evaluate its admission policies.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Office of Enrollment Management Services, specifically the Admissions Office, has a regular evaluation process to analyze admission policies and procedures based upon student success and upon the enrollment needs of the University. Student success is presently good, as evidenced by a six-year graduation rate of 66.8% for the 1994 Freshman Cohort and a first-year retention rate of 81.3% for

the 2000 Freshman Cohort. The current enrollment goal of the University is approximately 20,000 undergraduate students. This target enrollment is only slightly higher than the actual Fall 2001 undergraduate enrollment of 19,650 and includes first professional students.

Sources of Information

Document

Board of Trustees Policy and Procedures Manual, Enrollment Plan, C3-C4.

Interview

Doyle Bickers, Director of Admissions, August 15, 2002

Websites

Auburn University Withdrawal and Graduation Rates, Entering Freshman Cohorts,
Selected Years, 1988-2000

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/withdraw.htm>

Enrollment by College or School, Undergraduate and Professional,
Fall Quarters, 1991-2001

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/undgenr.htm>

It is the responsibility of the institution to ensure that its recruiting activities and materials accurately and truthfully portray the institution.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Recruiting activities and materials are designed and reviewed first by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, which consults with the Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs to check the accuracy of information about programs and policies. Many University publications used for recruiting are developed and reviewed by the College, School, or Department offering the curriculum. Additionally, the Office of University Relations works closely with all programs to develop recruiting materials and maintains a website with numerous recruiting resources. (See **Section 4.4** for additional details.)

Source of Information

Website

Office of University Relations

<http://www.univrel.auburn.edu/>

To be admitted to degree programs, applicants **must** show evidence of high school graduation or other successful experiences which reasonably predict their ability to make satisfactory progress at the institution. Each institution **must** assess and justify the appropriateness of experiences offered in lieu of a high school diploma.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Students are admitted to the University into a degree program after having provided official documentation of successful completion of required coursework from an accredited high school. Students must have completed a rigorous academic program at the secondary level and provide additional evidence (ACT or SAT scores) that they are prepared to succeed at Auburn.

In rare instances students who have not received a high school diploma are admitted to Auburn University. However, these students must have received a GED and have met all of the other academic requirements necessary to be admitted.

Sources of Information

Websites

Admissions Information

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/admissio/

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, Academic Policies, 8

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Procedures established for implementation of institutional policies **must** be followed in the admission of all students.

Auburn University is in compliance.

All admission decisions are made by the Admissions Office. All applicants to the University are considered on the basis of published admission guidelines as listed in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. Admission policies do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, creed, handicap, age, or national origin. However, preference is given to Alabama residents for admission at the undergraduate level. All students admitted under the special admissions policy must pass through an initial screening with an academic Dean's office. These recommendations for special admissions then flow through the Office of the Provost and finally to the Office of Admissions. (See **Section 5.5.4**)

Sources of Information

Interview

Admissions Staff: Mike Waldrop, Coordinator, Admissions; Debbie Benton, Student Affairs Specialist/Athletics; Gail Segrest, Student Affairs Specialist; Mike Reynolds, Director, Student Financial Aid, December 4, 2001

Websites

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, Academic Policies, 8

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Admissions Information

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/admissio/

The institution **must** provide evidence that it selects students whose interest and capabilities are consistent with the admission policies. An institution's admission and retention policies **should** not be compromised to maintain a desired enrollment.

Auburn University is in compliance.

All applicants who are offered admission have completed a rigorous academic curriculum and have submitted documented evidence of their academic record prior to their admittance. As previously stated, this evidence includes high school records and college aptitude test scores. Students are admitted according to the policies published in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*, and those policies include statements regarding equal opportunity admissions.

At least three types of evidence indicate that accepted students have interest and capabilities consistent with the admission policies. First, Auburn University's Office of Planning and Analysis periodically conducts a follow-up survey of recent bachelor degree recipients approximately 2 to 5 years following graduation. The most recent follow-up survey was performed on graduates from the 1995-96 and 1996-97 academic years. A sample of 3,600 graduates was selected and responses were received from 838 (23%). The distribution of respondents closely matched that of the two graduating classes in terms of gender, race and ethnicity, and College or School attended. More than 95% of these respondents indicated that they would still go to college and would, in fact, attend Auburn if they were to "start over again." Second, from 1995-2000, the composite mean ACT score for entering freshmen has ranged from 23.1 to 23.9. Finally, the six-year graduation rate (66.8%) and the freshman one-year retention rate (81.3%) both indicate successful admission policies.

Sources of Information

Document

2000-2001 Graduate Follow-Up Survey 1995-96 and 1996-97 Baccalaureate Recipients

Websites

ACT Test Means of Entering Freshmen by College/School 1995-2000

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/atmoef.htm/>

Admissions Information

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/admissio/

Auburn University Withdrawal and Graduation Rates, Entering Freshman Cohorts, Selected Years, 1988-2000

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/withdraw.htm>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, Academic Policies, 8

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

The institution **must** clearly define and publish its policy on the admission of transfer students. The policy **must** include the following: the requirement for official transcripts of credits earned from all institutions of higher education previously attended; qualitative and quantitative criteria determining the acceptability of transfer work; criteria regarding the award of advanced standing, whether by credit earned at another institution, by advanced placement examinations, or through experiential learning; and conditions governing admission in good standing, admission on probation, and provisional admission.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It clearly defines and publishes its policy on the admission of transfer students in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* and in online documents available to students. The policy includes the requirement for official transcripts of credits earned from all institutions of higher education previously attended; qualitative and quantitative criteria determining the acceptability of transfer work; criteria regarding the award of advanced standing; and conditions governing admission in good standing, admission on probation, and provisional admission.

Auburn University's transfer policy complies with the statewide Articulation and General Studies agreement, established by the 1994 Articulation law, which required that a General Studies and Articulation Agreement be drawn to apply to all public institutions in Alabama. According to the agreement, students can transfer one half of their degree program from one public institution to another in the state. Although the agreement applies only to students who are enrolled in public institutions in the state of Alabama, coursework from private and out of state institutions that is equivalent to approved statewide general studies courses is handled in the same manner.

The University has an excellent website that offers information and advice for transfer students. Links on this page include the following: application procedures, admission requirements, transferring coursework, majors at Auburn, other student services, institutional policies, contact your transfer counselor, AGSC/STARS transfer guides, AGSC/STARS homepage, and Auburn admissions. Further, the Auburn Admissions Brochure online includes “How to Get Your Stripes,” a transfer newsletter, and “How to Plan Now to Transfer to AU Later.”

Colleges and Schools decide upon credit that is transferable for each major outside of the equivalencies listed in the STARS guide. The equivalents were established by the Department that offers the major or course. The policy on the transferability of military credit is provided in the *Bulletin*. The Registrar’s office also has documents outlining AP/IB/CLEP credits. These documents list the criteria in terms of test scores and course equivalents. The Math placement test may be administered during Camp War Eagle. Foreign language equivalents are decided by the relevant Foreign Language program.

At the moment, however, the requirement to submit official transcripts of credits earned from all institutions of higher learning is not published in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. This requirement is currently outlined on the application for admission that is completed by each applicant and is on the web. The Registrar requires one transcript copy in the permanent file and one copy in the file within the College or School.

Suggestion 4-1:

The Steering Committee suggests that the requirement to submit official transcripts of credits earned from all institutions of higher education previously attended be explicitly stated in the Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin.

Sources of Information

Document

Advanced Placement Program, Office of the Registrar, May 2001

Policy for the College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Division of Student Affairs, Office of the Registrar, July 2000

Websites

Admissions Brochure Page with Links to “How to Get Your Stripes (Transfer Newsletter)” and “How to Plan Now to Transfer to AU Later”
<http://www.auburn.edu/admissions/downloads.html>

Camp War Eagle

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/fye/cwe.htm

Camp War Eagle Description

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/sa_newsletter/julyissue.htm

Transfer Assistance Page

<http://www.auburn.edu/transfer/>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 9-10

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

■ Institutions which award credit based on advanced placement or other examinations; training provided by non-collegiate institutions, such as armed forces and service schools; professional certification; or experiential learning **must** meet the following conditions governing the award of such credit:

1. The amount of credit awarded is clearly stated and is in accord with commonly accepted good practice in higher education.

2. Credit is awarded only in areas offered within the current curriculum of the institution, and is appropriately related to the student's educational programs.
3. Decisions regarding the awarding of credit and the determination of such credit are made by qualified faculty members at the institution, or according to procedures and standards approved by qualified faculty. The institution demonstrates that assessment procedures verify that the credit awarded is appropriate.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The transferability of military credit is described in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*, and the Registrar uses documents outlining AP/IB/CLEP credits, which have been determined by qualified faculty members from the Department that offers the course. These documents list the criteria in terms of test scores and course equivalents. The student receives a letter from the Registrar or a curriculum checklist stating the amount of AP credit awarded by the University. Credit is awarded only in courses offered within the University. When there is variance that cannot be covered by the STARS guide or other documents used by the Registrar, the transcript is referred to the relevant Department, and the appropriate Department faculty members make an assessment on transferability.

Sources of Information

Documents

Advanced Placement Program, Office of the Registrar, May 2001

Policy for the College Level Examination Program (CLEP),
Division of Student Affairs, Office of the Registrar, July 2000

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 15-16
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

In awarding credit for prior experiential learning, the institution **must** (1) award credit only for documented learning which demonstrates achievement of all outcomes for specific courses in an approved degree program; (2) award credit only to matriculated students, identify such credit on the student's transcript as credit for prior experiential learning and, upon request from another institution, document how such learning was evaluated and the basis on which such credit was awarded; (3) ensure that credit for prior experiential learning does not duplicate credit already awarded or remaining courses planned for the student's academic program; (4) adopt, describe in appropriate institutional publications, implement and regularly review policies and procedures for awarding credit for experiential learning; and (5) clearly describe, and establish the validity of, the evaluation process and criteria for awarding credit for prior experiential learning.

This **must** statement is not applicable. Auburn University no longer awards credit for prior experiential learning.

The institution **must** inform transfer students of the amount of credit which will transfer, preferably prior to their enrollment, but at least prior to the end of the first academic term in which they are enrolled.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It informs students of the amount of credit that will transfer after reviewing transcripts and checking core courses and grade point averages before the students begin their first semester at Auburn. The *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* details any differences in transfer admission requirements for each College or School. After accepting the student, the Registrar refers the student to an academic advisor. The Registrar provides transcripts to the relevant College or School one week before the student's entrance, indicating the credit that will transfer into the program.

Sources of Information

Websites

Calendar for Successfully Orienting Students Program

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/societies/advisors_counselors_caucus/sos.html

Student Success Center

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/

Successfully Orienting Students

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/fye/sos.htm

Successfully Orienting Students Program, Transfer Student Orientation

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/sa_newsletter/julyissue.htm

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 9

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Course work transferred or accepted for credit toward an undergraduate degree **must** represent collegiate course work relevant to the degree, with course content and level of instruction resulting in student competencies at least equivalent to those of students enrolled in the institution's own undergraduate degree programs. In assessing and documenting equivalent learning and qualified faculty, an institution may use recognized guides which aid in the evaluation for credit. Such guides include those published by the American Council on Education, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, and the NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Auburn University accepts transfer credit at admission only from accredited institutions. However, provisions are made for accepting credit from an unaccredited institution after one year of coursework at Auburn University and with approval by the receiving Department. The Online Student Information System has a database that contains the Auburn University equivalents for the majority of courses taught at Alabama public institutions and other colleges from which students typically transfer to Auburn.

Source of Information

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 9

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

There **must** be clearly defined policies regarding the academic dismissal, suspension and readmission of students. Readmission of students dismissed or suspended for academic reasons **must** be consistent with the academic policies of the institution.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Policies on suspension have been established to help students progress efficiently toward graduation. If their grade point average drops below 2.0, students are placed on academic warning. All students receive one term of academic warning before they may be suspended. Students will be suspended from the University if (1) they do not earn a 2.2 in the term they are on warning or (2) they do not meet the appropriate overall grade point average for their classification as listed below.

Freshman	1.50
Sophomore	1.80
Junior	1.90
Senior	1.97

For example, a freshman on academic warning must earn a grade point average of at least 2.2 in the term he or she is on warning or must have an overall grade point average of 1.50 by the end of the term. A senior on academic warning must earn a grade point average of at least 2.2 during the term he or she is on warning or have an overall grade point average by 1.97 by the end of the term.

Students receive a warning, a first suspension of one semester, and a second suspension of two semesters before they are expelled.

Students can appeal their suspensions to the University Admissions Committee for early readmission. They must demonstrate that they have undertaken and successfully completed a program designed for at risk students. They must also have a Plan of Study signed by the appropriate academic advisor. These factors weigh heavily in the reinstatement of students. Appeal procedures are outlined in the *Bulletin*.

Transfer students must have a GPA of 2.0 or greater after the first semester to avoid suspension.

The Student Success Center includes Academic Support Services that offers support for at risk students, including students on warning, students on suspension, and recently readmitted students.

Sources of Information

Websites

Academic Support

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/support/

Students At Risk

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/support/risk.htm

Student Success Center

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/

Tiger Cub, 90

<http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 11-12

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

4.2.2 Undergraduate Completion Requirements

In each degree program, there **must** be an appropriate sequence of courses leading to the degree. An institution **must** publish the requirements for each degree it awards. The requirements **must** be appropriate to the degree offered and **must** specify the total credits, the number and distribution of

4.2.2

general education credits, the number of credits to be earned in the major or area of concentration, the number of electives, standards for satisfactory progress, and other degree requirements.

Auburn University is in compliance.

All of the University's degree programs include an appropriate sequence of courses leading to the degree. The Colleges and Schools develop and maintain degree programs and participate in developing the University Core Curriculum and determine prerequisite requirements and courses in the major. This process ensures the relevance and appropriateness of courses. Each program is rigorously reviewed, first by the College or School and subsequently by the University Curriculum Committee. This Committee is charged with review of all new curricula and any changes in existing curricula.

All Colleges and Schools publish standards for satisfactory progress and other degree requirements in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. Each program is described in the form of a curriculum model, including the total number of hours in degree, the number and distribution of Core Curriculum credits, the required hours in the major, and the number of electives. These curriculum models are published in the *Bulletin*. Colleges and Schools and Departments provide students with checklists that include the Core Curriculum courses, the required courses in the major, and lists of acceptable elective courses. During the senior year, Deans' Offices complete graduation checks to ascertain that graduating students have satisfied all degree requirements. Auburn University is implementing an on-line degree audit program, which will be available to students through OASIS, the enrollment management and record keeping system.

Sources of Information

Documents

Curriculum Models and Graduation Checklists Available from the Department Office with Administrative Responsibility or from the Dean's Office in the Responsible College or School.

Websites

University Curriculum Committee

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/unicurr.html

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 30-100

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Undergraduate degree programs **must** contain a basic core of general education requirements. A minimum of 15 semester hours for associate programs and a minimum of 30 semester hours for baccalaureate programs are required for degree completion. The core **must** include at least one course from each of the following areas: humanities/fine arts, social/behavioral sciences, and natural sciences/mathematics.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The minimum number of semester hours in an undergraduate academic program is 120. All undergraduate baccalaureate programs include 41 semester hours of Core Curriculum courses as an integral part of every degree program. Core courses include humanities, social and behavioral sciences, and natural sciences and mathematics.

The Core Curriculum at Auburn University includes coursework intended to provide a shared, coherent, and integrated undergraduate experience for every student graduating from the University. The Core Curriculum courses emphasize both the necessary content to provide a broad educational background in the humanities and fine arts, social sciences, mathematics, and natural sciences as well as the development of appropriate writing and critical thinking skills.

A description of the goals of the Core Curriculum and a list of approved courses are published in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. Two sequences of courses included in the Core Curriculum are of particular note. First, the Human Odyssey course examines the development of human achievement through the interaction of science and the humanities. Second, Concepts of Science, an interdisciplinary science course that integrates diverse scientific ideas, stresses the interaction of the sciences and the humanities and the impact of science on everyday life.

Sources of Information

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 12-14

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

The institution **must** demonstrate that its graduates of degree programs are competent in reading, writing, oral communication, fundamental mathematical skills and the basic use of computers.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Periodically, the Office of Planning and Analysis conducts a follow-up survey of recent bachelor's degree recipients, approximately 2-5 years following their graduation. The most recent report from these surveys was released in February 2002 and represented data collected from graduates in the 1995-96 and 1996-97 academic years. Among 3,600 graduates selected, responses were received from 838 (23%). Graduates were asked how well they were prepared by Auburn in overall communication skills, written communication skills, public speaking and presentation skills, reading skills, and listening skills. The percentage of respondents indicating that they received either good or excellent preparation were as follows: Overall (77.5%), Writing (72%), Reading (69.5%), and Listening (68.1%).

Many courses in the Core Curriculum are designed to develop competency in reading, writing, and fundamental mathematical skills. In Spring Semester 2002, the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) was administered to a small sample of students who had completed the Core Curriculum (N = 44 = 6% of completers). Within this small sample, a high percentage of students scored above the 70th national percentile in written communication tests, critical reading tests, mathematics tests, critical thinking tests, and science reasoning tests.

In addition to the current assessment strategies, the University Core Curriculum Oversight Committee is developing criteria and assessment tools. The following four student outcomes have been established for students who have completed the Core Curriculum:

- Students will be able to read critically at a sophisticated level.
- Students will be able to communicate in writing at a sophisticated level.
- Students will comprehend the basic concepts of Algebra.
- Students will be able to gather, synthesize, and interpret information in accordance with contemporary scholarly standards.

Each of these outcomes will be evaluated by at least two means of assessment, and the results will be used to improve the Core Curriculum and its delivery.

Students demonstrate competency in reading and writing by completing two-semester English Composition and two-semester Great Books course sequences as part of the Core Curriculum. They must receive grades of C or better in both Composition courses.

Most students demonstrate competency in oral communications by completion of a course in public speaking offered by the Department of Communication in the College of Liberal Arts. Alternatively, a number of Departments have developed their own oral communication courses, designed to develop essential communication skills in the particular field. For example, many curricula in the

College of Business meet this requirement through the course, Strategic Management. Some students in the College of Education develop communication skills in teaching methodology courses, and some curricula in the College of Science and Mathematics have developed seminar courses in which students develop oral communication skills for communicating scientific findings and conclusions.

Competency in the use of computers is demonstrated in the majority of cases by completion of Computer Sciences 1000 or 1200 or by achieving an acceptable score on a computer use exam administered by the Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering in the College of Engineering. In a few degree programs, such as Graphic Design or Physics, in which the use of computers is an integral part of several courses within the major, students fulfill the requirement through coursework in the degree program.

All degree programs are required by the University Curriculum Committee to identify the courses that fulfill the SACS competency in oral communication and computer competency requirements. The documentation for these courses is maintained in the Office of the Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs.

Suggestion 4-2:

The Steering Committee suggests that the development of specialized courses in which the students develop the oral communications skills relevant to their fields be encouraged. Further, it is suggested that the University Core Curriculum Oversight Committee inventory these courses and that policies for the assessment of both the course content and student achievement in these courses be developed.

Sources of Information

Documents

Assessment Record for Core Curriculum Oversight Committee for 2001-02

Auburn University Survey of 1995-96 Graduating Classes Survey Instrument

Auburn University Survey of 1996-97 Graduating Classes Survey Instrument

Curriculum Models and Graduation Checklists Available from the Department Office with Administrative Responsibility or from the Dean's Office in the Responsible College or School

Report to the Core Curriculum Oversight Committee from the Office of Assessment and Program Improvement, April 29, 2002

Websites

Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP)

<http://www.act.org/caap/index.html>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 13

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

An institution **must** clearly define what is meant by a major or an area of concentration and **must** state the number of credits required for each. An adequate number of hours with appropriate prerequisites **must** be required in courses above the elementary level.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The definitions of a major, a program option, and a minor were developed by the University Curriculum Committee and approved by the Senate. They are published in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. The University Curriculum Committee reviews curricula in terms of the approved definitions.

Auburn University requires that a minimum of 20 semester hours must be taken in upper division courses in the subject field. Typically no fewer than 30 semester hours in the discipline and appropriate related fields are required in the major. Minors must include at least 15 semester hours, and no more than six of these may be completed in lower division courses. Departments develop and review these majors and minors, and all are represented by a curriculum model, including the required number of semester hours, Core Curriculum courses, required courses, and elective courses.

As previously stated, all academic majors, minors, and program options are described in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. The University Curriculum Committee is charged with ensuring that each degree program includes an appropriate sequence of courses leading to the degree. The Curriculum Committee also reviews curriculum models to ensure that the degree requirements are appropriate.

Sources of Information

Websites

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 15-16

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

University Curriculum Committee

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/unicurr.html

For degree completion, at least 25 percent of semester credit hours, or the equivalent quarter hours, **must** be earned through instruction by the institution awarding the degree.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It requires that a minimum of 25% of the total semester hours must be earned in residence. Usually, these hours must be taken in the final year and in the College or School curriculum of graduation. The final year's residence can be waived by the student's Dean. The Dean may also allow course credit to be earned at another institution during the final year. Nevertheless, the 25% of residence coursework at Auburn is a firm requirement.

Source of Information

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 15

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

All courses other than those identified by the institution as developmental/remedial, offered by an institution for credit, **must** be acceptable as requirements or electives applicable to at least one of its own degree or certificate programs or **must** be clearly identified on transcripts as not applicable to any of the institution's own degree or certificate programs.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Auburn University offers two developmental courses through the Department of Curriculum and Teaching (CTSE 1010 Developmental Studies: English and Language Arts and CTSE 1020 Developmental Studies: Mathematics). Although both of these courses provide two hours of credit, neither course provides credit toward graduation. Up to six hours of credit towards a degree is given for ROTC courses. Two University courses, UNIV1000 and UNIV1050, are one semester-hour courses designed

to aid freshmen in making the transition to college and in developing learning and study skills. Credit for these courses may be applied towards elective semester hours. These courses, as is the case with all courses offered at Auburn University, are reviewed by the University Curriculum Committee.

Sources of Information

Interviews

Linda Glaze, Assistant Provost, April 4, 2002

Sam Lowther, Executive Director of Planning and Analysis, May 6, 2002

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 15

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

4.2.3

4.2.3 Undergraduate Curriculum

Curricula **must** be directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the institution and the diplomas, certificates, or degrees awarded; to the ability and preparation of the students admitted; and to the financial and instructional resources of the institution.

The institution **must** have a clearly defined process, by which the curriculum is established, reviewed, and evaluated. This process **must** recognize the various roles of the faculty, the administration, and the governing board.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Its curricula are directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the institution, to the ability and preparation of the students, and to the financial resources of the institution. Auburn has a clearly defined process for establishing, reviewing, and evaluating curriculum. This process recognizes the roles of the faculty, the administration, and the governing board.

Auburn University has developed a structured process by which courses and programs are established. The process is designed to ensure that the course offerings mesh well with institutional goals and the program area goals. First, a new course or program is originated in a Department. Second, after Departmental review and approval is complete, the course or program request is forwarded to the College or School. The College or School solicits comments from the appropriate Departments during its review and approval process. Third, the program or course is reviewed by the University Curriculum Committee. The University Curriculum Committee recommends approval or disapproval of requests for undergraduate and graduate curriculum changes.

If the requested action involves the creation of a new academic program, then the Provost, President, and Board of Trustees must also approve the request. After this internal approval process is completed, new programs have to be sent to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education. All course approval information is available in the Office of the Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs. The role of the Board of Trustees in program approval is first, to determine whether the new program fits the mission of the University; second, to minimize program duplication throughout the state; and third, to improve institutional effectiveness.

When the University changed from the Quarter System to the Semester System in 2000, all of the degree programs and courses offered in each Department were reviewed and evaluated. This review resulted in the deletion and addition of courses in many Departments and in the revision of some courses. Whenever a new course is proposed in a Department, a review and evaluation of the curriculum usually occurs.

Professional accreditation reviews in many Colleges and Schools assess academic programs periodically for sufficiency of resources and appropriateness.

Sources of Information

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 2, Article 4, Section 11, Curriculum Committee
<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Alabama Commission on Higher Education
<http://www.ache.state.al.us>

For each major in a degree program, the institution **must** assign responsibility for program coordination, as well as for curriculum development and review, to persons academically qualified in the field. At least one full-time faculty member with appropriate credentials, as defined in **Section 4.8.2**, **must** have primary teaching assignment in the major. In those degree programs for which the institution does not identify a major the above requirements apply to a curricular area or concentration.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Dean of each College or School, with input from the Departmental faculty, appoints a Department Head or Chair with responsibility for program and curriculum development. The Departmental faculty members are also responsible for program development and oversight. A representative of the sponsoring College or School must review and approve all curriculum changes. Most Colleges and Schools have established Curriculum Committees to review and approve curriculum changes before these changes are sent to the University Curriculum Committee.

The courses in each curriculum are generally taught by full-time faculty with credentials in the field. In larger units, one faculty member is charged to oversee or coordinate undergraduate and graduate programs. When part-time faculty members teach courses, they are required to have the necessary credentials, special knowledge, and experience to qualify to teach the course.

Faculty members and their academic degrees are listed in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* along with the Head or Chair of each Department.

Source of Information

Document

Roster of Faculty

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 228-38
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

The governing board **must** be responsible for approving the number and types of degrees; the number and nature of departments, divisions, schools or colleges through which the curriculum is administered; and the extent to which the institution should offer distance learning programs.

Auburn University is in compliance.

All the degrees offered by Auburn University are approved by the Board of Trustees. The administrative structure of the University, including Departments and Colleges or Schools, is prescribed and

approved by the Board of Trustees. As indicated previously, new degree programs begin in the Departments and must be approved by the Board of Trustees before being submitted to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education for final approval. Distance Learning programs are related to on campus programs and, hence, have also been indirectly approved by the Board of Trustees. In order to promote the development of distance education programs, the Board has approved a differential tuition fee policy for distance education.

Sources of Information

Document

Differential Tuition Fee Policy for Distance Education

Websites

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, University Outreach, 7

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Outreach

<http://www.auburn.edu/outreach>

The administration and faculty **must** be responsible for the development of academic programs to be recommended to the governing board. They **are also responsible** for implementing and monitoring the general curriculum policy and the academic programs approved by the board. There **should** be an institution-wide process to coordinate programmatic and curricular changes.

The institution **should** avoid the unwarranted proliferation of course offerings and degree programs. The development of new educational programs **should** be considered only after the institution has completed a needs assessment and has identified resources to support the programs. The institution **should** proceed only after careful review by appropriate faculty and administrative bodies, approval by the governing board, and any necessary review and approval by state or other agencies.

Auburn University is in compliance.

As discussed previously, faculty initiate the new course or program approval process. Unwarranted proliferation of degree offerings is prevented by the internal University process, Board of Trustees oversight, and the required approval of new degree programs by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education is charged with reviewing new program requests to ensure that unnecessary duplication does not exist between the requested new program and any existing programs at the other state academic institutions. The Alabama Commission on Higher Education program proposal package requires that the institution:

- Address the fit with the institution's restructuring plan and with its programmatic directions
- Provide funding plans
- Identify strategies for resource allocation
- Analyze the cost effectiveness of developing a new program versus meeting the demand through telecommunications or partnering with another institution.

Sources of Information

Websites

Alabama Commission on Higher Education

<http://www.ache.state.al.us>

Curricula intended to provide basic preparation for students who will subsequently transfer to another institution **must** be designed to consider the institutions to which these students transfer. Associate and baccalaureate degree-granting institutions **should** work cooperatively to develop articulation agreements. The agreements should be evaluated periodically to ensure an equitable and efficient transfer of students. “Inverted,” “two plus two,” and similar programs **must** include an adequate amount of advanced coursework in the subject field.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It offers only comprehensive degree programs. It has no special programs to prepare students to transfer to other institutions. Auburn adheres to the Alabama Articulation and General Studies agreement implemented through STARS (Statewide Transfer Articulation System) with regard to accepting transfer credit from accredited public institutions within the state of Alabama.

No “inverted” or “two plus two” programs are offered at Auburn University.

Source of Information

Website

State of Alabama Articulation and General Studies Agreement
<http://stars.troyst.edu>

Institutions which enter into programmatic partnerships with secondary schools which result in the award of college credit, such as technical and dual enrollment programs, **must** ensure that the credit awarded is at the collegiate level and is in compliance with the *Criteria* and with Section IV in particular. Partnerships **must** be evaluated regularly by the participating institution of higher education. The participating institution **must** assume full responsibility for academic quality and integrity of partnerships as measured by the *Criteria*.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It has no partnerships with any secondary schools. Auburn does allow students with high academic promise to be admitted prior to their graduation from high school. These students must meet three criteria that are outlined in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. They may enroll full time in Auburn, or they may elect to be dually enrolled with their high school and participate in both high school and University classes. If they are dually enrolled, then they must attend their on campus University classes and complete the same academic assignments as their University classmates. Their course instructors and classmates will treat these students as regular members of the University student body. Due to the requirement that the dually enrolled students attend on campus classes, dual enrollment is practical only for a student who attends a high school located near the University.

Source of Information

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 8
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

4.2.4 Undergraduate Instruction

Instructional techniques and policies **must** be in accord with the purpose of the institution and be appropriate to the specific goals of an individual course.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Instructional techniques and policies are developed by faculty members responsible for teaching particular courses. The University Curriculum Committee ensures fit with existing degree programs and the mission of the University. It also addresses instructional techniques. The University Curriculum Committee has developed definitions for courses designated as “lecture,” “lab,” “studio,” and “internship” and posted these definitions on its website. During the curricular review process, courses are reviewed according to University standards for time (2 or 3 contact hours per credit hour for labs).

A sample syllabus is required in order for the University Curriculum Committee to assess the depth and breadth of the proposed course related to the requested course level and credit hours. A syllabus submitted for review by the University Curriculum Committee is expected to observe the following guidelines:

a. Credit Hours

- Define the number of hours of lecture and/or the number of hours of lab per week

b. Texts or Major Resources

- Use a full citation for textbooks, including publication year
- List appropriate potential resource materials (including journal titles) that could be assigned as required readings or to complete class assignments
- Listing of texts or major resources is not required for internship courses

c. Course Description

- Provide description as would be stated in the *Bulletin*

d. Course Objectives

- Include sufficient objectives to cover breadth of course

e. Course Content

- Provide sufficient outline to convey subject matter. Outline can be expressed in conjunction with the schedule.
- Provide schedule (weekly or daily) of meetings (to be used to determine if credit hours requested are appropriate) for all 15 weeks of the semester
- Identify approximate exam days/weeks, including the final exam. Explain how the final exam period will be used if another final activity, such as presentations or reports, will make use of the time. For example, in studio courses, final projects can be presented in the final exam time and in lieu of a written examination.

f. Course Requirements/Evaluation

- Clarify expectations of student performance, such as papers, quizzes, examinations, presentations, class participation, and field experiences
- List relative weights for tests, assignments, class participation, unannounced quizzes, and other components that contribute to the final grade
- Identify grading scale used and how it would be applied
- Explain how class participation, if included in evaluation, is to be graded
- Explain the criteria for attaining a grade of “S” when an S-U scale is used

g. Course Policy Statements

- Include policy statements on class-related matters, such as unannounced quizzes, class attendance/absences, and class participation

Sources of Information

Document

Sample Course Approvals from Colleges and Schools

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 4, 1, The University's Concern for Good Teaching

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Guidelines for Course Syllabi

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/guidelines.htm

Instruction **must** be evaluated regularly and the results used to ensure quality instruction.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The University views the evaluation of teaching as an on-going regular process that relies on multiple assessment measures. The results are intended to improve instruction.

One measure used in evaluation is the University's Teaching Effectiveness Survey. Each faculty member is required to administer this standardized instrument one semester per year, usually the Fall Semester. Many Colleges and Schools significantly exceed the minimum requirement by offering students the opportunity to complete an evaluation in nearly every class. Many professors conduct their own teaching evaluations, using criteria specific to their field.

Procedures for administering the survey are explicit and written on the Survey forms. Each College or School, Department, or faculty member may include optional questions or evaluation materials in addition to, but not in lieu of, the University's Survey. The class data from the scan sheets and any additional comments from the students are reported to the faculty member. The Department Head or Chair also receives the data on each class and each faculty member evaluated.

These data, along with other assessments of teaching, are used in the yearly review of faculty members by Department Heads or Chairs, in the third-year review of untenured faculty by Department faculty, and in the review for promotion and tenure. In addition, academic Deans receive data from each Department without identifying faculty information. Instructors not on the tenure track are evaluated according to guidelines presented in the *Faculty Handbook*, Chapter 3a, Section F Performance Evaluation.

Another method of assessment is evaluation by professional colleagues. Peer evaluations, mandated by the Board of Trustees, are achieved in a variety of ways. Faculty members or Departments develop appropriate peer evaluation strategies. Evaluation by professional colleagues may include evaluation of the faculty member's syllabi, tests, handouts, and other instructional materials; evaluation of the faculty member's preparation of students for subsequent courses in the field; evaluation of the faculty member's work in a team teaching situation by his or her partner; comparison of the faculty member's work with that of others teaching the same course; or observation of the faculty member's classes.

In many cases, similar evaluations extend to GTAs. The University has no policy for evaluating GTA performance, but the majority of Departments studied conduct GTA evaluations of some kind. The evaluations usually consist of using the Teaching Effectiveness Survey and faculty observation of teaching performance. Several Departments reward outstanding GTA performance by cash awards presented at the end of each academic year at the annual Department banquet.

To further confirm the University's concern for quality instruction and instructional programs, the University Teaching Effectiveness Committee, the University Curriculum Committee, and the University Core Curriculum Oversight Committee have been established. These committees are charged with carrying out a process of continuing evaluation, enhancement of instructional programs, and evaluation of proposed changes in the curriculum.

Sources of Information

Documents

Student Perceptions of Instruction Instruments

Sample Course and Teaching Evaluation Instruments

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 4, 4: Evaluation of Teaching

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

University Core Curriculum Oversight Committee

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/corecurr.html

University Curriculum Committee

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/unicurr.html

University Teaching Effectiveness Survey – Teaching Effectiveness Committee

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate/teacheff.htm>

Students **must** be provided written information about the goals and requirements of each course, the nature of the course content, and the methods of evaluation to be employed. Methods of instruction **must** be appropriate to the goals of each course and the capabilities of the students.

Auburn University is in compliance.

University policy requires the distribution of course syllabi to all students, as mandated in the *Faculty Handbook*, Chapter 4.1, The University's Concern for Good Teaching. Syllabi provide detailed information on course objectives, course content, field and lab work requirements, schedule, office hours, grading, and methods of evaluation. Some professors include an Honor Code statement relating to academic honesty and integrity and its application to the particular course. To ensure that this mandate is followed, some Department Heads and Chairs require faculty members to submit a copy of their syllabi each semester to keep on file in the Department office.

More specifically, as stated in the *Faculty Handbook*, faculty members have a responsibility to themselves and their students:

- To state, in writing at an early meeting of the class, specific course objectives and the manner in which they are to be attained
- To exercise care in the organization and presentation of all materials toward the end of achieving the stated instructional objectives
- To state, in writing at an early meeting of the class, grading and evaluation procedures, including:
 - The grading system and method of determining the final grade
 - The relative importance of assigned papers, quizzes, examinations, class preparation, and participation
 - The approximate schedule for examinations (other than the final exam)
 - The policy on unannounced quizzes
- To arrive promptly at all scheduled classes. If absence is anticipated, the class should be informed in advance of contingency arrangements.
- To maintain regular, posted office hours each week for conferences with students
- To grade and return examinations within a reasonable period of time

A variety of instructor, peer, and field evaluations ensure that instructional techniques are appropriate to the goals of the course and the capabilities of the student and that they fit with Departmental and institutional missions.

Sources of Information

Documents

Sample Course Syllabi

Websites

Faculty Handbook Section 4, 1: The University's Concern for Good Teaching

Chapter 4.6, A: Class Attendance Section 4.6, D: Final Examinations

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Tiger Cub

<http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub>

Experimentation with methods to improve instruction **must** be adequately supported and critically evaluated.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It has a number of supporting units, pools of resources, and infrastructure initiatives to encourage and support experimentation leading to improvement in instruction.

Several units of the University have experimented with increased use of information technology in instruction. The Office of Information Technology (OIT) through the Instructional Media Group (IMG) has spearheaded these efforts. Other units have experimented with providing increased academic and social support for students. These support services have included Supplemental Instruction for historically difficult courses through the Success Center.

OIT has delivered or supported a range of activities designed to prepare the University—including its faculty members, its facilities, and its curriculum—to use information technology in support of teaching and learning. It assists in the training of the University's faculty in the use of information technology, both hardware and software, in support of the teaching and learning process. OIT is designed to reach all faculty members in all academic Departments on a walk-in basis. Many faculty members have participated in ongoing media-related course offerings to upgrade their use of media in the classroom. In addition to receiving an introduction to the use of instructional technology, faculty members attending the workshops are educated in state-of-the-art computer networks and a suite of appropriate software applications.

OIT also helps professors develop on-line courses and provides related infrastructure, technical support, and assessment of results in targeted curricular areas. In addition, OIT serves as an umbrella for coordinating communications and developing partnerships focused on integrating technology into instruction. An example is the recent (May 9, 2002) hands-on workshop sponsored by OIT and the Libraries to demonstrate e-Packs for WebCT, a new teaching assistance software for faculty. Other activities include seminars on integrating instructional technology in teaching and learning and the development of a learning laboratory in mathematics.

Finally, Auburn University recently received a \$10 million endowment from the estate of a prominent Birmingham couple to establish the Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning. This Center will be housed in RBD Library and will promote professional growth and development for faculty, GTAs, and administrative and professional staff who work closely with students. The focus will be on development of knowledge, techniques, and skills related to teaching undergraduates. Faculty at the Center will assemble resource materials, conduct workshops, and advise other faculty members on teaching techniques, student learning styles, course and curriculum development, teaching technologies, evaluation of teaching, and preparation of teaching portfolios. The University

has begun a nationwide search for a director. Candidates for the position are expected to visit the campus in Fall 2002, followed quickly by the selection of a Director.

Sources of Information

Documentation

Article on Biggio Center, *AU Report*, Vol 35, No 9, May 6, 2002

University Retention Committee Annual Report

Websites

Instructional Media Group

<http://www.auburn.edu/img/>

Office of Information Technology

<http://www.auburn.edu/oit/>

■ An institution **must** use a variety of means to evaluate student performance. The evaluation **must** reflect concern for quality and properly discern levels of student performance.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Colleges, Schools, and Departments use a variety of means to evaluate student performance. All of these means of evaluation reflect a concern for quality and an intention to properly discern levels of student performance.

Professors who are expert in their respective fields are the best judges of student performance in a specific discipline. They determine the most appropriate method for evaluating student performance in their courses. As previously stated, this method of evaluation is documented in mandated syllabi for each course. As part of the annual review process, some Heads and Chairs examine syllabi and offer suggestions for improvement and check whether the course exhibits an appropriate level of student performance. A review of various course syllabi shows that the subject matter, the teaching techniques, and the learning environment determine the type and method of evaluation. Methods of evaluation include regular course tests and quizzes, final examinations, oral and written reports, group and individual projects, laboratory experiments, field projects, and portfolios.

In some Departments, such as Curriculum and Teaching, student teaching and apprenticeship experiences are required as an integral part of student evaluation. Some Colleges and Schools, such as Engineering, integrate Cooperative Education programs into curricula in order to give students practical, on-the-job training experiences.

To facilitate enrollment in appropriate courses, as previously stated, some Departments administer placement tests to incoming students to determine whether the needed prerequisite knowledge has been mastered. The tests, if successfully passed, allow well-prepared students to advance more efficiently to the appropriate skill level in an academic discipline.

Sources of Information

Document

Sample Course Syllabi

Websites

College of Education, Teacher Education

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/education/tes/index.html>

Cooperative Education

<http://www.auburn.edu/co-op/>

Department of Curriculum and Teaching

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/education/curr/C&T.home.html>

An institution **must** publish its grading policies and its grading practices must be consistent with policy.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Student evaluation and grading policies appear annually in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. These policies are consistent.

Grading procedures for courses are compliant with University policy and are described on the syllabus for each course. Department Heads and Chairs and the Dean's Office review grade distribution reports and follow grading practices. If a student believes he or she has been evaluated unfairly, the student can bring that grievance to the Department Head or Chair, then to the Dean, and finally to the University Academic Grievance Committee, which acts as a final arbitrator and a check that grading practices are consistent with policy.

Sources of Information

Websites

Student Academic Grievance Policy

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/tiger_cub/rules/rules.doc

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin/

The institution **must** evaluate the effectiveness of its instructional program by a variety of techniques, which may include the following: use of standardized tests and comprehensive examinations, assessment of the performance of graduates in advanced programs or employment, and sampling of the opinions of former students.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The evaluation of the instructional program has been discussed in **Section III**. This assessment is supported by the Office of Assessment and Program Improvement (API), created in 1994. API is administered by the Director of Assessment.

Each Department is responsible for assessing its programs. The means of gathering instructional effectiveness data include placement rates for graduates, comprehensive exit examinations, internship supervisor evaluations, student portfolios, licensing examinations, oral examinations, senior thesis projects, and capstone projects.

API is currently in its second year of evaluations. The data thus far collected show that a majority of the units at Auburn University are making honest attempts to assess how they are doing with their instructional programs. Most instructional units have reported the following information to API:

- The student learning outcomes being assumed
- The method of assessment used in 2000-01 for these outcomes
- The criteria for success or performance targets, if any, used by the Department for these outcomes
- The results of assessment for these outcomes

API offers a variety of resources to improve assessment, such as API@AU newsletters, fact sheets containing assessment reports, grants for innovative assessment projects, matching funds for travel to assessment training conferences, and announcements of upcoming regional and national assessment events.

Sources of Information

Websites

Office of Assessment and Program Improvement

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/assessment/>

University Assessment Committee

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/assessment/page4.html>



Courses offered in nontraditional formats, e.g., concentrated or abbreviated time periods, **must** be designed to ensure an opportunity for preparation, reflection, and analysis concerning the subject matter. At least one calendar week of reflection and analysis **should** be provided to students for each semester hour, or equivalent quarter hours, of undergraduate credit awarded. The institution **must** demonstrate that students completing these programs or courses have acquired equivalent levels of knowledge and competencies to those acquired in traditional formats.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It offers only summer courses and intensive four- to five-week courses called Study Abroad in non-traditional formats. For example, in the Foreign Language Study Abroad programs, students are in traditional classroom settings approximately six hours a day, five days a week, for four weeks. They live either with local families or in dorms. The faculty director accompanies the students on weekend trips and is available during the day for questions or problems.

The summer session is 10 weeks long and courses are offered in two formats: 10-week courses and five-week courses. Regardless of the format, the total number of hours a course meets equals the number of times it meets during the semester, and the material covered is the same. Because of the concentration of material, students take fewer credit hours than they would typically take during a 16-week semester.

At the end of summer 2001, a survey was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the five-week summer terms from the perspective of students (approximately 20,000 undergraduate students). About 8,000 responses from undergraduate and graduate students were received, and faculty members were interviewed as well. Responses from both faculty and students reflected a dichotomy. Some liked the short courses, and some did not like them. As a result, some courses were piloted for six-week terms during summer 2002.

Some professional curricula require special activities. For example, in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, students are selected to participate in special activities at the end of their second year. All students are required to attend the Forestry Practicum, which is 10 weeks long and is held at the Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center near Andalusia in southern Alabama.

Sources of Information

Documents

Summer School Timetable of Classes, 2002

Summer Session 2002, Course List

Websites

Office of International Education

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/other/international_education/office/studyabroad/index.htm

Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center

<http://www.forestry.auburn.edu/sdfec.htm>

Effective instruction depends largely upon the maintenance of an environment conducive to study and learning. Therefore, an institution of higher education **must** provide for its students a learning environment in which scholarly and creative achievement is encouraged.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It provides a learning environment in which scholarly and creative achievement is encouraged.

Auburn University is planning a new Student Center and is currently upgrading its intramural/recreation complex. Every residence hall room is wired with Ethernet to facilitate increased use of information based technologies and participation in cyber-based learning. Library services are state-of-the-art—offering on-line search capabilities for a host of research databases and services—and Auburn's Libraries is ranked among the best research libraries in the nation. In addition, the University has two important lecture series: the Littleton-Franklin Lectures in Science and Humanities and a Special Lectures series.

Auburn also has an active UPC to provide entertainment for the campus, including concerts, lectures, movies, and trips. UPC events are identified on an easily accessible calendar. Moreover, the University has over 100 formal, registered organizations, clubs, and honorary societies across the Colleges and Schools to provide for both the social and academic development of students.

Sources of Information

Websites

Libraries Homepage

<http://www.lib.auburn.edu>

Littleton-Franklin Lectures

<http://www.auburn.edu/franklin/franklin.html>

Special Lectures

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/spec_lec.html

University Program Council (UPC)

<http://www.auburn.edu/%7Eupc/about.htm>

In certain professional, vocational and technical programs (for example, allied health programs), clinical and other affiliations with outside agencies may be necessary. In all such cases, learning experiences for which credit is awarded **must** be under the ultimate control and supervision of the educational institution.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Credit-bearing internships are arranged through the Departments and are the responsibility of the Departments. Faculty members award credit and grades for all learning experiences, including clinical and field studies. While cooperating professionals in the field are asked to offer input, the final grade is the responsibility of a faculty member. During the transition from Quarters to Semesters, all

internships were reviewed, and it was determined that faculty have ultimate responsibility for supervising internships, student teaching, service learning, clinical, and other such learning experiences for which credit is awarded.

For example, in the Teacher Education program, elementary and secondary teachers are required to complete a student teaching internship prior to graduation. This demanding laboratory experience requires each student to assume for a limited time the role of professional teacher. The full-day 12-week/300-hour internship is conducted under daily supervision of a classroom teacher, who is selected on the basis of his or her demonstrated ability to participate in this crucial phase of the teacher preparation program. Each cooperating teacher is judged to be an outstanding practitioner in the intern's area of specialization and meets Alabama State Board of Education criteria.

Working closely with the cooperating teacher is a University supervisor who observes the intern a minimum of four times during the semester. After each observation visit, the University faculty member consults with the student and the cooperating teacher individually and, if possible, as a team. These periods of consultation allow each participant to become active in improving the process of teacher education for the intern.

A second example is the School of Nursing, which works in collaboration with a wide variety of agencies in the Auburn-Opelika area as well as east central Alabama and west central Georgia to provide clinical experiences for students. Students interact with clients in every area of the health care arena, including rural health clinics and school health nursing, just to name a few. Clinical experiences culminate with a nine-week professional internship, where senior students are paired with professional Registered Nurses for a concentrated clinical experience before graduation. The arrangements and ultimate responsibility for coordinating the program rest with School of Nursing faculty, who themselves work with the agencies to provide outreach to Alabama.

Supporting Documentation

Websites

College of Education, Teacher Education

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/education/tes/index.html>

Cooperative Education

<http://www.auburn.edu/co-op/>

Health Administration Internships

<http://www.auburn.edu/HA/intern.check.html>

School of Nursing Clinicals

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/nursing/clinicals.html>

■ The institution **must** demonstrate that an effective relationship exists between curricular content and current practices in the field of specialization.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Many Colleges, Schools, and Departments are fully accredited by their respective national disciplinary accrediting organization. In many Colleges, Schools, and Departments, alumni and professionally oriented lay advisory boards work with faculty to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of the programs. All Colleges and Schools have an Advisory Board (see examples below). Colleges and Schools and Departments also maintain active relationships with licensing agencies to ensure that their students are prepared academically to enter the profession upon graduation. Through contacts with student chapters of national or regional associations, faculty and students interact with professionals in business and industry to maintain knowledge of current practices in their field. Several Departments support ongoing colloquium speaker programs that bring national experts to the campus to speak on state-of-the-art advances in their respective fields. Alumni and employers are

surveyed as part of Departmental assessment programs that help ensure that programmatic and curricular offerings are responsive to needs in the respective field of specialization.

Sources of Information

Websites

College of Agriculture Advisory Council

<http://www.ag.auburn.edu/ourcollege/advisory.html>

College of Education Advisory Council

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/education/alumni/ac.html>

Electrical Engineering Industrial Advisory Board

http://www.eng.auburn.edu/ee/pages/adv_board.htm

List of Accrediting Agencies

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/accred.htm>

Works Links Advisory Board

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/education/rse/worklinks/public/wladboard.htm>

The institution **must** demonstrate that program length, clock hours or credit hours, and tuition and fee charges are appropriate for the degrees and credentials it offers.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Alabama Commission of Higher Education (ACHE) establishes boundaries, and guides, reviews, and approves program length and credit hours. ACHE is a statewide 12-member lay board appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House and confirmed by the Senate. It is the state agency responsible for the overall statewide planning and coordination of higher education in Alabama, the administration of various student aid programs, and the performance of designated regulatory functions. Statutory responsibilities of the Commission include the approval of new academic programs at public two-year and four-year institutions, the annual funding recommendation to the Governor and the Legislature on behalf of the public higher education institutions, and the approval of off campus offerings of public two-year and four-year institutions. The Commission also is responsible for monitoring program viability standards, developing and maintaining student and faculty electronic unit record databases, and collecting and reporting information on institutional facilities.

In addition to ACHE, professional accrediting associations also provide some guidance and input into program length and credit hour decisions. The Board of Trustees establishes tuition and fees. Annual tuition and fee surveys of peer and land grant colleges and universities continue to indicate that Auburn University's charges are in line with charges at other institutions, and in most cases lower. In particular, in 1996, Auburn University was ranked in *Money Magazine's* "Top 100" in educational bargains for the seventh consecutive year. (For more information about how Auburn's tuition and fees compare with those of comparable institutions, see **Section 6.3**.)

Sources of Information

Websites

Alabama Commission of Higher Education

<http://www.ache.state.al.us/>

Challenges for Higher Education in Alabama

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/horizon/challenges.html>

Estimated Costs at Auburn University

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/admissio/costs.html

Money Magazine Article

http://www.auburn.edu/administration/univrel/news/archive/8_96news/8_96money.html

4.2.5

4.2.5 Academic Advising of Undergraduate Students



Each institution **must** conduct a systematic, effective program of undergraduate academic advising. A qualified advisor **should** be assigned early in the student's program and **should** recognize the individuality of students and their particular needs and goals. Advisors **should** be proficient in using data to help determine students' major fields of interest, **should** have access to each advisee's records, and **should** have appropriate training or background and experience to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It conducts a systematic program of undergraduate academic advising. Entering students are directed to academic advisors in two ways. First, almost all entering freshmen are directed to academic advising in their Camp War Eagle orientation. Freshmen who miss Camp War Eagle, freshmen who enter in Spring or Summer Semester, and transfer students are directed to appropriate academic advisors in the Successfully Orienting Students program. In addition, all students (949 students in 2000-01, 1430 students in 1999-2000) taking UNIV 1000 The Auburn Experience are given a booklet that contains a page listing the phone numbers for advisors in all Colleges and Schools. The Schedule of Courses lists the office locations for advising in the Colleges and Schools and in bold lettering indicates that "All new freshmen and transfer students must contact their Dean's office for advisement."

All Colleges, Schools, and Departments have academic advisors and some type of advising system. Eight out of Auburn University's 10 Colleges and Schools with undergraduate programs have some sort of advising information on the web. For a few Colleges or Schools, this information is not easily found at the website, and some provide only a contact person. However, several Colleges and Schools provide immediately obvious, detailed information. (For example, see the website for the College of Sciences and Mathematics.) Undeclared majors are advised in either the College of Sciences and Mathematics or the College of Liberal Arts. An advisement schedule for all students is posted on the web. Four Colleges or Schools (Agriculture, Sciences and Mathematics, Engineering, Forestry and Wildlife Sciences) place registration holds on students to ensure that they see an advisor. The College of Human Sciences places a registration hold on all freshmen and on all other students who have a cumulative GPA less than 2.0.

Auburn University's program of advising is effective. In 1997 and 1998, student satisfaction with advising at Auburn University was not significantly different from the national average as assessed by the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory. More recently, nine of 10 Colleges and Schools with undergraduate programs have filed assessment reports with the Office of Assessment and Program Improvement. Without exception, measures of student satisfaction with advising were good to excellent. In several cases where the results fell short of goals or student comments indicated a need for improvement, changes were made. For example, the College of Business increased the number of advisors assigned to graduating seniors and implemented monthly training sessions for its professional advisors. The Teacher Education Services unit in the College of Education is reinstating an orientation course for Teacher Education and has made a personnel change in the Teacher Education Services office.

An indirect indicator of the effectiveness of Auburn's advising system is the graduation rate. Auburn's cumulative six-year graduation rate for the 1994 Freshman Cohort was 66.8%. This graduation rate

compares favorably with the national average of 54.1% for all institutions and 66.5% for highly selective institutions.

Although advising information does appear to be readily available and students are directed to advising in their orientation programs, access to advising could be made even more obvious on an ongoing basis.

Suggestion 4-3:

The Steering Committee suggests that a section on advising be added to the Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, the Tiger Cub, and the Schedule of Courses. For all three publications, this section should provide clear instructions (offices, phone numbers, email addresses, websites and perhaps names of advisors) by which students can access appropriate advising resources.

Suggestion 4-4:

The Steering Committee suggests that an easily located weblink to advising be provided on the Auburn University Homepage. This link should point to advising sites in each College and School.

Suggestion 4-5:

The Steering Committee suggests that an easily located weblink to advising be provided on each College and School homepage.

Sources of Information

Document

Advising in Camp War Eagle. *Camp War Eagle 2002 Student and Parent Program Guide*, 12-25

Assessment Reports for College-Located Advisement Units, 2000-2001

Questionnaire and Results of College of Agriculture Survey of Graduating Seniors –
Memorandum of August 15, 2002 from Bill Alverson, Jr., Assistant Dean of College
of Agriculture

Student Success Center Special Projects and Student Outcomes Report,
Fall 1999-Fall 2001

Successfully Orienting Students, August 14, 2002, Student Schedule of Events

Interviews

Linda Glaze, Assistant Provost, August 13, 2002

Associate Deans of Colleges/Schools.

Bill Alverson, Jr., Assistant Dean, College of Agriculture, June 25, 2002

Dorothy Cavender, Associate Dean, College of Human Sciences, July 1, 2002
and July 29, 2002

Betty Fendley, Associate Dean, College of Architecture, Design and Construction,
July 10, 2002 and August 12, 2002

Jennifer Hamner, Assistant Dean, School of Nursing, June 24, 2002

Kent Hanby, Director of Student Services, Forestry and Wildlife Sciences,
June 24, 2002, July 18, 2002, and August 12, 2002

Bob Karcher, Director of Student Services, College of Engineering, August 12, 2002

Joe Morgan, Associate Dean, College of Engineering, July 24, 2002 and August 12, 2002

Robert Rowsey, Associate Dean, College of Education, June 24, 2002
and August 12, 2002

Gary Waters, Executive Director of Student Services, College of Business, July 2, 2002

Larry Wit, Associate Dean, College of Sciences and Mathematics, June 24, 2002
and July 17, 2002

Websites

Academic Support

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/support/

Academic Warning Information

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/registrar/academic_warning.html

Advising in Camp War Eagle – Student Program/Schedule of Events Highlights for Camp War Eagle 2001

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/fye/cwestsch.htm

Advising on the Web. See the following websites:

College of Agriculture

<http://www.ag.auburn.edu/current/advising.html>

College of Architecture, Design, and Construction

<http://131.204.118.57/html/studentservices/stuserv.htm>

College of Business

<http://www.business.auburn.edu/saff>

College of Engineering

<http://www.eng.auburn.edu/departments/ess/>

Advisement Schedule

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/registrar/advisement_schedule.html

Auburn University Withdrawal and Graduation Rates, Entering Freshman Cohorts, Selected Years, 1988-2000

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/withdraw.htm>

Camp War Eagle

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/fye/cwe.htm

Colleges and Schools Advising

School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences

<http://www.forestry.auburn.edu/sso/>

College of Liberal Arts

<http://frontpage.auburn.edu/cla/default.asp?file=advise/main.txt>

School of Nursing

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/nursing/admissions.html>

College of Sciences and Mathematics

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/science_math/cosam/docs/Advising.htm

Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory

<http://www.noellevitz.com/solutions/retention/satisfaction/ssi/index.asp>

Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory News Report for Auburn University, 1997

http://www.auburn.edu/administration/univrel/news/archive/10_97news/10_97satisfaction.html

Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory News Report for Auburn University, 1998

http://www.auburn.edu/administration/univrel/news/archive/10_98news/10_98survey.html

Registration Holds

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/registrar/advisement_schedule.html

Six-Year Graduation Rates from the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange

<http://tel.occe.ou.edu/csrde/gradrate2.htm>

Students at Risk

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/support/risk.htm

Successfully Orienting Students

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/fye/sos.htm

UNIV 1000 The Auburn Experience

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/fye/u100.htm

UNIV 1000 Enrollment Statistics

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/fye/u100hist.htm

Undeclared Majors

<http://www.auburn.edu/cosam/semester/unsm.html>

<http://frontpage.auburn.edu/cla/tempdataA2.asp>

An institution **must** ensure that the number of advisees assigned to faculty or professional staff is reasonable.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Academic advising at Auburn University is largely centered at the College or School and Department level. In some Colleges or Schools (such as the College of Agriculture) advising is conducted within the Department by tenure-track faculty. These advisors receive assistance and advising information from an Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and the College or School advising staff. In other Colleges or Schools (such as the College of Sciences and Mathematics and the College of Business) academic advisors are full-time employees who have responsibilities for advising students enrolled in, or considering, majors in the Colleges or Schools. Although Colleges and Schools that use full-time academic advisors may have more students per advisor, advising is the full-time job of that advisor. Hence, an advising resource for undergraduate students is readily available. Even in Colleges and Schools that have full-time advisors, there are typically Departmental faculty advisors as well.

A “reasonable number” of advisees per advisor is difficult to determine. For example, the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) does not set any quantitative guidelines for the advising ratio. On the NACADA website, a frequently asked question appears: “Is there any research available to describe the most efficient student to advisor ratio?” Wes Habley, a Director of ACT, Inc., offered the following reply:

Not to my knowledge. It is difficult to define efficiency in the case of advising. Many experts in the field believe that a good target ratio for full-time advisors is 300/1 and a target ratio for faculty with full instructional loads is 20/1. But, the efficiency of advising depends more on the needs of the students being served. That is, I would lower the advisee/advisor ratio for undecided, under-prepared or other students who may need extra attention. Conversely, I would increase the ratio for students who are high achievers, committed to a major which is highly sequential. But.....the original question has not been the subject of definitive research.

The number of advisees per advisor at Auburn varies widely. In the College of Agriculture, for example, most advising is performed by faculty members, and the advisee load varies from 1 to 43 students, with 14 being a typical number assigned to one faculty member. In comparison, the College of Business (with 4,500 undergraduates) does not require its students to see an advisor prior to registration. Students are encouraged to contact one of the College of Business five full-time academic advisors if they need assistance, suggestions for course loads, or if they have any problems related to registration. The College of Sciences and Mathematics has three full-time staff advisors for 600 students, but once students have declared a major in the College, they are assigned a faculty advisor. In the College of Human Sciences, the average number of advisees per faculty advisor is 25-30 students. Generally speaking for the College of Education, the number of students per faculty advisor varies from 15-80, although at least one program has a full-time student advisor for all undergraduates in the program. The School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences has about eight advisees per faculty advisor once the students reach the junior year. In Wildlife Sciences specifically, two faculty members have 32 and 20 advisees, while another faculty member has 47 wildlife/preveterinary advisees, and the Director of Student Services in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences has 138

advisees. In the College of Architecture, Design, and Construction, two professional full-time advisors advise 1270 students with input as needed from an Associate Dean. In the School of Nursing, one full-time advisor handles all pre-nursing advisees, but the students are divided among faculty members once they are admitted to the professional program.

Sources of Information

Interviews

Associate Deans of Colleges and Schools.

Bill Alverson, Jr., Assistant Dean, College of Agriculture, June 25, 2002

Dorothy Cavender, Associate Dean, July 1, 2002 and July 29, 2002

Betty Fendley, Associate Dean, College of Architecture, Design, and Construction, July 10, 2002 and August 12, 2002

Jennifer Hamner, Assistant Dean, School of Nursing, June 24, 2002

Kent Hanby, Director of Student Services, Forestry and Wildlife Sciences, June 24, 2002, July 18, 2002, and August 12, 2002

Bob Karcher, Director of Student Services, College of Engineering, August 12, 2002

Joe Morgan, Associate Dean, College of Engineering, July 24, 2002 and August 12, 2002

Robert Rowsey, Associate Dean, College of Education, June 24, 2002 and August 12, 2002

Gary Waters, Executive Director of Student Services, College of Business, July 2, 2002

Larry Wit, Associate Dean, College of Sciences and Mathematics, June 24, 2002 and July 17, 2002

Websites

National Academic Advising Association

<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/>

National Academic Advising Association Frequently Asked Questions Related to Critical Advising Issues: "Is there any research available to describe the most efficient student to advisor ratio?" See Question #4

<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Profres/questions.htm#Administration>

■ An effective orientation program **must** be made available to all full- and part-time undergraduate students.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It offers an effective orientation program to all full- and part-time undergraduate students. As previously stated, almost all entering freshmen attend Camp War Eagle orientation. Freshmen who miss Camp War Eagle, freshmen who enter in Spring or Summer Semester, and transfer students participate in the Successfully Orienting Students program. In addition, many students (949 students in 2000-01, 1430 students in 1999-2000) take UNIV 1000 The Auburn Experience. According to the UNIV 1000 website:

UNIV 1000: The Auburn Experience is a one-hour, letter graded course offered to help first year students make a successful transition to college life. "The Auburn Experience" provides both an introduction to Auburn University and a general orientation to the functions, support services, and resources of the university as a whole. UNIV 1000 is offered to freshman students only, with the exception of one section each semester offered to transfer students.

Students are also directed to orientation opportunities from the Student Success Center as it is described in the *Tiger Cub*.

A division of the Student Success Center, the Freshman Year Experience and Students in Transition program provides academic and retention programs to freshman, transfer, returning adult, and other new students [including students with dependents] that promote intellectual and social development which leads to personal and academic success.

The Transfer Assistance website offers information for transfer students.

The orientation programs are effective. Camp War Eagle conducts annual evaluations at each session surveying both students and parents and provides an annual report. In general, the percentage of “Good” plus “Very Good” ratings by students of more than 40 activities are usually greater than 80%. The overall Camp War Eagle favorable response rate ranged from 79% to 94% for the eight sessions of summer 2002. Parent ratings tend to be even higher than those of students. Evaluations of the Successfully Orienting Students program are perhaps even more impressive. In October and November 2001 evaluations, approximately 80% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that each of the 29 elements of the SOS program was effective. The favorable response rate was 93% and 97% for the overall SOS program.

Sources of Information

Documents

Camp War Eagle Annual Report 2001

Camp War Eagle Student and Parent Evaluation Results 2002

Camp War Eagle Student Evaluation Survey Form

Successfully Orienting Students Evaluation Results for October 19, 2001
and November 30, 2001

Websites

Camp War Eagle

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success//fye/cwe.htm

Freshman Year Experience and Students in Transition Program

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/fye/

Information for Transfer Students

<http://www.auburn.edu/transfer/>

Returning Adult Students and Students with Dependents

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/fye/ras.htm

Successfully Orienting Students

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success//fye/sos.htm

Tiger Cub, Student Success Center, 20-21

http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/student_affairs/student_success_center.html

Orientation and advisement programs **must** be evaluated regularly and used to enhance assistance to students.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Yearly updates of the *Tiger Cub* show that orientation programs are constantly changing to meet the needs of students. As already described above, surveys and other assessment results are collected yearly from Camp War Eagle attendees (both students and parents) and are used to modify the orientation program as needed. For example, in Camp War Eagle 2001, a high level of dissatisfaction was expressed regarding housing accommodations (36% of the 1,319 respondents to the survey). In response, a Camp War Eagle Housing Committee was established to determine how to improve housing accommodations. The Successfully Orienting Students program, as described above, is also evaluated regularly with changes being made in response to the feedback.

As previously stated, undergraduate academic advising is evaluated regularly, and the resulting information is used to enhance assistance to students. Nine of the 10 Colleges and Schools with undergraduate programs have filed assessment reports and used the results to make improvements. The tenth College conducts a survey of graduating seniors; the survey includes questions about advising. Below is a summary of the assessment results for advising for 2000-01 reported to the Office of Assessment and Program Improvement:

- *Agriculture*. Survey results of 658 graduating students through 2000 show 61.4 – 76.0% favorable responses on three questions relating to advising.
- *Architecture, Design, and Construction*. 789/1000 surveys returned with 82% rating services as Excellent or Good.
- *Business*. 53.4% of 459 graduating seniors reported a rating of 4.0 or higher on a 5.0 scale expressing a positive level of satisfaction. Use of results – (1) The number of advisors assigned to graduating seniors was increased from one to two; (2) Enhanced training and development sessions were implemented for the academic advisors. At least one training and development session is held each month.
- *Education*. 66% of graduating students were satisfied or very satisfied. However, 65% of teaching interns who were surveyed indicated that they were not familiar enough with the requirements for preteaching, admission to Teacher Education, admission to internship, certification requirements, and other issues. As a result, the College is reinstating an orientation course to assist students in understanding these requirements. More than 35% of students said a personnel change was needed to make the Teacher Education Services office a more inviting place for students. This change was made.
- *Engineering*. Advisors received a 4.35/5.0 level of satisfaction. However, several negative comments were made: the process for providing academic advising at the Departmental level was a concern, and a need for a standardized policy manual was indicated.
- *Human Sciences*. 65% of respondents on Senior Exit survey indicated that they were very satisfied or satisfied with academic advising provided. 85% of graduating seniors participating in exit interviews rated their overall satisfaction with academic advisors as very satisfied or satisfied.
- *Liberal Arts*. A sample of 80 graduating students indicated 4.68 on a 5-point scale satisfaction with advising.
- *Sciences and Mathematics*. 137 graduating seniors indicated 3.36 on a 4.0 scale of overall satisfaction with advising services.
- *Nursing*. Survey on nine-item questionnaire ranging from 2.26-3.30 out of 5.0 for Academic Advising Satisfaction. Restructured office of pre-nursing advising.
- *Forestry and Wildlife Sciences*. Low numbers, but generally positive comments with only constructive advice. The College will adopt that advice when possible.

Sources of Information

Documents

Assessment Reports for College or School-Located Advisement Units, 2000-2001

Camp War Eagle Annual Report 2001

Camp War Eagle Student and Parent Evaluation Results 2002

Camp War Eagle Student Evaluation Survey Form

Questionnaire and Results of College of Agriculture Survey of Graduating Seniors –
Memorandum of August 15, 2002 from Bill Alverson, Jr., Assistant Dean
of College of Agriculture

Student Success Center Special Projects and Student Outcomes Report,
Fall 1999-Fall 2001

Successfully Orienting Students Evaluation Results for October 19, 2001
and November 30, 2001

Interviews

Associate Deans of Colleges and Schools.

Bill Alverson, Jr., Assistant Dean, College of Agriculture, June 25, 2002

Dorothy Cavender, Associate Dean, College of Human Sciences, July 1, 2002
and July 29, 2002

Betty Fendley, Associate Dean, College of Architecture, Design and Construction,
July 10, 2002 and August 12, 2002

Jennifer Hamner, Assistant Dean, School of Nursing, June 24, 2002

Kent Hanby, Director of Student Services, Forestry and Wildlife Sciences,
June 24, 2002, July 18, 2002, and August 12, 2002

Bob Karcher, Director of Student Services, College of Engineering, August 12, 2002

Joe Morgan, Associate Dean, College of Engineering, July 24, 2002
and August 12, 2002

Robert Rowsey, Associate Dean, College of Education, June 24, 2002
and August 12, 2002

Gary Waters, Executive Director of Student Services, College of Business, July 2, 2002

Larry Wit, Associate Dean, College of Sciences and Mathematics, June 24, 2002
and July 17, 2002

Websites

Camp War Eagle

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/success/fye/cwe.htm

Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory

<http://www.noellevitz.com/solutions/retention/satisfaction/ssi/index.asp>

Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory News Report for Auburn University, 1997

http://www.auburn.edu/administration/univrel/news/archive/10_97news/10_97satisfaction.html

Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory News Report for Auburn University, 1998

http://www.auburn.edu/administration/univrel/news/archive/10_98news/10_98survey.html

Tiger Cub

<http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/>

4.3 Graduate Program

4.3

4.3.1 Initiation, Operation and Expansion of Graduate Programs

4.3.1

The administration and faculty **must** be responsible for the development of new academic programs recommended to the governing board.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The importance of the faculty's role in academic matters is indicated in the University Senate's Constitution, which states:

The University Senate is advisory to the President. In that capacity it is the body having primary concern for the general academic policies of the University, including those involving curricula, programs, standards, faculty appointment, evaluation and development, student academic affairs and libraries.

The development of new academic programs at Auburn University follows a systematic process. First, proposals are developed by faculty members who have program-area expertise. Second, the proposals are reviewed and approved by the Department, College, or School, and University (Graduate Council, University Curriculum Committee, Provost, President). Third, once these reviews are completed, recommendations are made to and approved by the Board of Trustees. Fourth, the University passes approved proposals to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE). ACHE delivers them to the Alabama Council of Graduate Deans, which reviews them on behalf of all institutions in the state before making a recommendation to ACHE. Finally, ACHE approves or disapproves the proposed programs.

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001

Websites

Alabama Commission on Higher Education Policy and Procedures

<http://www.ache.state.al.us>

Faculty Handbook, University Senate Constitution, Article 1, Purpose

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>



A graduate program **must** have curricula and resources substantially beyond those provided for an undergraduate program. Research, scholarly activity and/or other advanced professional training **must** be included in graduate studies and supported by adequate resources.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It has curricula and resources substantially beyond those provided for its undergraduate program and includes opportunities for research, scholarly activity, and advanced professional training in its graduate programs.

Each College or School, except for the School of Nursing, offers a great variety of graduate courses, which are described in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. These courses are subject to formal reviews within each College and School, by the University Graduate Council, and by the University Curriculum Committee. During this review process, courses are examined to insure that they offer the rigor required for graduate credit. For each graduate course it submits, the Department must provide a justification stating that the course merits graduate credit. Furthermore, the quality of graduate curricula and the availability of resources for graduate programs are reviewed systematically as part of each program and College or School accreditation cycle. Altogether, graduate programs at Auburn are reviewed by over 30 accrediting bodies across 10 academic Colleges and Schools.

All doctoral programs require independent research and scholarship. Specifically, a minimum of 10 semester hours of dissertation research is required for doctoral programs. In addition, 90% of masters programs afford students the option of completing a research thesis. The remaining masters programs require capstone courses, comprehensive examinations, or other assessments of advanced learning.

Auburn University's graduate program has resources substantially beyond those provided for its undergraduate program and supports research, scholarly activity, and other advanced professional training with adequate resources. For 2000-01, Auburn University committed \$10,933,346 in Unrestricted Funds and \$3,867,246 in Restricted Funds to graduate assistant stipends. Additionally,

in 2001-02, Auburn University committed \$6,165,938 to non-resident tuition waivers for graduate assistants, \$2,605,077 to resident tuition waivers for graduate teaching assistants, and \$1,204,927 to resident tuition waivers for graduate research assistants. Combining funds from the Graduate School budget, the Graduate Student Council, and the Office of the Vice President for Research, the Graduate School provided graduate students with \$65,000 to support research and travel. Auburn University plans to increase its number of graduate students to 5,000, with concurrent increases in stipends, fellowships, and space.

Sources of Information

Interviews

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001 and July 30, 2002

Websites

Academic Program Accreditation at Auburn University, Office of Planning and Analysis

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/accred.htm>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 6-8, 101-123

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

An institution **must** provide a competent and productive faculty, adequate library and learning resources, adequate computer and laboratory facilities, and appropriate administrative organization.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It provides competent and productive faculty, adequate library and learning resources, adequate computer and laboratory facilities, and appropriate administrative organization to support its graduate programs.

Auburn University's success in graduate education rests largely on the strong, competent, and productive faculty serving graduate programs. A high priority is placed on research and scholarly productivity, as reflected in the University graduate faculty and tenure and promotion criteria. As of Fall Semester 2001, 93% of Auburn's full-time faculty members held doctorates or terminal degrees in their fields. They have been attracted from the best institutions in the world, and they make significant research and scholarly contributions. For example, the Auburn University faculty was responsible for a total of 1,051 grants, generating approximately 55 million dollars in 1998-99. These grants provide resources (for example, assistantships, equipment, travel, research funding) to assist graduate students in advancing towards their degrees. (For additional information on Auburn University's faculty, see **Section 4.8.2.3.**)

Auburn University also provides for an environment that facilitates research and scholarly productivity. The combined collections of Auburn's Libraries (Ralph Brown Draughon Library, Library of Architecture, Design, and Construction, and Charles Allen Cary Veterinary Medical Library) contain over 2.2 million bound volumes, 1.4 million government documents, and 134,000 maps. The Libraries also receives over 19,000 serials and 150 newspapers. According to the Association of Research Libraries, in 2001, Auburn ranked 102nd among member libraries. In addition to the Libraries, Auburn University has several other learning resources centers, which are funded by Colleges and Schools. These include the College of Education Learning Resources Center, the College of Engineering Media Services Center, and the School of Pharmacy's Drug Information Center and Learning Resources Center. (For additional information on the Libraries and other learning resources, see **Sections 5.1 and 5.2.**)

Computer and technological resources also play a critical role in supporting Auburn's graduate programs. In 1998, Auburn University was listed as one of the most wired universities by *Yahoo! Internet Life* and *Net Life* magazines. Auburn participates in Internet 2 as well as a regional network called Southern Crossroads (SoX). The regional network is managed by the Southeastern University Research Association (SURA) and provides high-speed access to regional research universities and educational networks, while Internet 2 provides high-speed access to the entire Internet 2 research

community. (For additional information on computer services and information technology, see **Section 5.3.**)

Auburn University maintains 809,833 square feet of assignable laboratory space, much of which is for graduate education. In the past 10 years, a new Life Sciences building and a new Chemistry building with modern laboratory facilities have been constructed. A new Poultry Science building is being constructed, and a new Forestry and Wildlife Sciences building is being planned. In addition, the designation of seven Peaks of Excellence will provide resources, including laboratory facilities, for graduate students. The Peaks of Excellence include Cellular and Molecular Biosciences, Detection and Food Safety, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Forest Sustainability, Information Technology, Poultry Products Safety and Quality, and Transportation.

Administrative organization of the graduate program is described in the *Faculty Handbook* as follows:

The governing body of the Graduate School is the Graduate Council. Graduate Council members represent the Graduate Faculty as a whole rather than the particular areas from which they come.

The Council is advisory to the President and acts on regulations and policies governing all graduate study and graduate degrees and on curriculum requests and proposals for new graduate programs, and assists the Dean of the Graduate School in carrying out regulations and policies. The Council helps to formulate changes in Graduate School policy. All actions of the Graduate Council are subject to the University President's review and approval. All general policy recommendations of the Graduate Council shall be reviewed by the University Senate before going forward to the President.

The Dean of the Graduate School reports directly to the Provost, who is also the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Sources of Information

Interview

Yvonne Kozlowski, University Librarian, June 11, 2002

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001, July 20, 2002, and July 30, 2002

Websites

Auburn Organizational Chart

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/pdf/orgchart.pdf>

Auburn University Libraries Information

<http://www.lib.auburn.edu/info.html>

Auburn University's Impact on Alabama

<http://www.auburn.edu/outreach/impact>

College of Education Learning Resources Center

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/education/lrc/lrc.html>

Engineering Media Services

<http://www.eng.auburn.edu/departments/ems/>

Faculty Handbook, Graduate Council Purpose Statement, Chapter 2, Article 4, Section 15

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Graduate Faculty Criteria

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/gradfaculty/index.html>

Graduate Student Resources

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/students/aid.html>

Harrison School of Pharmacy Drug Information Center and Learning Resources Center

<http://pharmacy.auburn.edu/dilrc/index.html>

Internet 2 Research Community Participants

<http://www.internet2.edu/members/html/universities.html#>

Office of Information Technology

<http://www.auburn.edu/oit>

Office of Planning and Analysis, Common Data Set

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/unifiedsurvey/cdsk.html>

Peaks of Excellence

<http://www.auburn.edu/univrel/peaks/index.html>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 6-8

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

An undergraduate institution planning to initiate its first graduate program, a graduate institution planning to initiate a program or degree level higher than that already approved, or a graduate institution planning to initiate a program at the same level but substantially different from those already approved **must** inform the Executive Director of the Commission on Colleges in advance of the admission of students. The institution also **must** document that any necessary approval from state or other agencies has been secured. Before an institution moves from baccalaureate to graduate status, or attempts to expand the number of its graduate programs at the same level, it **must** demonstrate that it has conducted a thorough assessment of needs, market and environmental factors, and resource requirements and financial implications for the institution.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Auburn University is a comprehensive land grant university, established in 1856. It conferred its first graduate degree in 1870. Since then Auburn has awarded 28,245 graduate degrees, 3,611 of which were doctorates. Currently, Auburn offers 98 masters and 44 doctoral programs, serving over 2,800 graduate students. In addition to awarding bachelors degrees, Auburn is currently accredited to offer first professional, masters, educational specialist, and doctoral degrees. At the time of its last re-accreditation, the institution also had in place its video-based graduate degree programs through the College of Business and the College of Engineering.

As previously stated, proposals for new programs, usually initiated by faculty, are subjected to review and approval by the Department, the College or School, and the University before recommendations are made to the Board of Trustees, and approval (or denial) is obtained from the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE). The review process required by ACHE includes an assessment of needs, market and environmental factors, and resource requirements and financial implications for the institution.

Sources of Information

Interviews

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001 and June 11, 2002

Website

Alabama Commission on Higher Education Policy and Procedures

<http://www.ache.state.al.us>

- Institutions **must** maintain strong educational programs at the master's and/or baccalaureate levels before attempting doctoral programs, or **must** justify their departure from the requirements.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It has maintained strong baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral programs for decades. As previously stated, Auburn has been granting graduate degrees since 1870 and granted its first doctoral degree in 1955. The procedures for the approval of new doctoral programs are well established and are designed to ensure fit with the University mission and existing bachelors and masters degree programs.

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001

Website

Alabama Council on Higher Education Policy and Procedures

<http://www.ache.state.al.us>

- Free-standing graduate and professional schools are exempt from this requirement; however, they **must** demonstrate not only the strength of their individual programs, but also that students admitted have met undergraduate requirements specified for the program.

Auburn University has no free-standing graduate or professional schools. However, the College of Veterinary Medicine and the School of Pharmacy, both of which offer first professional degrees, have admission requirements separate from those of the Graduate School or the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. These requirements are listed in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. The first professional degrees offered in the College of Veterinary Medicine and the School of Pharmacy have been accredited by the appropriate professional organizations.

Source of Information

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 87, 99

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

4.3.2

4.3.2 Graduate Admission

- An institution **must** establish qualitative and quantitative requirements which result in the admission of students whose educational preparation indicates the potential for a high level of performance. Admission criteria typically include an appropriate baccalaureate degree. In cases where the baccalaureate degree is not required, the institution **must** demonstrate that the student has adequate educational preparation to complete the graduate program. Admission procedures **must** include the requirement that an applicant submit, as part of the formal application process, official undergraduate transcripts of credit earned from all institutions of higher education previously attended; and other appropriate documents, such as official reports on nationally recognized aptitude tests and evaluations by professionals in the field as to the readiness of an applicant for graduate work. When possible, an interview with the applicant **should** also be arranged.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Auburn University has established qualitative and quantitative requirements that result in the admission of students whose educational preparation indicates the potential for a high level of performance. The Graduate School admits a student into a graduate program on the recommendation of the Department where the student wishes to study. Admission is typically coordinated through the Departmental Graduate Program Officer or other program representative. General requirements for admission include the following:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited US institution, or the equivalent from an international institution
- Good academic standing at the institution last attended
- Official transcripts of all undergraduate- and graduate-level study from each school previously attended
- GMAT (Management, Finance, Master of Business Administration, and Master of Accountancy programs), GRE General Test (all other programs) and/or TOEFL. International students must score at least 550 on the paper version or 213 on the computer version of the TOEFL.

Programs frequently establish additional and higher standards than the general requirements of the Graduate School. These standards include compatibility of the applicant's goals with Departmental resources, the availability of spaces for new students, and a holistic evaluation of the applicant's potential for success. Examples of additional evaluation items of applicants include letters of application, letters of recommendation, writing samples, portfolios, research or applied experience, and interviews in combination with GPA and standardized test scores.

The success of these admissions criteria is borne out by the facts that all current graduate programs meet viability requirements of the Alabama Commission on Higher Education and the time-to-doctoral-degree average is 5.11 years.

Sources of Information

Document

Auburn University Time-to-Degree Report for 1998-2001, December 3, 2001

Websites

Alabama Commission on Higher Education Viability Standards

<http://www.legislature.state.al.us/CodeofAlabama/1975/16-5-8.htm>

Graduate School General Admissions Requirements

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/webapp/requirements.html>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 101-02

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Admission criteria for all graduate programs **must** be published.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Graduate School publishes admission criteria in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*, which is revised and published annually, both in paper form and on the web. For the admission criteria of individual programs, the *Bulletin* refers interested applicants to Departments. Admission criteria for programs are usually available on the Department's website. However, applicants can also contact the Department directly to have the criteria and admission materials sent or use the Graduate Web Application and Admission Process (GWAAP) system, which is a web-based system that allows students to request information on all programs in which they are interested. Students' requests are electronically forwarded to the appropriate Graduate Program Officer. Although the system appears

to be effective, it could be improved by more direct access for potential students to individual program requirements.

Suggestion 4-6:

The Steering Committee suggests that because complete admission requirements reside at the program level, admission requirements for all graduate programs be published on the web and that the Graduate School website have direct links to the admission requirements for every graduate program offered.

Sources of Information

Websites

Graduate School General Admission Requirements

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/webapp/requirements.html>

GWAAP Request for Program Information Page

http://frontpage.duc.auburn.edu/gradschl/public_html/Gwaap2/rfi/rfi.asp

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 101-02

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Coursework transferred or accepted for credit toward a graduate degree **must** represent graduate coursework relevant to the degree, with course content and level of instruction resulting in student competencies at least equivalent to those of students enrolled in the institution's own graduate degree programs. In assessing and documenting equivalent learning and qualified faculty, institutions may use recognized guides which aid in the evaluation for credit. Such guides include those published by the American Council on Education, the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, and the NAFSA: Association of International Education.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* specifies requirements for transfer credit. The following stipulations from the *Bulletin* ensure that transferred credit is comparable to that earned at Auburn:

- No prior commitment is made concerning whether transfer credit will be accepted.
- The credit must be acceptable to the student's advisory committee and be pertinent to the student's Plan of Study.
- Two official transcripts are required.
- No course on which a grade lower than B was earned may be transferred.
- Credit will not be allowed if the combined GPA on graduate work taken at other schools is less than 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Departments may maintain their own additional standards.

Source of Information

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 103

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Graduate credit **must** not be awarded for portfolio-based experiential learning which occurs prior to the matriculation into a graduate program and which has not been under the supervision of the institution. This limitation on the award of credit for experiential learning does not preclude practices such as internships and field experiences that are an integral part of a graduate program and are conducted under the supervision of the institution. In those exceptional individual cases, however, an institution **may** award graduate credit for portfolio-based experiential learning which occurs prior to the student's matriculation into a graduate program. Justification for an exception **must** include adequate documentation that the institution: (a) awards credit only for documented learning which ties the prior experience to the theories and data of the relevant academic field; (b) awards credit only to a matriculated student, identifies such credit on the student's transcript as credit for prior experiential learning, and is prepared, upon request from another institution, to document how such learning was evaluated and the basis on which such credit was awarded (c) takes steps to ensure that credit for prior experiential learning does not duplicate credit already awarded for courses in the student's academic program; (d) adopts, describes in appropriate institutional publications, implements, and regularly reviews policies and procedures for awarding credit for experiential learning; and (e) clearly describes, and establishes the validity of, the evaluation process and criteria for awarding credit for prior experiential learning.

Auburn University is in compliance. It does not award graduate credit for portfolio-based experiential learning that occurs prior to the matriculation into a graduate program.

Source of Information

Interview

Jo Heath, Acting Associate Dean, Graduate School, April 12, 2002

Separate admission criteria **must** be formulated for each level of graduate work offered.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Although the Graduate School does not have separate admission criteria for different graduate degrees, Departments do. Anecdotal evidence from Graduate Program Officers indicates that separate admission criteria are used for different levels of graduate work. For example, some Departments admit students at the masters level and then selectively admit them to the doctoral program based on performance on a comprehensive exam; others admit at more than one level, but have different criteria for each level. Some programs such as Psychology and History, use a direct PhD track in which all admissions are at the doctoral level.

Suggestion 4-7:

The Steering Committee suggests that the Graduate Dean and the Graduate Council inventory all admission requirements for graduate programs at all levels to ensure that separate admission criteria are clearly delineated where required or appropriate.

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, August 10, 2002

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 101

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

- Policies **must** clearly define probation or conditional admission, if any, including the requirements for conditional admission and how long a student may remain in that status.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It offers provisional admission to students who meet all admission requirements except that they have not taken the GRE or GMAT. The *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* says: “This classification is for one semester only, and satisfactory scores must be submitted by the end of the semester.” This classification cannot be used for international students.

Source of Information

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 102
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

- Admission criteria for each graduate program **must** be established with representation by the faculty responsible for instruction in that program.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The role of the faculty in establishing admission criteria and implementing those criteria is evident in several ways. First, statements in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* clearly indicate the primacy of faculty in admission criteria and decisions: “Admission to any graduate degree program is granted by the Dean of the Graduate School upon the recommendation of the Department of proposed study” and “Departments may (and frequently do) establish higher standards than those described here, and may require that applicants submit additional materials.”

Further, the *Faculty Handbook* states that “faculty members at Auburn University are involved to a significant degree in the formulation and review of institutional policies which affect the academic and professional welfare of the University and the Faculty.” Additionally, “University policy concerning the academic functioning of the University is adopted with the participation of the elected representatives of the University Faculty.”

Finally, the Graduate Council, which includes 12-15 faculty members with at least one from each College or School with a graduate program, plays a prominent role in establishing admission criteria and most other procedures of the Graduate School. The charge of the Graduate Council is to “review requests for curriculum changes in courses that may be taken for graduate credit, review and recommend approval of all proposals for new graduate programs and modifications to existing programs, review existing programs, recommend regulations and policies for the Graduate School, and assist the dean of the Graduate School in carrying out those regulations and policies.”

Sources of Information

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 2, Article 4, University Senate Constitution
<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>
Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 102
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

An institution **must** publish both the general criteria for admission and any special admission criteria for individual programs.

Auburn University is in compliance.

General criteria for admission are published in both the electronic and paper forms of the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. General admission criteria are also found on the Admissions Requirements website of the Graduate School. For additional admission criteria of individual programs, the *Bulletin* refers interested applicants to Departments that publish their admission criteria individually, usually on paper and on the web. As previously stated, the applicant can also contact the Department directly to have the criteria and admission materials sent or use the Graduate Web Application and Admission Process system, which is a web-based system that allows students to request information on all programs in which they are interested. Students' requests are electronically forwarded to the appropriate Graduate Program Officer. As noted earlier, although this system appears to be effective, it would be improved by a more direct access for potential students to individual program requirements.

Sources of Information

Websites

Graduate School General Admissions Requirements

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/webapp/requirements.html>

GWAAP Request for Program Information Page

http://frontpage.duc.auburn.edu/gradschl/public_html/Gwaap2/rfi/rfi.asp

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 100-02

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

It **must** regularly evaluate its admission policies.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Graduate Faculty within Departments along with their Graduate Program Officers evaluate admission policies with each round of admission decisions. Admission policies are also evaluated on an unscheduled basis in Department Graduate Faculty meetings. At the University level, admission policies are revised on a regular, but unscheduled, basis by the Graduate Council, the Academic Standards Committee, and the University Senate. Most recently, admission policies were revised by the Graduate Council on July 21, 1999; revised again by the Graduate Council on November 17, 1999; then approved by the Academic Standards Committee in early December 1999; and approved by the University Senate on March 7, 2000.

Although anecdotal evidence and recent actions of the Graduate Council indicate that admission policies are regularly evaluated, these evaluations are not performed at scheduled intervals.

Suggestion 4-8:

The Steering Committee suggests that the Dean of the Graduate School and the Graduate Council establish and implement a plan for annual evaluation of admissions policies at both the Graduate School (General Admission Requirements) and individual program levels. This annual review should include the following: (1) annual review of admission policies and procedures by each graduate program, (2) submission of documentation of the reviewed policies, (3) submission of current (dated) admission policies and procedures for each graduate degree program, and (4) posting of the current admission policies, requirements, and procedures for each graduate degree program on a website linked to the Graduate School website.

Supporting Documentation

Websites

Graduate Council Minutes, July 21, 1999

http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/minutes/gc_1999.html#jul_21_99

Graduate Council Minutes, November 17, 1999

http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/minutes/gc_1999.html#nov_17_99

University Senate Minutes, March 7, 2000

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate/marchminutes.html>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 101

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin_02-03/

4.3.3

4.3.3 Graduate Completion Requirements



General completion requirements for graduate degrees offered by an institution **must** be determined by the faculty or an appropriate body representing the faculty. Policies governing these requirements **must** include the following: the specified period of time for degree completion, requirements governing residency, thesis and dissertation requirements (when applicable), the minimum number of credit hours required for the degree, the minimum acceptable grade-point average, standards for satisfactory academic progress, the level of academic progress at which the student **should** apply for candidacy, and the types of qualifying and exit examinations the candidate must pass.

Auburn University is in compliance.

As described earlier in **Section 4.3.1**, requirements for academic programs are developed by faculty with disciplinary expertise and subjected to review and approval at the Department, College, and University levels (Graduate Council, Provost, President). These policies include the following:

- *Completion requirements for graduate degree programs, including the time period for degree completion.* For masters and specialists degree programs, the time limit is five years. Students who do not complete the degree in five years are required to retake or replace coursework that is over five years old or retest over the subject matter. For doctoral programs, students are limited to four years past the general, preliminary examination. Students who exceed the four-year time limit must retest to establish currency in the field.
- *Requirements concerning residency.* A minimum of 18 of these semester hours must be completed at Auburn University. The residency requirement for doctoral students is satisfied by completing a minimum of 18 semester hours of on campus coursework over two consecutive semesters.
- *Thesis and dissertation requirements.* Although some masters degrees require students to complete a thesis; others do not. Both the Doctor of Philosophy and the Doctor of Education require the completion of a dissertation.
- *Number of credit hours required.* Masters programs require 30 semester hours of coursework beyond the bachelors degree. Half of the coursework must be earned from 7000- and 8000-level courses. Doctoral programs require an additional 30 semester hours of coursework.
- *Grade point average required.* Should a graduate student's cumulative GPA drop below a 3.0, the student is placed on academic probation. If this GPA remains below a 3.0 after the next nine credit hours of coursework, the student is placed on academic suspension. The student can be readmitted only after the completion of a remedial plan recommended by the academic unit and approved by the Graduate Dean.
- *Standards for satisfactory progress.* To earn a graduate degree, students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0, with no more than nine hours beyond the courses listed on the Plan of Study being calculated in the grade point average. If a grade below C is earned in a course, the student must repeat the course.

- *Level of academic progress at which the student should apply for candidacy.* Students become candidates for doctoral degrees when they pass the General Doctoral Examination.
- *The types of qualifying and exit exams the candidate must pass.* To complete a masters degree, students must pass a comprehensive exam. As previously stated, to become a candidate for a doctoral degree, students must pass a General Doctoral Examination.

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001

Websites

Alabama Commission on Higher Education Policies and Procedures
<http://www.ache.state.al.us>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 100-24
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

These requirements, along with any others developed by the institution, **must** be published and distributed to all incoming graduate students and be appropriate to the degree and program being offered. If individual academic units develop special completion requirements for their graduate programs, these requirements **must** be published in the official catalog.

Auburn University is not in compliance.

University requirements for graduate students are published in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*, which is available in paper copy and on the web. However, special completion requirements established by Departments, Colleges, or Schools are not published in the *Bulletin*.

Recommendation 4-1

The Steering Committee recommends that because complete completion requirements reside at the program level, completion requirements for all graduate programs be published on the web and that the Graduate School website have direct links to the completion requirements for every graduate program offered.

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, April 26, 2002

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 100-124
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

All courses offered by an institution for credit **must** be acceptable as requirements or electives applicable to at least one of its own degree or certificate programs or **must** be clearly identified on transcripts as not applicable to any of the institution's own degree or certificate programs.

Auburn University is in compliance.

All courses that are offered for credit are considered part of some degree or certificate program. Auburn does not have any for-credit graduate courses that cannot be counted toward at least one degree. However, the University may limit the number of credit hours in a particular field that the student may earn toward the degree or may transfer from another College or School within the University.

Graduate credit is denied for all undergraduate courses. Some programs, usually in situations where students are inadequately prepared, may recommend that students take undergraduate courses as part of their Plan of Study, but credit is not awarded toward the completion of the graduate degree. If a graduate student takes an undergraduate course, the official Auburn transcript contains an asterisk next to the course and a statement that the course is not counted for credit.

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001

Website

Alabama Commission on Higher Education Policies and Procedures

<http://www.ache.state.al.us/>

4.3.4

4.3.4 Graduate Curriculum

An institution offering graduate work **must** be able to demonstrate that it maintains a substantial difference between undergraduate and graduate instruction.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It maintains a substantial difference between undergraduate and graduate instruction. 5000-level professional courses and 6000-level graduate courses are open to advanced undergraduates (junior or senior standing required) as well as graduate students. 7000- and 8000-level graduate courses are not available to undergraduates without special permission. In the transition from the Quarter System to the Semester System (1998-2000), a syllabus was reviewed for every graduate course. Each graduate syllabus was required to include justification of graduate credit. In general, graduate courses use more sophisticated textbooks, require the application of critical and analytical skills, and require analysis, exploration, and questioning. Further, graduate students are usually expected to synthesize knowledge from various sources. Typically, graduate courses require students to go beyond basic principles and to think critically about new situations and conditions. Often, graduate courses require that students read primary sources that extend beyond textbooks. Most graduate instructors expect a greater degree of independence from graduate students. Many graduate courses require undergraduate courses and other graduate courses as prerequisites.

Graduate courses are developed by Graduate Faculty members. Appointment of faculty to the Graduate Faculty is based on criteria developed by the individual Departments, as described in the *Faculty Handbook*. The criteria for Graduate Faculty membership are reviewed by the Graduate Council and include expert teaching at the graduate level, advising on graduate committees, publishing refereed articles, and other significant professional scholarly activities. Professional courses are developed by Graduate Faculty members and clinical faculty who have professional degrees and, in most cases, are board certified in their areas of specialty. Additional information about Auburn's Graduate Faculty is provided in **Section 4.8.2.3**.

Sources of Information

Documents

Sample Graduate Course Syllabi Including Justification of Graduate Credit

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 4, 7, The Graduate School, Article B, Section 2

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Graduate Faculty Criteria

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/gradfaculty/index.html>

Graduate study **must** be at a level of complexity and specialization that extends the knowledge and intellectual maturity of the student. It **must** require graduate students to analyze, explore, question, reconsider and synthesize old and new knowledge and skills.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Complexity and specialization are monitored to assure that graduate courses extend the knowledge and intellectual maturity of graduate students. This monitoring ensures that graduate courses require students to analyze, explore, question, reconsider, and synthesize old and new knowledge and develop new skills. When a new professional or graduate course is developed, it is evaluated by the Department Head or Chair and the College or School Curriculum Committee so that colleagues familiar with the area of study are the first to determine if the level of complexity and specialization is adequately challenging. Then, the graduate course is reviewed by the Graduate Curriculum Committee of the Graduate Council according to SACS *Criteria*. Once approved by the Graduate Curriculum Committee, courses are then evaluated by the University Curriculum Committee.

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 16, 2001.

Websites

Graduate Council

<http://www.auburn.edu/policies/gradcouncil.html>

University Curriculum Committee

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/unicurr.html

The graduate curriculum **must** afford the depth of education, the specialized skills, and the sense of creative independence that will allow the graduate to practice in and contribute to a profession or field of scholarship.

Auburn University is in compliance.

In the professional and graduate programs, depth of knowledge and specialized skills are gained from the core and elective courses that are developed by the Graduate Faculty and reviewed by the College or School Curriculum Committee, working together, in some cases, with their accrediting agencies. Over 30 agencies accredit the academic units at Auburn University. Professional programs have special learning experiences (for example, internships) in which students are mentored and evaluated in professional settings to learn problem solving and creative independence. In non-thesis masters programs, graduate students develop creative independence through capstone or special project

courses, supervised field study, and internships. In graduate programs requiring a thesis or dissertation, students develop creative independence by working with their major professors in research settings, learning how to formulate questions and how to collect, synthesize, evaluate, and report original information in their field of specialty.

Sources of Information

Interview

Interviews of Selected Graduate Faculty Members in Departments of Chemistry; Pathobiology; and Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology, October 16-17, 2001

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 127
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Combined instruction of graduate and undergraduate students, if permitted at all, **must** be structured to ensure appropriate attention to both groups.

Auburn University is in partial compliance.

It assures appropriate attention to both undergraduate and graduate students when they are instructed in a single classroom setting (4000/7000) and different levels of achievement are expected. In these “piggyback” arrangements, the Graduate Council ensures that the graduate course meets the academic standards of graduate education.

Advanced (junior and senior) undergraduates and graduate students are also taught together when they register for 6000-level graduate courses. The 6000-level courses are designed to extend the usual undergraduate course structure and to bridge the academic discipline between undergraduate and graduate levels. The requirements for graduate students and for undergraduates are the same. A maximum of 50% of credit hours toward a graduate degree can be 6000-level courses.

The use of 6000-level courses is not uniform across the University. One concern is whether or not it is appropriate to require these courses in the curriculum models for undergraduate majors. In the SACS Faculty Survey, 29% of respondents (approximately 50% response rate of 1266 surveys sent) agreed that undergraduate programs should be allowed to require 6000-level courses; 31% were neutral; 22% disagreed; and 17% didn’t know.

When freshmen and sophomores try to register for 6000-level graduate courses, they are blocked by the OASIS computer program. Undergraduates are also blocked from registering for 5000-level professional courses, and 7000/8000-level graduate courses by OASIS, unless the undergraduate has special permission from the instructor and Graduate Dean.

Suggestion 4-9:

The Steering Committee suggests that the use of 6000-level courses in curriculum models as requirements for undergraduate majors be studied by a committee comprised of faculty from the Teaching Effectiveness Committee, the University Curriculum Committee, and the Graduate Council.

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 16, 2001

Websites

Graduate Council
<http://www.grad.auburn.edu/policies/gradcouncil.html>

SACS Reaffirmation and Reaccreditation, Surveys and Results, Faculty Survey
http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/Facultysurvey.htm
Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 127
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

The curricular offerings **must** be clearly and accurately described in published materials.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The curricular offerings are clearly and accurately described in Auburn University's *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* and the Schedule of Courses for each semester.

Source of Information

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 87, 100, 108-123
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Curricula **must** be directly related and appropriate to the purpose and goals of the institution and the degree program, and to the financial and instructional resources of the institution.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It has developed graduate programs in disciplines endorsed by its land grant heritage. Auburn has nationally recognized graduate programs in Agriculture, Mathematics and Science, Engineering, and Education. The graduate programs designated as Peaks of Excellence further show Auburn's commitment to its land grant mission.

The availability of financial and instructional resources to support curricula at the University is coordinated by the University's Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. University goals and objectives are updated annually to prioritize resource needs. The update is presented to the University Budget Advisory Committee for its comments. After feedback from the University Budget Advisory Committee, the Chief Financial Officer revises the update as necessary and then presents it to the President and the Board of Trustees. Once approved, a portion of the budget is distributed to Deans, who work with Department Heads and Chairs to make decisions regarding course offerings based on availability of funding and instructors.

Sources of Information

Interviews

Linda Glaze, Assistant Provost, February 12, 2002.

John Pritchett, Interim Provost, February 11, 2002.

Websites

Auburn University Commissions. Part 5.

AU in '90s Rethinks its Direction in Planning for Future

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/univrel/news/aurCommissions5.htm>

Recommendations of the Twenty-First Century Commission

http://www.ag.auburn.edu/commission/41398/21_recommendations



The institution **must** have a clearly defined process by which the curriculum is established, reviewed and evaluated. The faculty and administration **are responsible** for implementing and monitoring the general curriculum policy and the academic programs approved by the board. There **should** be an institution-wide process to coordinate programmatic and curricular changes.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It has a clearly defined process for establishing, reviewing, and evaluating curriculum, and the faculty and administration are responsible for implementing and monitoring curriculum policy.

As previously stated, the review and approval process for curricular changes is initiated in the Department by members of the Graduate Faculty who have program-area expertise. The Department Head or Chair evaluates the proposal for a change in the curriculum to see whether Departmental financial and instructional resources are available for the proposed change. After receiving Departmental approval, changes are reviewed by the College or School to insure that no program in the College or School is negatively affected by the change prior to submission to the Graduate Council and then to the University Curriculum Committee. The Graduate Council determines whether the proposed changes meet the requirements for graduate level studies, and the University Curriculum Committee evaluates each course for possible duplication with courses from other Colleges and Schools and for compliance with University academic policies and standards.

During 1998-2000, a comprehensive review of curricula and courses was conducted as part of the transition from the Quarter System to the Semester System. Every course and curriculum was fully reviewed for approval even if the course or curriculum had previously been offered. On-going review of the curricula occurs at the Departmental level as part of the annual establishment of the course schedule.

Sources of Information

Documents

Academic Program and Curricular Information Routing: Review and Approval,
Provost Office, October 23, 2001

Interviews

Linda Glaze, Assistant Provost, February 12, 2002

John Pritchett, Interim Provost, February 11, 2002

Websites

Alabama Commission on Higher Education

<http://www.ache.state.al.us>

Guiding Principles of Semester Transition

<http://www.auburn.edu/semesters/guidprin.html>

University Curriculum Committee

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/unicurr.html



The governing board **must** be responsible for approving the number and types of degrees; the number and nature of departments, divisions, schools or colleges through which the curriculum is administered; and the extent to which the institution should offer distance-learning programs.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Board of Trustees makes decisions on (1) addition of new degree programs, (2) deletion of degree programs, (3) Departmental name changes, formation, reorganization, and (4) College and School name changes, formation, reorganization. If the changes are approved by the Board of Trustees, then they will be evaluated by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

Auburn University's distance learning programs are decentralized, with primary responsibility for initial degree approvals, curriculum modifications, admissions, advising, and other administrative, logistical, and academic responsibilities originating in the College or School in which the degree program is located. However, as with all academic programs, ultimate approval comes from the Board of Trustees. For additional information on distance learning programs, see **Section 4.5**.

Sources of Information

Documents

Academic Program and Curricular Information Routing: Review and Approval,
Provost's Office, October 23, 2001

Board of Trustees Policies and Procedures

Interviews

Linda Glaze, Assistant Provost, February 12, 2002

John Pritchett, Interim Provost, February 11, 2002

Websites

Alabama Commission on Higher Education

<http://www.ache.state.al.us>

Guiding Principles of Semester Transition

<http://www.auburn.edu/semesters/guidprin.html>

An institution **must** make a distinction between a course of study leading to the master's or specialist degree and a course of study leading to the doctorate.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Graduate School requires that all programs leading to masters and specialist degrees have a minimum course requirement of 30 semester hours, and at least 50% of those credit hours must be at the 7000-level or above. The Master of (1) Arts, (2) Science, and (3) Industrial Design are offered under the thesis option. A non-thesis option is offered in special or professional masters degree programs. Credit hours for Research and Thesis 7990 cannot be counted toward graduation requirements for non-thesis programs. Thesis students must take at least four credit hours of the course entitled Research and Thesis 7990.

The Graduate School requires that all programs for the doctoral degree must have a minimum of 30 semester hours of graded graduate coursework at the 7000-level and above in addition to the bachelor's degree. The student must also complete 30 semester hours of additional coursework (for example, ungraded courses, 6000-level courses, 7990 and 8990). Students must complete a minimum of 10 hours of Research and Dissertation 8990. All candidates for Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Education are required to complete a dissertation.

Sources of Information

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 104-07

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin



A program leading to a master's or to a specialist degree **must** be the equivalent of at least one year of full time graduate study. A master's or a specialist degree must provide the following: an understanding of research and the manner in which research is conducted; an understanding of the subject matter, literature, theory and methodology of the discipline; an association with resident faculty sufficient to permit their individual evaluation of the candidate's capabilities; and demonstrated means of certifying the knowledge and skills the candidate has acquired. A non-research-oriented professional master's degree **requires** an understanding of the accepted professional practices in the field.

Auburn University is in compliance.

All masters programs at Auburn University meet or exceed the requirement of one year of full-time graduate study. As previously stated, all masters programs require a minimum of 30 semester hours, at least 50% of which must be at the 7000-level or above. The number of credits needed may exceed the minimum because of Departmental requirements or because of the student's lack of previous background or experience in the discipline. For students in the thesis option, at least 21 hours must be in a major area of concentration. Students in the thesis option must take at least four credit hours of a course entitled Research and Thesis 7990.

Masters degree programs at Auburn University are designed to foster understanding of research and the manner in which it is conducted through the development, implementation, and completion of a thesis or project topic. Both coursework and projects or theses provide students with an understanding of the subject matter, literature, theory, and methodology of the discipline. Regardless of discipline, all students work under the direction of an advisory committee composed of at least three members recommended by the Department Head or Chair and are expected to submit a Plan of Study no later than the first semester in Graduate School. The advisory committee ensures that the student obtains the proper training in the field. All masters students must take and pass a comprehensive exam at the end of their degree program. The examination entails the major and minor fields of study and any research or special projects involved. The requirement of the advisory committee and the requirement of the comprehensive examination provide for association with resident faculty sufficient to permit evaluation of each candidate's capabilities, knowledge, and skills. Students in the thesis option must select a topic approved by their major professor. Non-thesis or specialist programs typically include a supervised field component, internship, capstone course, or special project using accepted professional practices in the field.

The specialist degree is primarily designed for professionals in Education. Students must complete a minimum of 30 semester hours beyond the masters degree. As with the masters degree, all coursework must be approved by the student's advisory committee, and a Plan of Study is expected by the Graduate School during the first semester of coursework. As part of the requirements for the specialist degree, the student must complete a field project and submit a written report. The project is designed to demonstrate the student's understanding of the subject matter, literature, theory, and methodology of the discipline and accepted professional practices in the field. The advisory committee is responsible for the final examination regarding the student's area of specialization and the field project.

Sources of Information

Websites

Graduate School

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu/>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 104-05, 108-23

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

The institution **must** demonstrate that an effective relationship exists between curricular content and current practices in the field of specialization.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Annual faculty evaluations by the Department Head or Chair, promotion and tenure guidelines, and Departmental minimums regarding teaching and scholarly achievement make clear the expectation that faculty will be involved in continued learning and in dissemination of research and scholarship. The requirement that faculty members remain current in their fields ensures that they are capable of developing relevant up-to-date curricula.

Faculty members who direct masters students are required to apply for Graduate Faculty status. Applications are reviewed internally by the Department and by the Graduate Council every seven years to ensure that the faculty member has maintained a high level of teaching quality and scholarship commensurate with the standards set by each Department.

The University provides internships, field experiences, volunteer programs, and assistantships to help students increase their knowledge and skills. The Graduate School has established travel and research awards and a graduate student research forum to encourage students to participate in meetings and research projects.

Advisory Councils and Boards provide another avenue for Colleges, Schools, and Departments to ensure that curricular content reflects current practices in the field of specialization. Examples of Bylaws statements from some of the Advisory Councils and Boards illustrate this point:

“...shall make periodic evaluations of the activities and programs of the College of Business.”

“This support is in full recognition of the desire and need for the College of Engineering to maintain programs of excellence and a posture of leadership in engineering education.”

“...they promote Auburn’s flagship status by participating actively in the strategic planning and review of the College’s [Education] research, instruction and outreach missions.”

“Over the years, the Advisory Boards of CHS@AU [Human Sciences] have helped infuse our curricula with vital world-class perspectives and information via their professional and personal expertise and experiences.”

“Provide guidance to the Dean, Department Heads and Chairs of the College [Sciences and Mathematics] on strategies for achieving excellence in academic, research, and outreach programs.”

All Colleges and Schools and some Departments have Advisory Councils or Boards. In addition, many Colleges and Schools within the University are reviewed by various accrediting agencies. These reviews ensure that faculty relate curricular content to current practices in the field of specialization

Sources of Information

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3,10. Faculty Personnel Policies and Procedures

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Fellowships and Financial Aid for Graduate Students

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/students/aid.html>

Graduate Council

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu/policies/gradcouncil.html>

Graduate School

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 101-105, 107-123

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Examples of College or Schools Advisory Boards and Councils

Email from John Jensen, Interim Dean,

College of Agriculture and Bylaws of the College's Advisory Board

Bylaws of the Advisory Council of the College of Business

Email from Kim Ellis, College of Education and Website

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/education/alumni.ac.html>

Email from Joe Morgan and the Organization and Operating Procedures
of the Auburn Alumni Engineering Council

Email from Richard Brinker, Dean, School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences

College of Human Sciences Advisory Boards

<http://www.humsci.auburn.edu/alumni/boards.html>

College of Sciences and Mathematics Advisory Council

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/science_math/alumni/cosam4.html?

Bylaws of the Auburn University Veterinary Advisory Council

■ The institution **must** demonstrate that program length, credit hours, and tuition and fees are appropriate for its master's and specialist degrees and any other credential it offers.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education establishes boundaries, viability guidelines, and reviews new program length and credit hours. Professional accrediting associations also provide guidance regarding program length and credit hours earned in a particular degree program. Auburn's masters and specialist degree programs are comparable to those at benchmark institutions. Tuition and fees are established by the Board of Trustees and are below or comparable to peer institutions. In fact, among 22 universities in the Southeast surveyed by the Southern University Group in 2001-02, Auburn University's graduate tuition was the second lowest.

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School,

January 28, 2002 and June 22, 2002

Marcie Smith, Assistant Vice President and Controller,

January 28, 2002

Websites

Alabama Commission on Higher Education

<http://www.ache.state.al.us/>

Recommendations of the Twenty-First Century Commission

http://www.ag.auburn.edu/commission/41398/21_recommendations/

■ A doctoral degree program **must** be of sufficient duration to provide for substantial mastery of the subject matter, theory, literature, research and methodology of a significant part of the field, including any language or other skills necessary to its pursuit, and independent research as evidenced by a doctoral dissertation.

A substantial period of residence **must** be included to provide student access to a wide range of support facilities, including a research library, cultural events and other occasions for intellectual growth associated with campus life, significant faculty/student interaction, opportunities for student

exposure to and engagement with cognate disciplines and research scholars working in those disciplines, and significant peer interaction among graduate students. It **should** provide the opportunity for a mentoring apprentice relationship between faculty and students as well as adequate time for in-depth faculty evaluation of students.

Auburn University is in compliance.

All doctoral programs require a minimum of 60 semester hours, at least 50% of which must be at the 7000-level or above and a one-year residency requirement.

As previously stated, the number of credits needed may exceed the minimum because of Departmental requirements or because of the student's lack of previous background and experience in the discipline. All doctoral students must complete a minimum of 10 hours of a course entitled Research and Dissertation 8990. The average time to degree is variable depending upon discipline, but averages 5.11 years from entry into a program. This is a sufficient duration to provide for substantial mastery of the subject matter, theory, literature, research, and methodology of a discipline. Doctoral degree programs at Auburn University are designed to foster understanding of independent research and the manner in which it is conducted.

Regardless of graduate program, all doctoral students work under the direction of an advisory committee composed of at least three members, at least two of whom are members of the Graduate Faculty and who are approved by the Department Head or Chair. Students are expected to submit a Plan of Study no later than their second semester in Graduate School. All doctoral students must pass a general (preliminary) doctoral exam and a final examination at the termination of their degree program. The primary purpose of the preliminary exam is to assess the candidate's current understanding of the discipline and to review the student's proposed research. The general examination has to be given at least one semester before the completion of the dissertation and final examination. The final examination covers the major and minor fields of study and any research involved. A dissertation is required for all candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Education. An outside reader is appointed by the Graduate School to review and comment on the quality of the dissertation and to participate in the final examination.

Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Education degree programs require one-year residency. A minimum of 18 semester hours of on campus study must be completed, nine of which must be graded coursework. This substantial period of residence provides student access to a wide range of support facilities, a research library, cultural events on campus, opportunities for engagement with cognate disciplines and research scholars working in those disciplines, and significant peer interaction. This period of residence along with the requirements noted above also provides the opportunity for a mentoring-apprentice relationship between faculty and students as well as adequate time for in-depth faculty evaluation of students.

Sources of Information

Document

Auburn University Time-to-Degree Report for 1998-2001, December 3, 2001.

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, December 3, 2001

Websites

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 101-03, 106-23

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Graduate School

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu>

- For appropriate professional programs, a project may be substituted for the research dissertation. In such cases, the institution **must** demonstrate a substantial level of competency appropriate to a doctoral degree.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Auburn has two professional doctoral programs, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Doctor of Pharmacy. The Doctor of Veterinary Medicine requires an eight-week internship during which the candidate is evaluated in a practice situation under the supervision of a veterinarian. Therefore, the candidate must satisfy the requirements of both practitioners in the field and the faculty. This internship serves as the equivalent of a project. The Doctor of Pharmacy requires a clinical seminar, a poster project, and 10 one-month rotations in various pharmacy settings. Students are required to make a formal presentation and to participate in discussions with faculty as a capstone course and complete an assessment examination. Both professional programs meet national standards and guidelines established by their accrediting agencies.

Sources of Information

Interviews

Paul Jungnickel, Associate Dean, Pharmacy, February 5, 2002

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, January 28, 2001

Websites

American Council of Pharmaceutical Education

<http://www.acpe-accredit.org>

American Veterinary Medical Association

<http://www.avma.org/education/ecfvg/ecfvg9.pdf>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 87-88, 99-100, 214-15, 223-25

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

- There **must** be appropriate and regular means for determining candidacy and the fulfillment of degree requirements.

Auburn University is in compliance.

All applicants for the Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Education have to pass a general, (preliminary) doctoral examination. It consists of written and oral testing by the student's advisory committee. The oral portion requires approval through application to the Graduate School at least one week prior to the examination. The oral exam should be conducted immediately after successful completion of the written portion. Successful completion of the doctoral examination requires unanimous approval of the candidate's advisory committee. The student becomes a candidate for the degree on successful completion of the examination and has four calendar years after which to complete all additional requirements for degree fulfillment. All students must have an approved Plan of Study on file in the Graduate School and must submit a graduate check prior to the semester of graduation.

Source of Information

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 102-07

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

The institution **must** demonstrate that an effective relationship exists between curricular content and current practices in the field of specialization.

Auburn University is in compliance.

As previously stated, annual faculty evaluations by the Department Head or Chair, promotion and tenure guidelines, and Departmental minimums regarding teaching and scholarly achievement make clear the expectation that faculty will be involved in continued learning and in dissemination of research and scholarship. This requirement ensures that faculty members remain current in their fields, and, in turn, that they incorporate current practices into their teaching.

Faculty members who direct doctoral students are required to have full Graduate Faculty status. Applications are reviewed internally by the applicant's Department and by the Graduate Council every seven years to ensure that the faculty member has maintained a high level of teaching quality and scholarship commensurate with the standards set by each Department.

The University provides internships, field experiences, volunteer programs, and assistantships to help students gain an increased knowledge base and field experiences. The Graduate School has established travel and research awards and a graduate student research forum to encourage students to participate in meetings and research projects.

Advisory Councils and Boards provide another avenue for Colleges, Schools, and Departments to ensure an effective relationship between curricular content and current practices in the field of specialization. In addition, many Colleges and Schools are reviewed by various accrediting agencies to ensure that curricular content is relevant to current practices in the field of specialization.

Sources of Information

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3, 10. Faculty Personnel Policies and Procedures

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Fellowships and Financial Aid for Graduate Students

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/students/aid.html>

Graduate Council

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu/policies/gradcouncil.html>

Graduate School

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 106-07, 108-23

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Examples of College or School Advisory Boards and Councils

Email from John Jensen, Interim Dean, College of Agriculture and Bylaws of the College's Advisory Board

Bylaws of the Advisory Council of the College of Business

Email from Kim Ellis, College of Education and Website

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/education/alumni.ac.html>

Email from Joe Morgan and the Organization and Operating Procedures of the Auburn Alumni Engineering Council

Email from Richard Brinker, Dean,
School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences

College of Human Sciences Advisory Boards

<http://www.humsci.auburn.edu/alumni/boards.html>

College of Sciences and Mathematics Advisory Council

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/science_math/alumni/cosam4.html?

Bylaws of the Auburn University Veterinary Advisory Council

- The institution **must** demonstrate that program length, credit hours, and tuition and fees are appropriate for its doctoral degrees.

Auburn University is in compliance.

As previously stated, the Alabama Commission on Higher Education establishes boundaries and viability guidelines and reviews new program length and credit hours. Professional accrediting associations also provide guidance regarding program length and credit hours earned in a particular degree program. Auburn's doctoral programs are comparable to those at benchmark institutions. Auburn's average time-to-degree of 5.11 years for doctoral students compares very favorably against national data. Tuition and fees are established by the Board of Trustees and are below or comparable to peer institutions. In fact, among 22 universities in the Southeast surveyed by the Southern University Group in 2001-02, Auburn University's graduate tuition was the second lowest.

Sources of Information

Document

Auburn University Time-to-Degree Report for 1998-2001,
December 3, 2001

Interviews

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School,
January 28, 2002, June 21, 2002, June 22, 2002, and August 5, 2002.

Marcie Smith, Assistant Vice President and Controller, January 28, 2002

Websites

Alabama Commission on Higher Education
<http://www.ache.state.al.us/>

Recommendations of the Twenty-First Century Commission
http://www.ag.auburn.edu/commission/41398/21_recommendations/

- The institution **must** conduct frequent systematic evaluations of graduate curricula offerings and program requirements.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Graduate curricula offerings and program requirements are evaluated every semester as a part of the process whereby faculty members and their Department Heads and Chairs establish course loads, review syllabi, and set the Schedule of Courses. Broader evaluations occur through the activities of College and School Curriculum Committees, the Graduate Council, and the University Senate Curriculum Committee.

More than 50 programs at Auburn University are frequently and systematically evaluated by accrediting agencies, with some of these accreditation reviews including an assessment of graduate curricula and program requirements. Also, as noted earlier, all Colleges and Schools and many Departments have external advisory councils or boards. Typically, the bylaws of these external councils or boards will include "periodic evaluations of the activities and programs of the College (or School)."

Suggestion 4-10:

The Steering Committee suggests that the Dean of the Graduate School and the Graduate Council study the feasibility of establishing a process for conducting frequent systematic evaluations of graduate curricula offerings and program requirements at the University level.

Sources of Information

Documents

Semester Transition Guidelines for Semester Degree Programs

Auburn University Structure for the Semester System

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, June 21, 2002.

Websites

Accredited Programs at Auburn University

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/accred.htm>

Faculty Handbook, Evaluation of Teaching, Chapter 4, 4.

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Graduate Council

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu/policies/gradcouncil.html>

Graduate School

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 102-06

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

An institution **must** integrate research with instruction.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It is a land grant institution that has traditionally integrated research and instruction. The requirement that all doctoral students and most masters students produce a research dissertation or thesis integrates research with instruction. Most professors at Auburn University have substantial responsibilities in both research and instruction.

Annual faculty evaluations, promotion and tenure guidelines, and Departmental minimums make clear the expectation that faculty will be productive in both teaching and research. As previously stated, faculty members involved in graduate education are required to achieve and maintain Graduate Faculty status.

Sources of Information

Websites

Graduate Council

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu/policies/gradcouncil.html>

Graduate School

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu>

Mission Statement

<http://www.frontpage.duc.auburn.edu/gradschl/public-html/aucupsv2/mission.asp>

4.3.5 Graduate Instruction

The effectiveness of a graduate program depends largely on the scholarly stimulation obtained when a group of students interacts with faculty in complementary specialties. For this reason, graduate faculty members **should** be productive, creative scholars readily accessible to their students. The institution **must** provide an environment which supports and encourages scholarly interaction and accessibility among the faculty and students consistent with the qualitative intent of the *Criteria*.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Auburn University supports and encourages scholarly interaction among the faculty and graduate students. This interaction is achieved by ensuring that graduate students are advised by Graduate Faculty members. Graduate Faculty status, which requires a solid record of scholarly productivity, is attained and re-evaluated regularly through a rigorous review process. Promotion and tenure criteria also reinforce the expectation that faculty will be involved in continued learning and in the dissemination of research and scholarship.

Scholarly interaction among faculty and students and accessibility of faculty to students are also encouraged in several other ways. Faculty are required to post and maintain office hours each week so that students have the opportunity for conferencing as needed. In Fall Semester 2001, the ratio of graduate students to Graduate Faculty members was 2.59:1, ensuring the opportunity for access and interaction among graduate students and Graduate Faculty. In graduate lecture and seminar courses, the average number of students per class in Fall Semester 2001 was 8.9. In research and thesis/dissertation direction, non-thesis master's project courses, independent study classes, internships, directed study classes, directed field experience classes, and readings courses, the ratio of students to Graduate Faculty is 1:1.

Each graduate student works closely with an advisor and an advisory committee, consisting of a minimum of three members. The student, in consultation with his or her advisory committee, is responsible for completing an official Plan of Study that specifies required coursework and is tailored to meet the needs of the student and the academic program. (See **Section 4.3.6** for additional details.)

Outside of the classroom, graduate students are encouraged to attend Departmental, College, School, and University scholarly presentations, seminars, colloquia, and special topics sessions. For example, dissertation presentations are listed with the Graduate School and advertised by many Colleges, Schools, and Departments to promote scholarly interaction. The University Lecture Program and College- and School-sponsored presentations, seminars, and lectures, such as the Littleton-Franklin, the Goodwin, and the Grisham-Trentham lecture series, provide for interaction among the faculty, students, and the University community. Most University-sponsored lectures and presentations are advertised in the Auburn University newspaper, *The Plainsman*, as well as through email and paper flyers sent to University faculty and graduate students.

Every spring, the Graduate Student Organization, through interaction with the Graduate School, sponsors a Graduate Research Forum as a "showcase for graduate work of all types being conducted here at Auburn." This Forum encourages interaction among faculty and students as well as among graduate students from different programs across campus. Students are also encouraged to interact with scholars outside of the University through presentation of research results at regional and national meetings. By combining funds from the Graduate School budget, the Graduate Student Council, and the Office of the Vice President for Research, the Graduate School provided \$65,000 for graduate students to support research and travel in 2001-02.

Sources of Information

Interviews

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001, June 11, 2002, July 30, 2002, and August 21, 2002

Websites

College of Human Sciences Grisham-Trentham Lecture

http://www.auburn.edu/administration/univrel/news/archive/04_02news/04_02robertson.html

College of Veterinary Medicine's Joy Goodwin Lecture Series

<http://www.vetmed.auburn.edu/orgs/SeminarSchedule.html>

Faculty Handbook, Graduate Council Purpose Statement, Chapter 2, University Senate Constitution, Article 4, Section 15

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Faculty Handbook, Tenure and Promotion Requirements, Chapter 3, Sections 8 and 9.

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Graduate Faculty Criteria

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/gradfaculty/index.html>

GSO Research Forum

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/horizon/gso.html>

Instructional Faculty and Class Size Data, Office of Planning and Analysis

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/unifiedsurvey/cdsi.html>

2002-03 Littleton-Franklin Lectures in Sciences and Humanities

<http://www.auburn.edu/franklin/franklin.html>

SACS Reaffirmation and Reaccreditation, Surveys and Results, GTA Survey, Questions 3, 12, and 19

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/GTA_survey.htm

University Lectures Program

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/spec_lec.html

Instructional methods and delivery systems **must** provide students with the opportunity to achieve the stated objectives of a course or program. Students **must** be informed of the goals and requirements of each course, the nature of the course content, and the methods of evaluation to be employed.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It uses instructional methods and delivery systems that provide students with the opportunity to achieve the stated objectives of a course or program. Students are informed of the goals and requirements of each course, the nature of the course content, and the methods of evaluation to be employed through the course syllabus.

All instructors are required to provide students with a detailed course syllabus. This syllabus lists course objectives and describes the manner in which they are to be attained and grading and evaluation procedures. Grading procedures described on a syllabus include the grading system and method of determining the final grade, the relative importance of assigned papers, quizzes, examinations, class preparation and participation, the approximate examination schedule, and the course policy on unannounced quizzes. Course syllabi are to be provided to students at the beginning of the semester. In the Quarter to Semester transition of 1998-2000, all courses and their syllabi were reviewed.

Both the *Faculty Handbook* and the *Board of Trustees Policies and Procedures Manual* emphasize Auburn University's concern for good teaching. In particular, the *Faculty Handbook* describes six responsibilities that faculty members have to themselves and to their students:

- To state, in writing at an early meeting of the class, specific course objectives and the manner in which they are to be attained
- To exercise care in the organization and presentation of all materials toward the end of achieving the stated instructional objectives

- To state, in writing at an early meeting of the class, grading and evaluation procedures, including:
 - The grading system and method of determining the final grade
 - The relative importance of assigned papers, quizzes, examinations, class preparation, and participation
 - The approximate schedule for examinations (other than the final exam)
 - The policy on unannounced quizzes
- To arrive promptly at all scheduled classes. If absence is anticipated, the class should be informed in advance of contingency arrangements.
- To maintain regular, posted office hours each week for conferences with students
- To grade and return examinations within a reasonable period of time

The *Faculty Handbook* also quotes from the *Board of Trustees Policies and Procedures Manual*, which notes that “faculty teaching loads should not be so burdensome as to preclude the availability of faculty for individual or small-group counseling, advising, and informal discussion with students.”

Sources of Information

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 4,1, The University’s Concern for Good Teaching. Note quote from C1-C2 of *Board of Trustees Policies and Procedures Manual*
<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Graduate Council

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu/policies/gradcouncil.html>

Guidelines for Submission of Syllabus to the University Curriculum Committee

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/guidelines.htm

Teaching Effectiveness Committee Report.

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate/teacheff.htm>

Tiger Cub, Rules, Regulations, and Policies. Section 1. Faculty Responsibilities in the Instructional Program, 88

http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/rules/rules_regs_policies.html

University Curriculum Committee.

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/unicurr.html

Methods of instruction **must** be appropriate for students at the specified level of graduate study.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The methods of instruction are appropriate for students at the specified level of graduate study. A variety of methods are employed in graduate instruction, including lecture, labs, seminar, independent study, practica, internships, directed studies, readings courses, project courses, and thesis/dissertation research. The rigor of class work is particularly relevant to the appropriateness of instruction. In the transition from Quarters to Semesters (1998-2000), a syllabus was reviewed for every graduate course. Each graduate syllabus was required to include a justification of graduate credit. In general, graduate courses use higher level textbooks, require the application of critical and analytical skills, and require analysis, exploration, and questioning.

Appropriateness of instruction is also ensured by having Graduate Faculty develop graduate courses. When a new professional or graduate course is developed by a faculty member, it is evaluated by the Department Head or Chair and College or School Curriculum Committee so that colleagues famil-

iar with the area of study are the first to determine if the level of complexity and specialization adequately challenges professional or graduate students. Subsequently, graduate courses are reviewed by the Graduate Curriculum Committee of the Graduate Council and then the University Curriculum Committee.

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001

Websites

Graduate Council

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu/policies/gradcouncil.html>

Graduate Faculty Criteria

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/gradfaculty/index.html>

Teaching Effectiveness Committee Report


<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate/teacheff.htm>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, Course Listings, 127-127

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

University Curriculum Committee

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/undergrad_studies/unicurr.html

Experimentation with methods to improve instruction **must** be adequately supported and critically evaluated. 

Auburn University is in compliance.

Experimentation with methods to improve instruction is adequately supported and critically evaluated. Innovative teaching approaches are encouraged, and outstanding teaching is recognized and rewarded. Department Heads and Chairs, faculty members, and Deans are encouraged to work together for the innovation and improvement of instruction. The primary avenue through which the University supports such efforts is through the Daniel Breeden grants program.

The Office of the Provost sponsors the University Lectures Program, which may be used by faculty members to invite speakers to Auburn University to complement an instructional program. Furthermore, Professional Improvement Leave may be requested for the purposes of faculty professional development and improvement of the instructional program. (See **Section 4.8.7** for a suggestion to increase the availability of Professional Improvement Leave.)

Furthermore, the University, and units within the University, offers formal recognition of meritorious teaching and of scholarly achievements. Through private gifts and state matching funds, the University obtains and retains eminent scholars. Currently the eminent scholar positions include ALFA Eminent Scholar in Agriculture, Breeden Eminent Scholar in Liberal Arts, Lowder Eminent Scholar in Business, Purcell Eminent Scholar in Business, West Point Stevens Eminent Scholar in Liberal Arts, Williams Eminent Scholar in Engineering. Many Colleges and Schools and the University itself also offer positions of endowed chairs or salary enhancements for exceptional faculty. In addition, the Auburn University Alumni Association supports a number of Alumni Professorships as well as yearly Alumni Teaching Awards. The Alumni Professorships are non-renewable and carry an annual \$3,500 salary supplement for five years.

Critical evaluation of instructional experimentation occurs through rigorous review of proposals for teaching grants by faculty committees. In addition, teaching grant awardees are required to submit final reports that detail the findings of their projects and any implications for instructional practice.

Similar critical evaluation occurs in an indirect way when candidates for scholar positions and teaching awards are reviewed.

Auburn University recently received a \$10-million endowment to establish the Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning: “Faculty at the center will assemble resource materials, conduct workshops and advise individual faculty on teaching techniques, student learning styles, course and curriculum development, teaching technologies, evaluation of teaching, and preparation of teaching portfolios.” Although the focus of this Center will be on undergraduate education, graduate education should benefit as well.

Sources of Information

Websites

Auburn University News. The Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning

http://www.auburn.edu/administration/univrel/news/archive/05_02news/05_02biggio.html

Faculty Handbook, Awards and Recognition of Excellence in Teaching, Chapter 4, Instruction, Section 4

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Faculty Handbook, Resources for Improved Teaching, Effectiveness, Chapter 4, Instruction, Section 3

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Faculty Handbook, Guidelines for Professional Improvement Leave, Chapter 8, section 6, D

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

The institution must use a variety of means to evaluate student performance. This evaluation **must** reflect concern for quality and properly discern levels of student performance. An institution **must** publish its grading policies, and its grading practices **must** be consistent with policy.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It uses a variety of means to evaluate student performance, and these means of evaluation are published on syllabi of faculty members, with University policies appearing in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*.

Faculty members determine the most appropriate methods for evaluating student performance in their courses. The methods of evaluation are determined by the teaching and learning environment. Techniques include in-class essay examinations, oral and written reports, group and individual projects, laboratory experiments, field projects, research papers and literature reviews, ratings by internship supervisors, portfolios, comprehensive and qualifying examinations, and committee reviews of theses and dissertations among other methods.

Grading policies are reported both on the course syllabi and in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. All course syllabi must include a description of evaluation methods and grading policies. The University Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Council evaluate all graduate courses with particular attention to the quality of instruction, instructional methods and delivery systems, and integrity of the evaluation procedures. The University uses a traditional grading system whereby grades of A, B, and C represent passing grades in order from highest to lowest. Some courses may be taken on a pass-fail option with a grade of S being satisfactory and passing, and U representing unsatisfactory and failing. If a student receives a D or F on a course, that course must be repeated. In addition, students are not allowed to receive more than two Cs in courses without being placed on academic probation.

Sources of Information

Document

Sample Course Syllabi

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Examinations and Reporting of Grades Chapter 4, Section 6, D
<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 11, 103-04
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Courses offered in nontraditional formats, e.g., concentrated or abbreviated time periods, **must** be designed to ensure an opportunity for preparation, reflection, and analysis concerning the subject matter. At least one calendar week of reflection and analysis **should** be provided to students for each semester hour, or equivalent quarter hours, of graduate credit awarded. The institution **must** demonstrate that students completing these programs or courses have acquired equivalent levels of knowledge and competencies to those acquired in traditional formats.

Auburn University is in compliance.

In Auburn's graduate program, many Colleges and Schools offer intensive class sessions, which may include evening and weekend classes or internship-like trips or in-residence campus visits. For example, the College of Business Executive MBA programs require students to participate in a four- or five-day residency period of intensive classes for about eight hours per day on the Auburn University campus. Following this residency period, students return home and receive course instruction through distance education. Weekend classes involving several weeks of classes on Friday evenings and all day Saturdays generally serve students who are employed full-time. In all of these cases, the students do significant background work prior to leaving and significant evaluation and assessment after returning. In other words, these courses actually have a semester of preparation, reflection, and analysis before and after coming to campus or traveling.

Courses offered during the Summer session may be taken over a five-week term, a six-week term, or a 10-week term and thus are more concentrated than those offered during the 15-week Fall or Spring Semesters. To ensure an opportunity for preparation, reflection, and analysis of the subject matter, the maximum course loads that students are allowed to take are less during the Summer than during the traditional semester. In 2001, a survey regarding summer classes was sent to all Auburn University students (22,000, including approximately 2,700 graduate students). About 8,000 responses were received. Since the process was confidential, graduate responses were not separated from undergraduate responses. Some professors were interviewed as well. The survey for both professors and students focused on the effectiveness of five-week classes. Some instructors noted that the short summer terms allowed students to become more absorbed and that absenteeism was decreased. Others considered the loads to be too heavy for short terms. Student responses reflected the same dichotomy; some liked the short courses and others hated them. Both instructors and students indicated that lab courses were perhaps least suited to a five-week term. As a result, some courses were piloted for six-week terms during summer 2002.

All new courses or programs are subject to the same approval process. Proposals for new programs or courses are typically developed by faculty with program-area expertise. Proposals are then subjected to review and approval at the Department, College or School (Graduate Council), and University levels (University Curriculum Committee). During the review process, "nontraditional" formats are carefully evaluated in terms of their academic integrity to ensure that students are able to acquire levels of knowledge and competencies equivalent to those acquired in traditional formats.

Sources of Information

Interviews

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001,
August 25, 2002, and August 26, 2002

Kim Kuerten, Director, Executive MBA Program, August 26, 2002

Linda Glaze, Assistant Provost, August 22, 2002

Websites

Alabama Council on Higher Education Policy and Procedures

<http://www.ache.state.al.us>

Report of the Teaching Effectiveness Committee to the University Senate,
November 13, 2001

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate/1113min.htm>

- There **must** be provision for assigning students to their advisors or directors, appointing their graduate committees, and monitoring their academic progress.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Provisions are in place for assigning students to advisors or directors, forming graduate committees, and monitoring academic progress of graduate students. The Dean of the Graduate School is the general counselor to all graduate students. In addition, each Department or program has a Graduate Program Officer. Following admission to graduate school, graduate students are assigned, usually by the Department Head or Chair or the Departmental Graduate Program Officer to a faculty advisor or director within the Department. Graduate students may remain with a faculty advisor for one or more semesters or may elect or be assigned to another faculty member who will serve as major professor. Graduate students select courses under the guidance of the faculty advisor or director or the major professor.

Graduate students along with their faculty advisors or major professors select other faculty members to serve on advisory committees. Thus, advisory committees are determined by the graduate student and faculty within the Department. Once committee membership and anticipated coursework are determined, a Plan of Study is formally filed with the Graduate School. This formal agreement between the student and the Graduate School clearly directs the student, specifying the graduate courses to be taken and when they should be taken, and serves as a basis for monitoring the academic progress of the graduate student. Each graduate student's progress toward a degree is monitored by the advisory committee. If a graduate student is deemed not to be making satisfactory progress toward a degree, the student may be dropped from the Graduate School.

Academic progress is monitored by the Graduate School as well as by the Department's Graduate Program Officer each semester. If at the end of a semester the student's cumulative graduate grade point average falls below 3.0, the student will receive a letter from the Graduate School notifying the student about academic probation. Copies of the letter are sent to Department Heads and Chairs and Departmental Graduate Program Officers. In addition, Departmental Graduate Program Officers are charged with the responsibility of alerting the Department Head or Chair and academic advisor if a student's academic performance drops below 3.0. Should the cumulative grade point average remain below 3.0 after the next nine credit hours of graduate enrollment, the student receives a letter stating that he or she has been placed on academic suspension. A student may be readmitted only after completion of a remediation plan recommended by the Department and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Supporting Documentation

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 103, 104-05, 106

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

There **must** be frequent, systematic evaluation of graduate instruction and, if appropriate, revision of the instructional process based on the results of this evaluation. Information gained from the follow up of current or former students is one method of testing the effectiveness of graduate instruction.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Graduate instruction is evaluated through many approaches. Graduate curricula are reviewed regularly at the Department, College or School, and University levels. Graduate programs are developed by faculty and subjected to review and approval at the Department, College or School (Graduate Council), and University levels (University Curriculum Committee). The Teaching Effectiveness Committee and the University Curriculum Committee are charged with carrying out a process of continuing evaluation and enhancement of instructional programs and evaluation of proposed changes in the curriculum.

To ensure appropriate graduate instruction, faculty who teach graduate courses must have Graduate Faculty membership and also may undergo evaluation by peers. Graduate Faculty membership is regularly evaluated by the Department and the University's Graduate Council. Peer evaluation of instruction is used in many Colleges and Schools to provide feedback to faculty on instruction. Faculty members, in turn, use this feedback and make changes to the course or instructional method where appropriate.

In addition to Departmental, College or School, and University reviews of courses and Graduate Faculty, graduate students evaluate instruction through the University's Teaching Effectiveness Survey. Faculty members are required to have this standardized instrument administered in their classes at least one semester per year. Students are encouraged to provide feedback to the instructor on the Survey. Post-graduate degree surveys and exit interviews of graduate students by Department Heads and Chairs and Deans also provide feedback on graduate instruction and on graduate programs. Student evaluations and exit-interview and survey results are reviewed by the Department Head or Chair and faculty members. Changes are made to the course or instructional method where appropriate.

All Departments thoroughly reviewed and refined graduate curricula as Auburn University made the transition from Quarters to Semesters. Departments also use faculty committees to systematically review graduate courses and programs. In addition, graduate programs are evaluated as part of ongoing reviews performed by Colleges or Schools and Departments in association with University outcomes assessment and professional accreditation reviews. Some Colleges and Schools have also established formal curriculum review procedures such as those employed in the College of Education's Curriculum Design Unit Assurance Seminars. These reviews require each academic program to reflect on program goals, instructional and evaluation methods, and experiences of current and former students. Such reviews also allow for expert assessments by academic faculty and other practicing professionals.

Sources of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, October 18, 2001

Websites

Alabama Council on Higher Education Policy and Procedures

<http://www.ache.state.al.us>

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 2, University Senate Constitution, Article 4, Section 15,
Curriculum Committee

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 2, University Senate Constitution, Article 4, Section 12,
University Curriculum Committee

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

4.3.6

4.3.6 Academic Advising of Graduate Students



Each institution **must** conduct a systematic, effective program of graduate academic advising. A qualified advisor **should** be assigned early in the student's program and **should** recognize the individuality of students and their particular needs and goals. Advisors **should** be proficient in using data to help determine students' major fields of interest, **should** have access to each advisee's records, and **should** have appropriate training or background and experience to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It conducts a systematic program of graduate academic advising. The *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* indicates that the Graduate School is the general counselor to all graduate students but that an individual advisor will be designated from within the major Department.

Each Department has a Graduate Program Officer (GPO), who is responsible for communicating with the Graduate School regularly and keeping the graduate students in his or her Department informed. The GPO in consultation with the program's Graduate Faculty and the Department Head or Chair assigns new graduate students to advisors. Usually assignments are made on the basis of common interests. In addition, an advisory committee, consisting of a minimum of three Department faculty members, is formed for all graduate students. As previously stated, the student, in consultation with his or her advisory committee, is responsible for completing an official Plan of Study that specifies required coursework and is tailored to meet the needs of the student and the academic program. The Plan of Study is approved and signed by the advisory committee, Department Head or Chair, and Dean of the Graduate School. Students are encouraged to complete their Plans of Study by the end of their first semester at Auburn. The advisory committee is responsible for monitoring the progress of the student and administering the comprehensive examinations upon completion of coursework. The Graduate School reports the progress of graduate students and issues alerts to GPOs of situations, such as low graduate grade point averages, which require attention.

All advisors are members of the Graduate Faculty. The qualifications and characteristics of Auburn's Graduate Faculty are described briefly in **Sections 4.3.1** and **4.3.4**, and in more detail in **Section 4.8.2.3**.

Auburn University's graduate advising program is effective. In the 2000 National Doctoral Program Survey, 20 doctoral students from the History Department and 15 doctoral students from the Psychology Department gave average to above-average scores for their programs in the areas of "guidance" and "mentoring." More significantly, data compilation from the Graduate School shows that

the overall average time-to-degree for all doctoral students at Auburn is 5.11 years. However, there is no documented University-wide graduate advising policy, and there is no formal, systematic, direct evaluation of the effectiveness of graduate advising.

Suggestion 4-11:

The Steering Committee suggests that the Graduate Dean and the Graduate Council develop a University-wide graduate advising policy and develop procedures for a more systematic and direct evaluation of the effectiveness of graduate advising.

Sources of Information

Document

Auburn University Time-to-Degree Report for 1998-2001, December 3, 2001

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, March 28, 2002

Websites

The 2000 National Doctoral Program Survey: Summary of Results for Auburn University, Main Campus

<http://survey.nagps.org/digest.php?instID=9>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 103, 104-05, 106

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

An institution **must** ensure that the number of advisees assigned to faculty or professional staff is reasonable.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Department Head or Chair, most commonly in consultation with the GPO, is responsible for monitoring faculty advisement loads and in ensuring that graduate students are given appropriate attention. In the Fall Semester 2001, the ratio of graduate students to Graduate Faculty members was 2.59.

Source of Information

Interview

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, June 11, 2002

An effective orientation program **must** be made available to all full- and part-time graduate students.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* describes academic program requirements, Graduate School policies, and other opportunities for graduate students. The Graduate School website is also easily accessible and very informative. It offers information about applications and admissions, graduate student resources, programs, Graduate Faculty resources, forms, and news. All graduate students receive an abbreviated version of the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* with their acceptance letter as well as instructions on how to access the full version on the web. All students who request a complete paper copy of the *Bulletin* from the Graduate School receive one.

New graduate students are invited to attend an annual University-wide orientation, which is planned and presented in cooperation with the Graduate Student Council. In addition to the Graduate School orientation, each academic Department has its own orientation process for new students. The Graduate School orientation introduces students to University services and resources (email, websites, University officials)and reviews the basic rules and procedures of graduate education (establishing a committee, Plans of Study). University librarians also attend the graduate student orientation to inform students about the Libraries resources. Furthermore, computer workshops designed for specific disciplines are offered for new graduate students.

Another mandatory workshop is held for GTAs, and the University-wide graduate workshop is further supplemented by Departmental workshops. In addition to the workshop, each GTA is given a *Graduate Assistant Handbook*, which is also readily available on the Graduate School's website. Some Departments provide additional information, such as handouts, pamphlets, or handbooks, which detail the responsibilities of GTAs in their programs.

Sources of Information

Interviews

Steve McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, March 28, 2002

Yvonne Kozlowski, University Librarian, June 11, 2002

David M. Johnson, Sr., Director of Administrative Services,
Graduate School, June 17, 2002

Websites

Graduate Assistant Handbook

http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/students/grad_assist_guide.html

Graduate School

<http://www.grad.auburn.edu/>

Graduate Student Council

<http://htmlscript.auburn.edu/cgi-bin/miva?~augsc98/index.html>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 101-23

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Orientation and advisement programs **must** be evaluated regularly and used to enhance effective assistance to students.

Auburn University is not in compliance.

Evaluation of graduate student orientation is done yearly in conjunction with the Graduate Student Council and modified based on feedback obtained from participants and observations of the Graduate School staff. A primary mechanism of evaluation is informal feedback during the Graduate Student Council picnic after the orientation. Informal feedback is also gathered throughout the year from students, staff, and faculty. All of this informal feedback is used to change the orientation program as necessary.

Evaluation of advisement programs is performed on an ad hoc basis at the program level.

Although there is no reason to believe that the current orientation and advisement programs are not effective, these programs are not being evaluated regularly with standardized methods.

Recommendation 4-2:

The Steering Committee recommends that the Graduate Dean and the Graduate Council establish procedures for regular evaluation of orientation and advisement programs and for using the results of such evaluations to enhance effective assistance to graduate students.

Source of Information

Interview

David M. Johnson, Sr., Director of Administrative Services,
Graduate School, June 17, 2002

4.4 Publications

4.4

The content and design of publications produced and distributed by an institution **must** be accurate and consistent in describing the institution and rigorously adhere to principles of good educational practice.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Its publications are accurate and consistent in describing the University and adhere to the principles of good educational practice.

Auburn University has numerous official publications. Most notable among these with regard to the Educational Program are the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*, the Schedule of Courses, and the *Tiger Cub Student Handbook*. More and more information is also being provided through the World Wide Web. Auburn University's Publications Office is housed under Multimedia Services within the Office of University Relations. The Publications Office works closely with the Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs and the Graduate School to coordinate the publication of the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* once a year. The Departments work closely with the Office of the Registrar to publish the Schedule of Courses three times a year. The *Tiger Cub Student Handbook* is published yearly by the Division of Student Affairs. Adherence to the principles of good education is ensured by the staff who prepare the informational materials and by educational committees who review the materials.

A broader review reveals that publications of many different types produced and distributed by Auburn University accurately reflect the institution and give attention to the principles of good practice. Preparation and publication of information by Auburn University is distributed within several distinct administrative units. These units include the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, Educational Television, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, and the Office of University Relations. Each of these units has its own targeted client groups, specialized information, and delivery approaches. Delivery approaches include printed publications, newspaper releases, and radio and television materials.

A printed booklet entitled *Printing Policies and Procedures of Auburn University* has been distributed to all divisions of the University. Last revised in 1988, this publication provides guidelines and goals for all materials promoting any academic program or University function.

The Office of University Relations includes four units: Administration, News Bureau, Multimedia Services, and Photographic Services. The News Bureau, consisting of four employees, is responsible for print media covering the newsworthy activities of students. Multimedia Services has four employees. One of these is responsible for broadcast media including television production and public relations materials for regular and occasional release. Another Multimedia Services employee is responsible for on-line media (including the Auburn University Homepage) and broadcast news. The third and fourth Multimedia Services employees work in Publications, preparing print brochures and newsletters. Photographic Services, with a staff of three persons, provides a variety of services to the University population as well as pictures for news releases and publications. Numerous other campus communicators (listed under "Staff" on the University Relations website) do not report directly to the Office of University Relations.

As a part of this SACS Self Study, informational materials produced by Multimedia Services and the News Bureau were reviewed. Particular attention was given to the Auburn University Homepage and the rapidly expanding potential for the use of the Internet in recruiting students and fostering the University image. At present, Multimedia Services does not review student recruitment materials produced or contracted by academic units. Video materials are occasionally provided from the archival files when requested by other units within the University.

Presently, Multimedia Services covers news assignments, produces special materials for radio and television network programs, and responds to requests from stations for campus material. The videotape quality from this unit is impressive and presents a positive image of the University to its various publics. There was no indication of strongly biased materials or any misrepresentation of the institution.

Student recruitment materials produced by University Relations clearly imply a good working relationship between the Office of Admissions and University Relations. Staffs of the two units prepare informative, accurate, and effective materials. Copies of all printed brochures, fliers, and other recruiting materials were assessed as attractive, informative, and appropriate. These materials are not only effective but also illustrate an honest and responsible presentation of the University to potential students and their parents. All printed materials reviewed appeared to adhere to official publications policies.

University Relations is currently discussing the possibility of establishing a new system whereby all University publications would come through its unit before receiving a purchase order. The goal of this move is to establish a catalog of all University publications and ensure consistency in the messages the University disseminates. When printing is to be contracted-out, Purchasing will get assurance from University Relations that it has performed a review of this work and that approval has been secured before advertising for bids. When the printing is to be completed by University Printing Service and does not require a separate purchase order, the *Policies and Procedures* manual states that "All publications printed for the first time for public dissemination shall be reviewed by University Relations prior to submission of material to University Printing Service." It is not clear what checks University Printing uses to ensure that an approval of the review has been received from University Relations.

In addition, many units around the University have in-house expertise (other campus communicators) available that allows them to produce a variety of multimedia public relations and recruiting materials on their own without ever interacting with University Relations. Currently, no systematic mechanism is in place to review and approve these materials produced by individual units, nor is a central repository available for storing and maintaining such material. While there is no evidence of problems with this system, review procedures should be reconsidered in light of current changes in publication technology and practices.

In compliance with federal regulations, the Publications Editor periodically reminds Deans, Directors, and Department Heads and Chairs of the need to include relevant Equal Opportunity statements in all University publications. As stated in *Printing Policies and Procedures*, student publications must include the statement: "Auburn University is an equal opportunity educational institution." Faculty and staff recruitment materials must include the statement: "Auburn University is an equal opportunity employer." All publications reviewed carried the appropriate statement.

It is important to note that Auburn University hired Steege/Thomson Communications in Summer 2001 to generate a report reviewing its communication programs and to offer recommendations for strengthening them. It was felt that positive messages regarding Auburn's teaching, research, and outreach missions may not be getting heard and may also be overshadowed by messages of dissension in the Auburn community. This Self Study generally concurs with the Steege/Thomson recommendations.

Suggestion 4-12:

The Steering Committee suggests that a joint committee of representatives from the Colleges and Schools and the Office of University Relations study the merits of establishing a university-wide inventory and monitoring process to ensure the continued quality of publications representing Auburn University.

Sources of Information

Documents

Printing Policies and Procedures

Interview

Bob Lowry, Interim Executive Director, University Relations,
April 30, 2002 and July 3, 2002

Websites

Auburn Communications Plan, Steege/Thomson Communications, February, 2002
<http://www.univrel.auburn.edu/steegethompson.html>

Office of University Relations
<http://www.univrel.auburn.edu/>

Office of University Relations, Publications,
<http://www.auburn.edu/univrel/multimedia/publications/sourcebook>

An institution **must** make available to students and the public accurate, current catalogs or other official publications containing the following information: entrance requirements and procedures; admissions criteria and policies, including the admission of transfer students; rules of conduct; academic calendar; degree completion requirements; full-time faculty and degrees held; costs and financial obligations; refund policies; and other items relative to attending the institution or withdrawing from it. (See Commission document "Institutional Advertising, Student Recruitment and Representation of Accredited Status.")

Auburn University is in compliance.

Information regarding entrance requirements and procedures, admissions criteria and policies including the admission of transfer students, rules of conduct, academic calendar, degree completion requirements, full-time faculty and degrees held, costs and financial obligations, refund policies, and other items relative to attending the institution or withdrawing from it is contained in both on-line and hardcopies of the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* and the *Tiger Cub Student Handbook*.

Sources of Information

Websites

Tiger Cub
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/tiger_cub/index.html

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

University Relations Publications
<http://www.univrel.auburn.edu/publications.html>

4.5 Distance Learning Programs

4.5

Auburn University has a distinguished history in distance learning, both "for- credit" toward an academic degree and "not-for-credit" continuing education.

"For-Credit" Distance Learning Activities - Auburn University has offered distance-based academic programs for nearly 15 years. These programs are decentralized, with primary responsibility for

initial degree approvals, curriculum modifications, admissions, advising, and other administrative, logistical, and academic responsibilities originating in the College or School in which the degree program is located. The primary distance-based “for-credit” programs currently in place at Auburn University are listed below.

The Academic Certificate in Community Employment Services - coordinated by the College of Education. This program awards academic credit for three courses at the undergraduate level.

The Executive MBA Programs - coordinated by the MBA Program administered by the College of Business. It includes:
Executive Master of Business Administration
Physicians Executive Master of Business Administration
Techno-Executive Master of Business Administration

The Graduate Outreach Programs in Business and Engineering - administered by the Associate Deans for Outreach of the College of Business and the College of Engineering. This program includes:

- Master of Business Administration
- Master of Accountancy
- Master of Management Information Systems
- Master of Engineering:
 - Aerospace
 - Chemical
 - Civil
 - Computer Science and Software
 - Electrical and Computer
 - Industrial and Systems
 - Materials
 - Mechanical Engineering

The Graduate Program in Hotel and Restaurant Management - coordinated by the College of Human Sciences. This program awards a Master of Science in Nutrition and Food Science with an Emphasis in Hotel and Restaurant Management.

The Graduate Program in Rehabilitation Counseling - coordinated by the College of Education. This program awards a Master in Rehabilitation Counseling.

The Pharm D Nontraditional Program - coordinated by the School of Pharmacy. This program awards a Doctor of Pharmacy degree.

The Office of Distance Learning and Outreach Technology - housed within the Office of the Vice President for University Outreach. This Office coordinates and provides support for Independent Learning courses that can be taken for credit. Currently, these courses are distance versions of a limited number of existing courses that are taught on campus in a traditional format.

“Not-For-Credit” Distance Learning Activities - University-wide “not-for-credit” distance learning activities are coordinated through the Office of the Vice President for University Outreach. Individual College and School “not-for credit” distance learning activities are generally conducted through Centers and Institutes with Associate Deans as Coordinators. “Not-for-credit” activities that award continuing education units (CEUs) follow national guidelines for recording CEUs. Records of all CEUs are kept by the Office of Outreach Information and Marketing under the Vice President for University Outreach. The primary providers of “not-for-credit” distance learning activities are as follows:

The Office of Distance Learning and Outreach Technology - a unit within the Office of the Vice President for University Outreach.
Dietary Manager Program

Business and Engineering Outreach and Continuing Education

Certificate in Business Series

Certificate in Business for Physicians Series

Engineering & Surveying Professional Development Distance Learning Series

Trench Safety – A Tutorial for Constructors

College of Veterinary Medicine

Distance Learning Project

The Commission recognizes the legitimacy of distance learning, such as that conveyed through off campus classroom programs, external degree programs, branch campuses, correspondence courses, and various programs using electronically-based instruction offered geographically distant from the main campus. An institution **must** formulate clear and explicit goals for its distance learning programs and demonstrate that they are consistent with the institution's stated purpose.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Its distance learning programs have clear and explicit goals and are consistent with the University's Mission Statement, as quoted below.

Auburn University's mission is defined by its land-grant tradition of service and access. The University will serve the citizens of the State through its instructional, research and outreach programs... The University will provide both traditional and non-traditional students broad access to the institution's educational resources. In the delivery of educational programs on campus and beyond, the University will draw heavily upon the new instructional and outreach technologies available in the emerging information age.

....

Extension and Outreach programs are fundamental to the land-grant mission because these programs directly affect the lives of all citizens in the State. The University will maintain the strengths of its traditional outreach programs and will increasingly involve the broader University in outreach programs that respond to the changing needs of the society in which we live. The University will continue to seek new and innovative ways to reach out to the people it serves.

While both the "for-credit" and "not-for-credit" distance learning providers use different technologies to deliver their educational, research, or outreach activities, they all have established mission and goal statements appropriate for their unit.

Even though Auburn University is in compliance with this **must** statement, it is sometimes difficult to establish clear and explicit goals for distance learning activities. The technologies are constantly changing, and the unique demands and constraints of each population to be served dictate that the institution remain flexible and supportive of innovation. Auburn University should continue to support innovation in technologies associated with instruction and outreach to the degree possible and foster entrepreneurship at the unit level.

Sources of Information

Documents

The information is available in a packet entitled *Distance Learning Providers* in the SACS Library. Each “for-credit” and “not-for-credit” distance learning provider was contacted and asked to provide the following information.

- Written statement of the purpose and goals of the distance learning program
- Any planning documents related to distance learning activities
- Descriptions of any assessment methods, or the instruments used to evaluate the success of the program in carrying out goals and objectives, including procedures used for monitoring compliance with academic admissions and financial aid policies and for assessing and evaluating student achievement
- Evidence of the use of assessment results to improve distance learning activities
- Documents explaining the duties and authority of the coordinator of distance learning programs
- A list of faculty and all those involved in the development and implementation of the distance learning activities, their academic qualifications for teaching particular courses, their roles in the distance learning program, and their total work loads
- A description of any professional development programs for faculty teaching distance learning programs
- A description of any special provisions for distance learning students, such as advising, counseling, admissions, or programmatic requirements
- A copy of any contracts or consortial agreements related to distance learning activities
- A copy of the current year’s budget for distance learning activities and the institution’s most recent fiscal year audit
- Documents describing student access to learning resources and library materials

Additionally, the Chairs of the Institutional Effectiveness, Educational Programs, Faculty, Educational Support Services, and Administrative Processes Committees of the Self Study were contacted and questioned concerning distance learning in their areas.

Additional Documents Available in the SACS Library

Assessment Reports for Distance Education Programs

Emails about Distance Learning and Outreach Technology

Policies for Distance Education Programs



Further, an institution **must** demonstrate that it achieves these goals and that its distance learning programs are effective and comply with all applicable **Criteria**.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Its distance learning programs achieve their goals, are effective, and comply with all applicable *Criteria*. Distance learning programs are referenced in the following Sections of the *Criteria*:

Section II – Institutional Purpose. The issues regarding the statement of purpose of the institution and the relevance of distance learning are addressed above in the first must statement in **Section 4.5**.

Section III – Institutional Effectiveness. Distance learning activities are coordinated at the University level through the Office of the Vice President for University Outreach and in College -or School -based Centers and Institutes. The Vice President for University Outreach has an Advisory Board that is made up of Associate Deans and Coordinators of Outreach Programs across the campus. This Board provides a forum by which the Vice President is able to monitor and stay involved in outreach activities (and distance learning) throughout the campus.

All of the distance learning providers whether “for-credit” or “not-for-credit” evaluate their activities and make adjustments according to the results. Samples of evaluation documents are provided.

Proposals for new distance learning programs are initiated in academic Departments and approved through the academic hierarchy, including Academic Affairs and University Outreach. The Vice President for Outreach provides development grants for those units considering new offerings.

Section IV – Educational Program.

- **Undergraduate and Graduate Programs.** Information regarding the various distance learning options at the undergraduate and graduate levels is provided in the SACS Library. Based upon the needs of the students served and the constraints of the unit providing the education, various technologies are used to deliver the instruction. All units provide an effective environment within which the information is delivered, and they evaluate and adjust course content based upon feedback from the students and clients being served. “For-credit” courses are administered within the academic unit providing the instruction, and that unit takes responsibility for admitting and advising the students, monitoring their progress through the academic program, and evaluating the results of the course based upon feedback from the students. All “for-credit” distance learning courses follow the same approval process as on campus programs.
- **Student Records.** Student records related to academic “for-credit” distance learning activities are handled in the same manner as the records of on campus students. Student records related to continuing education “not-for-credit” distance learning activities are handled by the unit providing the activity. The records of students receiving CEU awards are maintained in accordance with national guidelines by the Office of Outreach Information and Marketing (OIM).
- **Faculty.** The faculty members who teach in distance learning “for-credit” activities hold the same academic qualifications as those teaching on campus. Those faculty are members of the teaching faculty within each College or School. Qualifications of faculty members who teach in distance learning programs are discussed in **Section 4.8.2.4**. The University offers training courses to enhance teaching skills in the distance learning environment. In addition, units provide specialized training for their faculty. Samples of training manuals and instructional CDs are in the SACS Library.

Faculty members are compensated in a variety of ways within the units providing distance learning activities. The decision is made at the College or School level in conjunction with the Dean, the Department Head or Chair, and the faculty member.

- **Consortial Relationship and Contractual Agreements.** None of the distance learning providers contacted have any consortial relationships or contractual agreements related to their distance learning activities.

Section V – Educational Support Services.

- **Library and Other Learning Resources.** All of the units contacted provide information and access to the University Libraries and other research databases relevant to their degree program. The Libraries provides access to journal articles, chapters in books, and answers to reference questions through Infochat, or to instant email reference service. The Libraries also has a link for distance education on its homepage. Distance learning students at Auburn have access to all University resources available to on campus students.
- **Student Development Services.** Each distance learning unit provides academic counseling and advisement. Registration, grading, and testing methodologies vary across units, but all have systems in place to accommodate their students’ needs.

Section VI – Administrative Processes.

Organization and Administration. Academic Departments have responsibility for the academic content of courses to ensure equivalence between on campus and off campus offerings. The Associate Provost and Vice President for University Outreach stimulates and supports distance education activities, primarily through the Office of Distance Learning and Outreach Technolo-

gy (DLOT). DLOT provides advice and support for Departmental courses, especially small or new programs, and conducts studies and proposes policies to improve distance education University-wide.

The University should continue efforts to educate and inform faculty and administrators about the distance learning technologies available and, if possible, continue to fund new distance learning initiatives at the College and School level. The University does not try to enforce a single methodology or technology on units because of differences in opportunities, constraints, audiences, and materials. Additionally, academic control of “for-credit” distance learning offerings must be maintained at the College or School level to continue equivalence with on campus programs.

Sources of Information

Documents

The information is available in a packet entitled *Distance Learning Providers* in the SACS Library. Each “for-credit” and “not-for-credit” distance learning provider was contacted and asked to provide the following information.

- Written statement of the purpose and goals of the distance learning program
- Any planning documents related to distance learning activities
- Descriptions of any assessment methods, or the instruments used to evaluate the success of the program in carrying out goals and objectives, including procedures used for monitoring compliance with academic admissions and financial aid policies and for assessing and evaluating student achievement
- Evidence of the use of assessment results to improve distance learning activities
- Documents explaining the duties and authority of the coordinator of distance learning programs
- A list of faculty and all those involved in the development and implementation of the distance learning activities, their academic qualifications for teaching particular courses, their roles in the distance learning program, and their total work loads
- A description of any professional development programs for faculty teaching distance learning programs
- A description of any special provisions for distance learning students, such as advising, counseling, admissions, or programmatic requirements
- A copy of any contracts or consortial agreements related to distance learning activities
- A copy of the current year’s budget for distance learning activities and the institution’s most recent fiscal year audit
- Documents describing student access to learning resources and library materials

Additionally, the Chairs of the Institutional Effectiveness, Educational Programs, Faculty, Educational Support Services, and Administrative Processes Committees of the Self Study were contacted and questioned concerning distance learning in their areas.

Website

Libraries’ Distance Education Services

<http://www.lib.auburn.edu/disted/>

4.6 Continuing Education, Outreach, and Service Programs

Application of Terms to the Auburn Experience

Continuing education programs generally enroll adults who have completed their formal education but want to expand their knowledge or experience in the use of computers, languages (including English), or recreational activities. These programs may also include short courses designed to keep professionals, such as pesticide applicators or home gardeners, up to date on the latest developments in their fields. None of these programs is offered for academic credit. Approximately one half of the not-for-credit activities offer CEUs, all in accordance with national guidelines.

This definition of outreach scholarship as it applies to Colleges and Schools has recently been approved by the University Senate:


Outreach refers to the function of applying academic expertise to the direct benefit of external audiences in support of university and unit missions. A faculty endeavor may be regarded as outreach scholarship for purposes of tenure and promotion if it meets all of the following conditions: (1) there is a substantial link with significant human needs and societal problems, issues, or concerns; (2) there is a direct application of knowledge to significant human needs and societal problems, issues or concerns; (3) there is a utilization of the faculty member's academic and professional expertise; (4) the ultimate purpose is for the public or common good; (5) new knowledge is generated for the discipline and/or the audience or clientele; and (6) there is clear link between the program activities and an appropriate academic unit's mission.

Under this definition, "outreach" includes instruction (including continuing education), applied research, technical assistance, and other activities so long as they employ academic expertise to the direct benefit of external audiences in support of University or unit missions. University and public service activities that do not meet these criteria are called "service." Thus, outreach is broader than extension and different from service. Because much of this Self Study was completed before the definition was adopted, some **Sections** still refer to extension. Centrally reported outreach activities for the last three years averaged 1008 activities and 40,240 participants per year.

Organizationally, outreach is decentralized and fragmented. The Associate Provost and Vice President for University Outreach oversees five units, provides seed funding for outreach initiatives in Colleges and Schools, and is the institutional advocate for outreach University-wide. A federal court order merged the Auburn Cooperative Extension Service with that of Alabama A&M University to become the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (ACES). The ACES Director reports to the Presidents of the two universities. A number of outreach units in Colleges and Schools report through their Deans to the Provost. Many academic Departments also house outreach activities, some as ongoing programs and some as individual faculty responses to external needs.

Source of Information Document

An Overview of the Evolvement of Outreach at Auburn University

Continuing education and outreach and service programs **must** be clearly related to the purpose of the institution. 

Auburn University is in compliance.

Auburn's continuing education and outreach programs are clearly related to the purpose of the institution, as the Mission Statement says:

Auburn University's mission is defined by its land-grant traditions of service and access. The University will serve the citizens of the State through its instructional, research, and outreach programs and prepare Alabamians to respond successfully to the challenges of a global economy. The University will provide traditional and nontraditional students broad access to the institution's educational resources. In the delivery of educational programs on campus and beyond, the University will draw heavily upon the new instructional and outreach technologies available in the emerging information age.

Sources of Information

Documents

Packet in SACS Library, *Outreach, Continuing Education, and Extension: College and School Activities*

Packet in SACS Library, *Outreach, Continuing Education, and Extension: University-wide Activities*

Interviews

Richard Alekna, Director, Distance Learning and Outreach Technology,
September 26, 2001

Email Response from Sam Burney, Director, Outreach Program Office,
September 17, 2001

David Wilson, Associate Provost and Vice President for University Outreach,
September 10, 2001

Websites

Mission Statement

http://frontpage.duc.auburn.edu/gradschl/public_html/AUCUPSv2/mission.asp

■ All continuing education programs, both credit and non-credit, **must** be evaluated regularly.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Its continuing education programs are evaluated regularly.

Continuing education courses are evaluated by students at the end of the course. Student evaluations are retained by the College, School, or unit that presented the course. The Office of Distance Learning collects data on programs presented through distance methodologies. Data on all University not-for-credit programs are collected by the Office of Outreach Information and Marketing for analysis at the Vice Presidential level. Not-for-credit programs awarding CEU's are evaluated by the University CEU Officer for compliance to national guidelines.

Sources of Information

Documents

Assessment Documents Used by the Distance Learning Programs, the Outreach Programs Office, and the Cooperative Extension Service. These documents are on file in the respective offices. Assessment results are available in *Assessment Reports for Distance Education Programs* in the SACS Library.

Interviews

Richard Alekna, Director, Distance Learning and Outreach Technology,
September 26, 2001

Email Response from Sam Burney, Director, Outreach Program Office,
September 17, 2001

Samuel Fowler, Extension Specialist, Program and Planning, Alabama
Cooperative Extension System, September 28, 2001

William Gaines Smith, Interim Director, Alabama Cooperative Extension System,
September 28, 2001

Website

Definition of Outreach

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate/109min.htm>

Additional Documents Available in the SACS Library

Emails about Distance Learning and Outreach

Extension System Annual Report, 2001

Faculty Participation in Outreach Scholarship

Outreach Brochures (several in a packet)

Organizational Chart for Office of Vice President for Outreach

Quicklist of Outreach Units and Directors

Strategic Planning for Outreach, 1996

All continuing education and outreach and service programs offered for credit **must** comply with requirements of the *Criteria*, and with Section IV in particular.

Auburn University is in compliance.

As discussed in **Section 4.5**, all degree programs offered as part of the institution's outreach mission are offered through Colleges and Schools. All programs are distance versions of existing programs. As such, they meet the same criteria as on campus programs in terms of curricular approvals, faculty qualifications, educational support services, and assessment. See **Section 4.5** for a detailed discussion of the nature of distance education offered through outreach.

Sources of Information

Interviews

Richard Alekna, Director, Distance Learning and Outreach Technology,
September 26, 2001

Email Response from Sam Burney, Director, Outreach Program Office,
September 17, 2001

Samuel Fowler, Extension Specialist, Program and Planning, Alabama Cooperative
Extension System, September 28, 2001

William Gaines Smith, Interim Director, Alabama Cooperative Extension System,
September 28, 2001

For non-credit continuing education programs, the institution **should** follow national guidelines for the recording of Continuing Education Units. (See Commission on Colleges' document *C.E.U.: Guidelines and Criteria*.)

The *Auburn University CEU Policy and Outreach Reporting Guidelines* were adopted in November 1994. These guidelines were intended to ensure compliance with the *Commission on Colleges' C.E.U.: Guidelines and Criteria* and with the *Guidelines of the International Association for Continuing Education and*

Training. All not-for-credit programs are reported to the Office of Outreach Information and Marketing; programs awarding CEUs are reviewed for compliance to national guidelines by the Director of Outreach Information, who is designated as the University CEU Officer.

Sources of Information

Interview

Telephone Interview with Ralph Foster, Director, Outreach Information and Marketing,
April 1, 2002

Website

Auburn University CEU Policy and Outreach Reporting Guidelines
<http://www.auburn.edu/outreach/events/>

For outreach and service programs, an institution **must** provide the resources and services necessary to support the programs and **must** evaluate the programs regularly.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Outreach programs typically rely on varying combinations of public funds and fees for service. Contracts and grants are also an important source of support, and outreach grants have increased from \$5.4 million in 1994-95 to \$15.7 million in 2000-01. In 1997 the University revised its tuition policy for distance education, allowing units to set prices according to costs and markets. This policy has brought in additional funds.

Programs conducted by the Cooperative Extension System are supported by funds from a combination of federal, state, and county government grants and appropriations as well as by contract sources. During 2001-02 the total Cooperative Extension System Budget was approximately \$45 million. The total included \$8.7 million from federal sources, \$27 million from state appropriations, \$2.7 million from counties, and \$7 million from grants, contracts, and other sources. The 2001-02 Cooperative Extension budget was approximately \$3 million higher than that of 1999-2000. The budget supports the Extension System's 900+ member team and the outreach programs it develops.

Outreach programs are regularly evaluated by units throughout the University. AUCUPS and API help to ensure that regular assessments are conducted and reported. Assessment mechanisms include student evaluations (for instructional programs), client satisfaction surveys, impact analyses, and reports to funding agencies for contracts and grants.

In 2002 Auburn changed its *Faculty Handbook* to institute its rigorous system for assessing and rewarding faculty outreach in the tenure and promotion process. This change is the culmination of work by three committees over seven years. This process was initiated by the Vice President for University Outreach in response to observations from the Outreach Council that the lack of reward was a major impediment to faculty outreach.

Sources of Information

Documents

Alabama Cooperative Extension System 2001 Annual Report
Assessment Information Report: Outreach Units, Drew Clark, Director of Assessment,
Office of the Vice President for University Outreach
Auburn University Annual Budget 2001-2002

Interviews

Richard Alekna, Director, Distance Learning and Outreach Technology,
September 26, 2001

E-mail Response from Sam Burney, Director, Outreach Program Office,
September 17, 2001

William Gaines Smith, Interim Director, Alabama Cooperative Extension System,
September 28, 2001

David Wilson, Associate Provost and Vice President for University Outreach,
September 10, 2001

An institution planning to initiate, through continuing education or outreach programs, a degree program **must** inform the Executive Director of the Commission on Colleges in advance of program implementation. (See Commission document “Substantive Change Policy for Accredited Institutions.”)

Auburn University is in compliance.

As discussed in **Section 4.3.1** and in **Section 4.5**, Auburn University began to offer “for credit” distance education programs through the Colleges of Business and Engineering prior to its 1993 SACS reaffirmation. Then and now, these programs are video-based but use a variety of delivery methods, including face-to-face instruction during periods of residence on campus. Since 1993, these delivery methods have been enhanced through the use of computer-based technologies such as streaming video and chat rooms, but the programs’ video-instruction basis has been little altered.

Since its 1993 reaffirmation, the University has added or is currently implementing a small number of new distance-learning courses and programs, as follows:

- Master of Science in Nutrition and Food Science with an emphasis in Hotel and Restaurant Management
- Non-Traditional Doctor of Pharmacy for registered Pharmacists
- Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling
- Master of Science in Special Education (Early Childhood and K-12)
- Master of Education in Music Education
- Master of Education in Foreign Language Education

The University has not informed the Executive Director of the Commission on Colleges in advance of the implementation of these six programs. The Commission’s document called “Substantive Change Policy for Accredited Institutions” calls for such notification if an institution adds distance learning courses or programs that are significantly different from those offered at the time of the institution’s initial or most recent accreditation. The University believes that in these cases prior notification was not required since (1) none was the institution’s first distance learning program, (2) each is a fully equivalent version of an approved on campus program and complies with all applicable *Criteria*, and (3) all are actually hybrid programs, using a mix of techniques ranging from face-to-face instruction during short campus stays to fully on-line discussions.

Though it complies with this **must** statement, the University also recognizes the importance of monitoring developments in its distance learning activities. Current University policy does not require the Board of Trustees to approve the implementation of a distance learning version of an existing degree program, nor does state policy require the Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) to do so. Consequently, there is at present no internal fail-safe mechanism to insure notification.

Suggestion 4-13:

The Steering Committee suggests that the University routinely notify the Executive Director of the Commission on Colleges before the first distance education course or program in a broad content area, such as Education or Pharmacy, is added to the inventory.

Suggestion 4-14:

The Steering Committee suggests that internal Distance Education Program and Tuition proposals require the signature of the University's SACS Accreditation Liaison Officer to insure that proper advance notifications can be forwarded to the Executive Director of the Commission on Colleges.

Sources of Information**Interviews**

Richard Alekna, Director, Distance Learning and Outreach Technology,
September 26, 2001

Email Response from Sam Burney, Director, Outreach Program Office,
September 17, 2001

Ralph Foster, Director, Outreach Information and Marketing,
September 24, 2001

Robert S. Montjoy, Assistant Vice President, University Outreach,
October 1, 2001

■ An institution **must** not award academic credit for work taken on a non-credit basis without appropriate documentation that the non-credit coursework is equivalent to a designated credit experience. In such cases, the institution **must** document that the credit awarded for non-credit coursework represents collegiate coursework relevant to the degree, with course content and level of instruction resulting in student competencies equivalent to those of students the institution's own degree programs; and coursework taught by faculty members qualified to teach at the appropriate degree level. All credit-bearing continuing education courses and activities **must** comply with the requirements of the *Criteria*.

Auburn University does not award academic credit for work taken on a non-credit basis. Auburn University does not offer any continuing education courses or activities "for-credit," and there are no plans to change this policy.

Supporting Documentation**Interviews**

Email response from Sam Burney, Director, Outreach Program Office,
September 17, 2001

Ralph Foster, Director of Outreach Information and Marketing,
September 24, 2001

Robert Montjoy, Assistant Vice President, University Outreach, October 1, 2001
James Seroka, Director, Center for Governmental Services, October 5, 2001

4.7 Student Records

The institution **must** have adequate student records for both credit and non-credit courses. Official student academic records for credit and non-credit courses **should** be maintained and stored in one central office at the institution. Complete back-up files, such as facsimiles, microfilm or electronic data banks, **should** be maintained continually, one set of which should be stored in a secure area outside the records office, preferably in a different building or at an off-site location. The institution **must** take all steps necessary to ensure the security of its student records, including storage in a secure vault or fireproof cabinet. Since computer generated and stored records present unique security problems, the institution **should** have in place special security measures to protect and back up the data.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It maintains adequate student records for credit and non-credit courses. Those records are maintained continually and stored securely.

A student's permanent academic record consists of a transcript and admissions information. The Registrar maintains the transcripts for all students, both graduate and undergraduate, enrolled in credit courses and the admissions information for undergraduate students. Admissions information for graduate students is maintained by the Graduate School.

Auburn University follows the guidelines of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Offices and adheres to the state of Alabama policies on record storage and disposal contained in the University General Records Schedule posted on the Auburn University website.

In 1998, the University purchased the SISPlus system from Systems in Computer Technology for enrollment management and record keeping. At Auburn, this system is referred to as OASIS. Student record information is maintained on the mainframe computer and is backed up nightly to DB2 Recovery Logs and to tape. All records are backed up to computers maintained by the Office of Information Technology in Parker Hall. The daily backups are stored locally, while the weekend backups are stored off-site. Staff members with the need to access records have access; however, the use of records is security protected. Students do not have direct access to records, but can view their records through the OASIS website. Grades and other personal information are also available to students by telephone.

All records for students enrolled in the Fall 1993 term and after are maintained electronically. The records for 1935 through the Summer 1994 are located in a secure vault in the Office of the Registrar in Mary Martin Hall. There is an overlap in paper and electronic records from Fall 1993 through Summer 1994. The records for the years 1935-84 are also stored on microfilm in the RBD Library. Records prior to 1935 are stored in the RBD Library but are not on microfilm.

Sources of Information

Documents

AACRAO Academic Record and Transcript Guide, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Offices

Websites

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpc/ferpa/index.html>

OASIS

<http://www.auburn.edu/main/currentstudents.html>

Office of the Auburn University Registrar

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/registrar/

Tiger Cub, 27, 91, 96

<http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 17-19
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin
University General Records Schedule
<http://www.lib.auburn.edu/archive/sched.html>



The institution **must** have policies concerning what constitutes the permanent record of each student, as well as policies concerning retention and disposal of records. It **must** establish and publish information-release policies which respect the rights of individual privacy, the confidentiality of records, and the best interests of the student and the institution.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It has established and published information-release policies, respecting individual privacy and confidentiality and the best interests of the University. Auburn University adheres to the regulations of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended. Policies regarding disclosure of student records and directory information are published annually in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*. Beginning in Fall 2002, this information will also be sent to all students via their official Auburn University email address. Directory information consists of the student's full name; local address and phone number; parent/spouse's name; address and phone number; mailing address and phone number; email address; photographs, video, or other electronic image; participation in recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; dates of attendance; degrees and awards received; and most recent previous educational agency or institution attended. Students may request that directory information not be released.

Sources of Information

Documents

AACRAO Academic Record and Transcript Guide, American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Offices

Websites

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974
<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OM/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

OASIS

<http://www.auburn.edu/main/currentstudents.html>

Office of the Auburn University Registrar

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_affairs/registrar/

Tiger Cub, 27, 91, 96

<http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/>

***Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*, 17-19**

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

University General Records Schedule

<http://www.lib.auburn.edu/archive/sched.html>

4.8 Faculty

An institution **must** provide evidence that it has employed faculty members qualified to accomplish its purpose.

Auburn University is in compliance.

To achieve its educational goals, Auburn University must attract and retain scholars who excel in teaching, research, and outreach. Therefore, the University has established policies regarding recruitment, tenure, and promotion. These policies are published in the *Faculty Handbook*. Over 92% of full-time faculty members hold the terminal degree in their discipline.

Sources of Information

Document

Roster of Faculty

Website

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

4.8.1 Selection of Faculty

An institution **must** show that it has an orderly process for recruiting and appointing its faculty. This process will normally involve developing a pool of qualified candidates and interviewing those who appear to be best qualified. Institutions are encouraged to recruit and select faculty with highest degrees earned from a broad representation of institutions. Recruitment and appointment procedures **must** be described in the faculty handbook or other published documents.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It recruits and appoints faculty according to policies described in the *Faculty Handbook*.

The University has an orderly process for recruiting and appointing faculty that is clearly described in the *Faculty Handbook*. The *Faculty Handbook* (1983 with revisions in 1996, 1997, and 2000) states that Department Heads and Chairs shall make recommendations to the Dean or Director after summarizing the reactions of the tenured and tenure-track faculty in the unit. The Dean or Director is to pass on this information for “recommendation or action” to the Provost, who recommends to the President. The President holds sole authority to issue appointments to the faculty. The filling of either a vacant or new position created to meet teaching or outreach needs is governed by the guidelines in the *Faculty Handbook* and the *Financial Policies and Procedures Manual*. These guidelines are intended to ensure that candidates for faculty positions are prepared academically and are proficient communicators. They define the length of service and accomplishments typical for the attainment of rank and tenure.

New faculty members are selected and appointed based on a review and evaluation of their curriculum vitae, scholarship, references, interviews, and campus visits. The candidate may be required to teach a class or give a presentation based on his or her scholarly achievements. Hiring decisions are made according to the University criteria for tenure and promotion described in the *Faculty Handbook*.

During the pre-recruitment stage, a search and screening committee representing the broad interests of the academic unit is selected by the Department Head or equivalent administrator. This committee is required to adhere to all policies and procedures regarding guidelines for recruitment of minorities, women, and persons with disabilities. Coordination with the University Office of

Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity is required. Established procedures in that regard must be followed (see February 25, 2002 memorandum from Interim Provost John Pritchett regarding faculty recruitment). Searches include advertising in appropriate academic and professional journals. Based on evaluation of credentials, a list of candidates for interview is presented to the Department Head or equivalent. Following the completion of interviews, a recommendation for hire is made as outlined above. Documentation of each faculty member's training and qualifications resides within the Department.

Sources of Information

Documents

Financial Policies and Procedures Manual

Memo from Interim Provost John Pritchett, February 25, 2002

Website

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3, Sections 3 and 4

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

- It is **expected** that an institution will employ faculty members whose highest earned degree presented as the credential qualifying the faculty member to teach at the institution is from a regionally accredited institution. If an institution employs a faculty member whose highest earned degree is from a non-regionally accredited institution within the United States or an institution outside the United States, the institution **must** show evidence that the faculty member has appropriate academic preparation.

Auburn University is in compliance.

For almost all positions a terminal degree in that discipline from an accredited institution is a requirement. In cases where a prospective faculty member has earned a degree from an institution outside the United States, evidence of the academic quality of the institution and of the candidate's academic preparation, such as sample publications, are required and kept on file in the Departmental office.

Sources of Information

Document

Roster of Faculty

Interview

John F. Pritchett, Interim Provost, February 7, 2002

- Institutions **must** ensure that each faculty member employed is proficient in oral and written communication in the language in which assigned courses will be taught.

Auburn University is in compliance.

During the interview process, each candidate for a faculty position is evaluated on his or her oral communication skills. The manner and clarity of the candidate's language during general conversation and discussion and in formal presentations to both faculty and student groups are considered. Each academic unit is required to inform the Provost regarding its method of screening for English proficiency.

Sources of Information

Interview

John F. Pritchett, Interim Provost, February 7, 2002

4.8.2 Academic and Professional Preparation

Both full-time and part-time faculty **must** meet the following criteria for academic and professional preparation.

Auburn University is in compliance as shown in **Sections 4.8.2.2, 4.8.2.3, and 4.8.2.4.**

4.8.2.1 Associate

Auburn University does not offer programs that lead to the associate degree.

4.8.2.2 Baccalaureate

Each full-time and part-time faculty member teaching credit courses leading toward the baccalaureate degree, other than physical education activities courses, **must** have completed at least 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline and hold at least a master's degree, or hold the minimum of a master's degree with a major in the teaching discipline. In exceptional cases, outstanding professional experience and demonstrated contributions to the teaching discipline may be presented in lieu of formal academic preparation. Such cases **must** be justified by the institution on an individual basis.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The University has policies within the Office of Academic Affairs and the Graduate School to ensure that credit courses leading toward baccalaureate degrees are taught by highly qualified faculty members. All faculty members teaching courses leading toward baccalaureate degrees are required to have completed at least 18 graduate semester hours in the relevant teaching discipline and to hold at least a masters degree in the teaching discipline. Exceptions are not generally allowed. According to data provided by the Office of Institutional Research, only 7.7% of the full-time teaching faculty do not hold a terminal degree.

Sources of Information

Document

Roster of Faculty

Interviews

G. Sam Lowther, Executive Director, Planning and Analysis, April 24, 2002

Stephen L. McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, April 26, 2002

John F. Pritchett, Interim Provost, February 7, 2002

Website

Faculty Distribution (Full time) by Educational Level
<http://panda.auburn.edu/fdfbel.htm>

4.8.2

4.8.2.1

4.8.2.2

- The Commission encourages interdisciplinary courses and recognizes that appropriate credentials for teaching may vary. The institution **must** document and justify the academic and professional preparation of faculty members teaching in such courses or programs.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The *Roster of Faculty* shows that Auburn faculty members are well educated in their areas of specialization. Interdisciplinary programs are based on a blend of disciplinary-specific courses, and the faculty members teach in their own specialties.

Source of Information

Document

Roster of Faculty

- It is the **responsibility** of the institution to keep on file for all full-time and part-time faculty members documentation of academic preparation, such as official transcripts and, if appropriate for demonstrating competence, official documentation of professional and work experience, technical and performance competency, records of publications, certifications and other qualifications.

An original transcript of the degree-granting institution that represents each faculty member's terminal degree is on file in his or her Departmental office, as is a current curriculum vitae.

Source of information

Document

Roster of Faculty

- At least 25 percent of the discipline course hours in each undergraduate major **must** be taught by faculty members holding the terminal degree, usually the earned doctorate, in that discipline. In some disciplines, the master's degree in the discipline may be considered the terminal degree, such as the M. F. A., the M. S. W., and the M. L. S.; in others, a master's degree in the discipline, coupled with a doctoral degree in a related discipline, is considered appropriate.

Auburn University is in compliance.

According to data provided by the Office of Institutional Research, 92.3% of full-time faculty hold the terminal degree in their discipline. A policy established in 2002 by the Dean of the Graduate School and approved by the Provost states that no degree-granting units will employ GTAs to teach 3000-5000 level courses and that all units will conform to SACS *Criteria*. An original transcript from the degree-granting institution that represents each faculty member's terminal degree is on file in his or her Departmental office.

Sources of Information

Document

Roster of Faculty

Policy Related to Use of GTAs in Instructional Program

Interviews

Stephen L. McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, April 26, 2002

John F. Pritchett, Interim Provost, February 7, 2002

G. Sam Lowther, Executive Director, Planning and Analysis, April 24, 2002

It is the **responsibility** of the institution to justify the master's degree, or master's in the teaching discipline coupled with a related doctorate, as the terminal degree for faculty members teaching in these disciplines. The above requirement also **applies** to each major offered through distance learning, including those offered at branches or other sites.

Auburn University is in compliance.

For some positions, a degree other than an earned doctorate may be considered the terminal degree. Such cases are restricted to specific fields, such as the performing arts, architecture, creative arts, building science, and nursing, in which a degree other than the doctorate is accepted nationally as the terminal degree. In these special cases, evaluation of these individuals as scholars and teachers also takes into account their unique and special qualifications and experiences.

Distance education courses are held to the same standards as those courses offered on campus. Every distance education course must have a parallel course on campus. The same faculty member is responsible for both the on campus and the parallel distance course.

Sources of Information

Document

Roster of Faculty

Interviews

Stephen L. McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, April 26, 2002

John F. Pritchett, Interim Provost, February 7, 2002

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 101-23

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

Faculty members who teach in remedial programs **must** hold a baccalaureate degree in a discipline related to their teaching assignment and have either teaching experience in a discipline related to their assignment or graduate training in remedial education.

Auburn University does not offer remedial programs.

4.8.2.3 Graduate

Institutions offering either master's or specialist degrees **must** demonstrate a high level of faculty competence in teaching and scholarship.

Auburn University is in compliance.

4.8.2.3

As noted above, 92.3% of full-time faculty hold the terminal degree in their disciplines. Moreover, in order to achieve tenure and promotion, faculty must demonstrate a continuing high level of competence in teaching and scholarship.

Sources of Information

Document

Roster of Faculty

Interview

G. Sam Lowther, Executive Director, Planning and Analysis, April 24, 2002

Website

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

- Institutions offering doctoral degrees **must** demonstrate the research capacity of faculty members teaching in these programs.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Membership on the Graduate Faculty is a requirement for teaching courses that are part of doctoral programs. While criteria for Graduate Faculty membership are determined by each Department, with the approval of the Graduate School, all Departmental criteria include a requirement that the faculty member demonstrate continuing involvement in research. In addition, every faculty member receives an annual performance evaluation in which research performance is a central feature. Indications such as refereed publications, contracts, grants, juried exhibitions, invited performances/lectures are all considered, depending on the discipline.

Sources of Information

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapters 2, Section 4, and Chapter 4, Section 7B

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Graduate Faculty

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/gradfaculty/index.html>

- Eligibility requirements for faculty members teaching graduate courses **must** be clearly defined and published.

Auburn University is in compliance.

In 1995-96, each doctoral program prepared criteria for membership on the Graduate Faculty. These criteria were evaluated, modified if necessary, and approved by the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council is now undertaking a two-year review of Departmental criteria. These criteria are posted on the Graduate School website.

Sources of Information

Interview

Stephen L. McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, April 26, 2002

Website

Graduate Faculty Criteria

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/gradfaculty/index.html>

All institutions **must** have adequate resources to attract and retain a qualified faculty, especially in the disciplines in which doctoral programs are offered.

The University is in compliance. See **Sections 4.8.5** and **4.8.7**.

Faculty members responsible for the direction of doctoral research **must** be experienced in directing independent study.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It ensures its faculty members responsible for directing doctoral research are experienced in directing independent study through membership on the Graduate Faculty. Each candidate nominated for directing doctoral research is evaluated against these criteria, which include previous experience in advising and directing graduate students, service on graduate committees, research and publication requirements, and peer evaluations (including a majority vote from the Departmental faculty holding membership in the Graduate Faculty). Membership is reviewed on a seven-year cycle and continued evidence of participation in graduate education is required.

Sources of Information

Interview

Stephen L. McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, April 26, 2002

Websites

Graduate Faculty Criteria

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/gradfaculty/index.html>

In addition, those engaged in graduate teaching **should** demonstrate, by their involvement in institutional activities, their commitment to the academic community, the institution they serve, their students, and their academic disciplines.

The *Faculty Handbook* states the requirement that all tenured and tenure track faculty are expected to engage in at least some form of university service. Such service is listed on the distribution of effort agreement that each faculty member discusses with his or her Department Head or Chair each year.

Source of Information

Website

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3, Section 6 and Section 8

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

- Each faculty member teaching courses at the master's and specialist degree level **must** hold the terminal degree, usually the earned doctorate, in the teaching discipline or a related discipline. In some instances, the master's degree in the discipline may be considered the terminal degree, such as the M.F.A., the M.S.W., and the M.L.S.; in others, a master's degree, or master's in the teaching discipline coupled with a doctoral degree in a related discipline is considered appropriate. It **is** the **responsibility** of the institution to justify the master's degree, or master's in the teaching discipline coupled with a related doctorate, as the terminal degree for faculty members teaching in those disciplines. All faculty members teaching courses at the doctoral degree level **must** hold the earned doctorate in the teaching discipline or a related discipline.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The University has policies within the Office of Academic Affairs and the Graduate School to ensure that credit courses toward graduate degrees are taught by faculty members with terminal degrees in their disciplines. According to the Dean of the Graduate School, all faculty teaching graduate courses hold the terminal degree.

The qualifications for faculty members teaching courses leading toward graduate degrees are outlined on the Graduate School website.

Sources of Information

Interview

Stephen L. McFarland, Interim Dean, Graduate School, April 26, 2002

Website

Graduate Faculty Criteria

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/gradfaculty/index.html>

- When an institution presents evidence of competence or academic credentials other than the doctorate in the discipline for its graduate faculty, it **must** justify the employment of such faculty.

Auburn University is in compliance.

All Departments with graduate programs require the terminal degree for membership on Graduate Faculty. Any exceptions would have to be approved by the Graduate Council.

Source of Information

Website

Graduate Faculty Criteria

<http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/gradfaculty/index.html>

- The Commission encourages interdisciplinary courses and recognizes that appropriate credentials for teaching may vary. The institution **must** document and justify the academic and professional preparation of faculty members teaching in such courses or programs.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Faculty members teaching in interdisciplinary programs are based in academic Departments and must be recommended for Graduate Faculty status by their home Department. In the SACS Heads and

Chairs Survey, all 48 respondents (of the 55 who received the survey) said that faculty members teaching graduate courses in their Departments held terminal degrees in their disciplines.

Sources of Information

Documents

Email from Jo Heath, Acting Associate Dean, Graduate School, June 27, 2002

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Survey and Results, Department Heads and Chairs Survey

It is the **responsibility** of the institution to keep on file, for all full-time and part-time faculty members teaching graduate courses, documentation of academic preparation, such as official transcripts and, if appropriate for demonstrating competence, official documentation of professional and work experience, technical and performance competency, records of publications, and certifications and other qualifications.

Auburn University is in compliance.

An original transcript from the degree-granting institution that represents each faculty member's terminal degrees is on file in his or her Departmental office, as is a current curriculum vitae.

For each graduate degree program, an institution **must** employ at least four qualified full-time faculty members whose responsibilities include teaching in the program.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The Graduate School ensures conformity with this **must** statement. In addition, the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin* includes a list of faculty by department and membership on the Graduate Faculty is indicated by an asterisk.

Source of Information

Documents

Email from Jo Heath, Acting Associate Dean, Graduate School, June 27, 2002

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, Faculty List, 228-38

http://www.auburn.edu/student_bulletin

All policies and regulations affecting graduate curricula, as well as requirements leading to graduate credit, certification and degrees, **should** be formulated by the graduate faculty or an appointed or elected group representing that faculty.

Auburn University has established a Graduate Council, which is described as follows in Chapter 2 of the *Faculty Handbook*:

The Graduate Council shall consist of the Dean of the Graduate School as chair, the Associate Dean of the Graduate School as non-voting vice chair, the Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School as non-voting secretary, and 12 - 15 faculty members, with at least one from each school or college with a graduate program, and a graduate student nominated by the Graduate Student Organization. Faculty members shall be appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School from a list of nominees provided by the Senate Rules Committee. The list of nominees shall, at a minimum, exceed the number of openings by two and shall contain at least two nominees from any school or college without a continuing representative. Faculty members must be full members of the Graduate Faculty. The council shall review requests for curriculum changes in courses that may be taken for graduate credit, review and recommend approval of all proposals for new graduate programs and modifications to existing programs, review existing programs, recommend regulations and policies for the graduate school in carrying out those regulations and policies.

Sources of information

Website

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 2, Section 2, Articles 4, 15

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

4.8.2.4

4.8.2.4 Distance Learning Programs/Activities

Institutions offering courses for credit through distance learning activities and programs **must** meet all criteria related to faculty. Whether through direct contact or other appropriate means, institutions offering distance learning programs **must** provide students with structured access to and interaction with full-time faculty members.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It has published policies and procedures for distance education programs and courses that insure students structured access to and interaction with full-time faculty. Four statements from the *Comprehensive Policies: Distance Education Programs and Courses* manual relate to this criterion:

- All courses offered via distance education shall have a qualified faculty member approved and assigned by the appropriate Department Head. (5)
- In general, it is expected that the faculty assigned to distance education courses and programs shall have the same profile (expertise, experience, rank) as the faculty assigned to resident classes. (6)
- Distance education students shall be assured access to academic resources required for their distance education program. (7)
- Distance education students shall have reasonable and adequate access to the range of student services and student rights appropriate to support their learning and successful matriculation and comparable to those offered to traditional, on campus users. (7) (Note: One of the services listed is academic advising.)

Students are further assured of access to and interaction with full-time faculty as verified through the development and review of distance education program proposals. For each distance learning program proposal, faculty members must describe the delivery systems and provide additional rationale for their selection. Specifically, as stated in the proposals for distance education, programs must:

Make specific reference to delivery of instruction and access of ancillary instructional support items or activities—library services, student services and support, communication between students and faculty and among students. (Program Proposals 1)

In addition to the policies stated in the *Comprehensive Policies: Distance Education Programs and Courses* manual, the staffing of distance learning courses was verified via a listing of distance learning courses and the professors teaching the courses. The Registrar's Office supplied a listing of all distance education courses offered by Auburn University for Fall Semester 2001 and Spring Semester 2002. Available in the SACS Library, this listing generated 214 entries and provided the College or School, course prefix and number, course name, and instructor. The Faculty Committee then verified the instructor's highest degree, the degree-granting university, and the current rank for each entry. All faculty members teaching distance education courses were found to be full-time Auburn University faculty members with appropriate degree credentials to teach the courses listed.

Sources of Information

Documents

Comprehensive Policies: Distance Education Programs and Courses, February 2002
(See **Section 4.1**)

Registrar's Office Generated Listing of Distance Education Courses
and Instructors for Fall Semester 2001 and Spring Semester 2002

Website

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 228-38
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

4.8.3 Part-Time Faculty

4.8.3

The number of full-time faculty members **must** be adequate to provide effective teaching, advising and scholarly or creative activity, and be appropriate to participate in curriculum development, policy making, institutional planning and governance. The employment of part-time faculty members can provide expertise to enhance the educational effectiveness of an institution but the number of part-time faculty members **must** be properly limited.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It has an appropriate number of full-time faculty members to provide effective teaching and perform other duties. It has only a limited number of part-time faculty members.

Less than 10% of all faculty at Auburn University are employed on a part-time basis. Part-time faculty at Auburn University may include instructors, assistant professors, associate professors, professors. However, "all part-time faculty members, regardless of rank, are temporary appointments" (*Faculty Handbook*, 3. Personnel Policies, 3. Kinds of Appointments). "A temporary appointment is granted to a faculty member whose service is required for a specific period of time (usually one academic year or less) identified on the appointment form and to all instructors and equivalent appointments."

The University monitors the number of full- and part-time faculty. The Faculty Committee is concerned, however, with a gradual increase in the number of part-time faculty. According to the Office of Planning and Analysis, the University employed 1,230 academic faculty in 2001; of this number, 1,115 were employed full-time and 115 (9.3%) were employed part-time. Since 1991, the number of part-time faculty has increased from 77 to 115, an increase of 2.9% (from 6.4 to 9.3%). See Table 4-2 for a listing by Colleges and Schools of the number of faculty from 1991-92 to 2001-02.

Table 4-2: Part-Time Faculty, 1992-2002

College or School	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Agriculture	2	3	3	3	4	3	3	5	5	6	3
Architecture	11	12	17	10	10	9	8	11	11	12	6
Business	4	2	9	8	4	3	5	6	6	10	15
Education	16	19	20	16	18	27	16	18	24	13	18
Engineering	4	1	7	9	10	7	11	13	10	9	8
Forestry	1	1	2	5	4	2	3	3	3	2	1
Human Sciences	5	8	7	8	6	7	9	8	5	4	5
Liberal Arts	23	27	27	37	49	50	51	38	31	41	41
Nursing	2	5	3	2	1	1	2	3	1	0	1
Pharmacy	6	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
Sciences and Mathematics	1	2	1	5	4	4	5	5	9	7	5
Veterinary Medicine	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	4
Total	77	83	99	107	112	115	116	114	108	108	109

Sources of Information

Document

Table of Employees by College and School, Prepared by Office of Planning and Analysis

Website

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Part-time faculty members teaching courses for credit **must** meet the same requirements for professional, experiential and scholarly preparation as their full-time counterparts teaching in the same disciplines.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Part-time faculty are granted temporary appointments. Faculty members on temporary appointment are nevertheless subject to the same policies and practices relating to preparation (detailed in the *Faculty Handbook*) as faculty on probationary, tenured, or continuing appointments.

Source of Information

Website

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3, Section 3

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Each institution **must** establish and publish comprehensive policies concerning the employment of part-time faculty members. It **must** also provide for appropriate orientation, supervision and evaluation of all part-time faculty members.

Auburn University is in partial compliance.

Comprehensive policies concerning the employment of all faculty members are published in the *Faculty Handbook*. However, since Auburn University makes very limited use of part-time faculty, these policies were drafted with full-time faculty in mind.

As previously stated, policies and procedures for the supervision and evaluation of *all* faculty members are described in the *Faculty Handbook* (see especially Chapter 3, Section 7, “Performance Evaluation”). Policies and practices regarding orientation of faculty (full- or part-time) are not stated explicitly in the *Faculty Handbook*, and part-time faculty are not normally included in orientation programs each fall for newly employed faculty.

The SACS Part-Time Faculty Survey points to the need for improvement in the orientation, supervision, and evaluation of part-time faculty. Results of the Survey indicate that part-time faculty members need to be better informed. Only 51.7% of respondents (31% response rate of 97 surveys sent) reported that they were very knowledgeable about the general education courses required for undergraduates. Only 55.2% said they were knowledgeable about core curriculum requirements for undergraduates. Only 59.3% said that they were very knowledgeable about minor course requirements in their Departments. The Survey also reveals the need for improvement in the supervision of part-time faculty. Only 27.6% of respondents said that they were regularly supervised by a full-time faculty member.

Likewise, the SACS Part-Time Faculty Survey suggests the need for improvement in the evaluation of part-time faculty. Only 53.9% of respondents said that they were given an annual review of their performance; 46.2% said they were not. Although 73.3% of respondents reported that their teaching was evaluated at least once per year, only 56.7% indicated that criteria for faculty evaluation were clearly stated in their Departments. However, in the SACS Faculty Survey, only 55% of full-time faculty respondents (47% response rate of 1266 surveys sent) also acknowledged that their Departments lacked clear criteria for evaluation.

Recommendation 4-3:

The Steering Committee recommends that policies addressing the appointment criteria, remuneration, rights and responsibilities, orientation, supervision, evaluation, and reappointment for part-time faculty be established and published.

Suggestion 4-15:

The Steering Committee suggests that steps be taken to improve access to information for part-time faculty. Specifically, part-time faculty should be included on email lists and should be alerted to the publication of the Faculty Handbook.

Sources of Information

Websites

Faculty Handbook

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Survey and Results, Part-Time Faculty Survey

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Survey and Results, Faculty Survey

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm



Procedures to ensure student access to part-time faculty members **must** be clearly stated and publicized.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The *Faculty Handbook* requirement that faculty are responsible for maintaining “regular, posted office hours each week for conferences with students” applies to part-time, as well as full-time, faculty members. (See Chapter 4, Section I, “The University’s Concern for Good Teaching.”) The SACS Part-Time Faculty Survey reveals that 80% of the respondents agree that they are available to students for advice and counseling.

Sources of Information

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 4, Section 1

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Survey and Results, Part-Time Faculty Survey

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm

4.8.4

4.8.4 Graduate Teaching Assistants



An institution **must** avoid heavy dependence on graduate teaching assistants to conduct class-room instruction.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It monitors the number of GTAs to avoid heavy dependence on graduate students to conduct class-room instruction. Auburn employs approximately 700 GTAs, with the Departments of English and Biological Sciences employing about 15% of the total.

GTA Distribution Fall Semester 2001

College /School/Department	Number of GTAs
College of Agriculture	
Agric. Econ. & Rural Soc.	2
Agronomy & Soils	1
Animal & Dairy Sciences	0
Entomology, Plant Path.	0
Fish. & Allied Aqua.	1
Horticulture	1
Poultry Science	0
College of Arch. Des. & Const.	
School of Architecture	3
Building Science	3
Industrial Design	5
College of Business	
Economics	15
Finance	1
Management	29
School of Accountancy	1
Marketing	0

College /School/Department	Number of GTAs
College of Education	
Learn Res. Center	.0
Couns. & Couns. Psych.	.9
Curriculum & Teaching	.11
Ed. Foun., Lead. & Tech.	.5
Health & Human Perf.	.22
Rehab. & Special Ed.	.9
College of Engineering	
Aerospace Eng.	.15
Chemical Eng.	.24
Civil Eng.	.9
Computer Sci. & Software Eng.	.35
Electrical & Computer Eng.	.18
Industrial & Sys. Eng.	.11
Mechanical Eng.	.28
Textile Eng.	.0
School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences	
Forestry & Wildlife Sci.	.1
College of Human Sciences	
Consumer Affairs	.3
Human Dev. & Fam. Studies	.21
Nutrition & Food Science	.4
College of Liberal Arts	
Communication & Journalism	.16
Communication Disorders	.1
English	.59
Foreign Language & Lit.	.21
History	.30
Philosophy	.0
Political Science	.13
Psychology	.28
Sociology	.12
School of Fine Arts	
Music	.3
School of Pharmacy	
Pharmacy Care Systems	.5
Pharmaceutical Sciences	.11
College of Sciences & Mathematics	
Bio. Sciences	.62
Chemistry & Lab. Tech.	.44
Discrete & Statistical Sci.	.20
Geology/Geography	.12
Mathematics	.32
Physics & Physical Sci.	.24
College of Vet. Medicine	
Anat., Phys., & Pharm.	.3
Pathobiology	.0
Miscellaneous	.22
Admin-ED, HHP; Academic Support;	
PGM Student w/Disabilities; etc.	
Total	.705

Source of Information

Document

GTA/GRA Distribution Fall Semester 2001, Graduate School

Each institution employing graduate teaching assistants **must** provide a published set of guidelines for institution-wide graduate assistantship administration, including appointment criteria, remuneration, rights and responsibilities, evaluation and reappointment.

Auburn University is in partial compliance.

Guidelines for the administration of GTAs, in the form of a *Graduate Assistant Handbook*, are available on the Graduate School's website. The Graduate School's website also includes *General Guidelines for Graduate Assistantships*. Additional information is found in the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*, (101). Although the *Graduate Assistant Handbook* includes general information about the administration of graduate teaching assistantships, administrative oversight is handled by individual Colleges and Schools.

Although the University has complied in principle with this **must** statement, GTAs still need to be better informed. In the SACS GTA Survey, only 69% of respondents (29% response rate of 600 surveys sent) agreed that they have been informed about the academic or other institutional regulations affecting their role as a GTA. Only 63% of respondents said they were informed in writing of the terms and conditions of their teaching assistantship; 18.1% had not received written information about the terms and conditions of their assistantship.

Although guidelines are in place to insure compliance with the **must** statement, the Faculty Committee concludes that the University should take steps to see that GTAs are better informed about appointment criteria, remuneration, rights and responsibilities, evaluation, and reappointment.

In addition, GTAs do not currently receive health benefits. The Faculty Committee agrees with the American Association of University Professors, in its "Statement on Graduate Students" that "Graduate student assistants, though they work only part time, should receive essential fringe benefits, and especially health benefits" ("Statement on Graduate Students," 270).

Suggestion 4-16:

The Steering Committee suggests that GTAs be better informed about appointment criteria, remuneration, rights and responsibilities, evaluation and reappointment.

Suggestion 4-17:

The Steering Committee suggests that GTAs receive essential fringe benefits, especially health benefits.

Sources of Information

Document

"Statement on Graduate Students," *American Association of University Professors: Policy Documents and Reports*, 9th ed., Washington, D.C.: AAUP, 2001.

Websites

General Guidelines for Graduate Assistantships

http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/guidelines_ga.htm

Graduate Assistant Handbook

http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/students/grad_assist_guide.html

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Survey and Results, GTA Survey

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm

Graduate teaching assistants who have primary responsibility for teaching a course for credit and/or for assigning final grades for such a course, and whose professional and scholarly preparation does not satisfy the provisions of Section 4.8.2 **must** have earned at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline, be under the direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, receive regular in-service training and be evaluated regularly.

Auburn University is not currently in full compliance with this **must** statement, but it is already taking steps to come into full compliance.

All but one of the University's 12 Colleges and Schools are in compliance with this **must** statement. The College of Liberal Arts, not now in compliance, has taken steps to address the problem (in the Department of Communication and Journalism and the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures) and expects to be in compliance by 2002.

According to the SACS Department Heads and Chairs Survey, 50% of the 48 respondents from the 55 surveyed agree that the graduate students in their Departments who have primary responsibility for teaching courses leading to the BA/BS degrees have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credits hours in the discipline; only 4.1% of respondents said that GTAs in their Department had not completed 18 graduate hours. 45.8% of respondents reported that the 18-hour credit requirement for GTAs did not apply to their Department. Transcripts documenting compliance with the 18-hour credit requirement are available in Departmental offices.

The SACS GTA Survey reveals that supervision and interaction with faculty in relation to teaching responsibilities can be improved. 87.1% of respondents said that they did not have sufficient opportunities to interact with other faculty in relation to their teaching responsibilities. Only 51.5% of the respondents felt their Department prepared them well for their duties as a GTA through training. 47.4% of the respondents thought that more thorough training should be provided for GTAs before they enter the classroom.

Direct supervision of GTAs varies. 27.4% of respondents to the SACS GTA Survey reported that they were supervised once each semester, 15.4% of respondents reported that they were supervised weekly, 9.3% reported that they were supervised monthly, 7.4% reported that they were supervised annually, and 4.3% reported that they were supervised bi-weekly. 36.4% of GTAs who responded to the Survey reported that they were not supervised.

Most GTAs receive orientation upon arrival on campus, but subsequent in-service training varies. 80.7% of the respondents to the SACS GTA Survey said that they received in-service training upon arrival on campus. 29.2% of GTAs who responded to the survey reported receiving weekly in-service training. 10.5% of respondents reported receiving in-service training each semester. 7.6% of the survey respondents reported receiving monthly in-service training. 6.4% said that they received annual in-service training, and 16.4% of those who responded reported receiving "other" in-service training.

The Faculty Committee concludes that the University is not in full compliance with the **must** statement. Although individual Departments employing GTAs generally do have in place methods of supervision and evaluation, these could be improved. The Committee notes that enhanced GTA training is to be one of the activities of the forthcoming Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning.

Recommendation 4-4:

The Steering Committee recommends that the College of Liberal Arts complete the process of coming into full compliance with the 18-hour credit rule for GTAs teaching their own courses.

Recommendation 4-5:

The Steering Committee recommends that all Departments employing GTAs insure that their GTAs who have primary responsibility for teaching a courses be supervised by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, receive regular in-service training, and be evaluated regularly (at least annually).

Documents

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Survey and Results, Department Heads and Chairs Survey

Telephone Survey

Telephone Survey of Deans, 2002

Website

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Survey and Results, GTA Survey
http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm

■ Institutions **may** appoint graduate teaching assistants for whom English is a second language **only** when a test of spoken English, or other reliable evidence of the applicant's proficiency in oral and written communication, indicates that the appointment is appropriate.

Auburn University is in compliance.

According to the *Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin*, international graduate teaching assistants must be certified by receiving a minimum score of 50 on the Test of Spoken English or by approval of the Director of the ESL program at Auburn, unless they are graduates of an accredited institution whose instruction is in English.

Source of Information**Website**

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 101
http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

■ Institutions employing graduate teaching assistants **must** provide a structure for administrative oversight at a level above that of the individual academic units to ensure conformity with institutional policies and procedures.

Auburn University is not in compliance.

Administrative oversight of graduate teaching assistantships is handled by individual Colleges and Schools, which, in practice, have delegated this responsibility to the Departments. The SACS GTA Survey indicates that orientation, supervision, and evaluation of GTAs vary widely across campus.

Recommendation 4-6:

The Steering Committee recommends that the Dean of the Graduate School, in consultation with the Graduate Council, develop written guidelines for the training, supervision, and evaluation of GTAs and a method of administrative oversight to ensure conformity with these guidelines.

Sources of Information

Websites

General Guidelines for Graduate Assistantships

http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/guidelines_ga.htm

Graduate Assistant Handbook

http://gradweb.duc.auburn.edu/students/grad_assist_guide.html

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results, GTA Survey

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm

4.8.5 Faculty Compensation

4.8.5

An institution **should** provide adequate salaries and benefits to attract and retain able faculty members. The institution **should** also provide a retirement plan, to which it contributes a reasonable percentage of the cost, and a plan for adequate insurance coverage. Salary increases **must** be based on clearly stated criteria.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Even though they are below the regional averages, Auburn's salaries, benefits, and retirement plan are adequate. According to Department Heads and Chairs, salary increases are based on clearly stated criteria. However, compensation levels will have to be raised if Auburn is to compete effectively for the best faculty, and the University should more effectively communicate to faculty the criteria used for salary increases.

Only 8.5% of respondents to the SACS Faculty Survey agreed that Auburn salaries are regionally competitive; an overwhelming majority of faculty (80%) disagreed. Department Heads and Chairs were somewhat less negative, but 58% of respondents to the SACS Head and Chair Survey said that their Departments are not able to pay competitive salaries in order to retain qualified faculty. There is a widespread perception that Auburn salaries make it difficult for the institution to attract and retain the best faculty members. Data about salaries support the accuracy of this perception.

Acknowledging the low level of faculty salaries, in January 1999, the Board of Trustees formally adopted as an objective: "That average faculty salaries, by rank, be raised to 100% of the respective SREB averages for doctoral-level universities by the year 2004."

Nevertheless, Auburn's salary situation has, in fact, substantially deteriorated over the last decade. As shown on Figure 4-1, for 1991-92, the average salary for all instructors was at 90% of the regional average for the SREB group of peer institutions; that figure had fallen to 83% by 2001-02. The average salary for all assistant professors was 96% of the regional average in 1991-92 but had fallen to 88% in 2001-02. For associate professors, Auburn was at 97% of regional average in 1991-92, but was at 91% in 2001-02. For professors, the salary for 1991-92 was 93% of regional average; in 2001-02 the University was at only 88% of regional average.

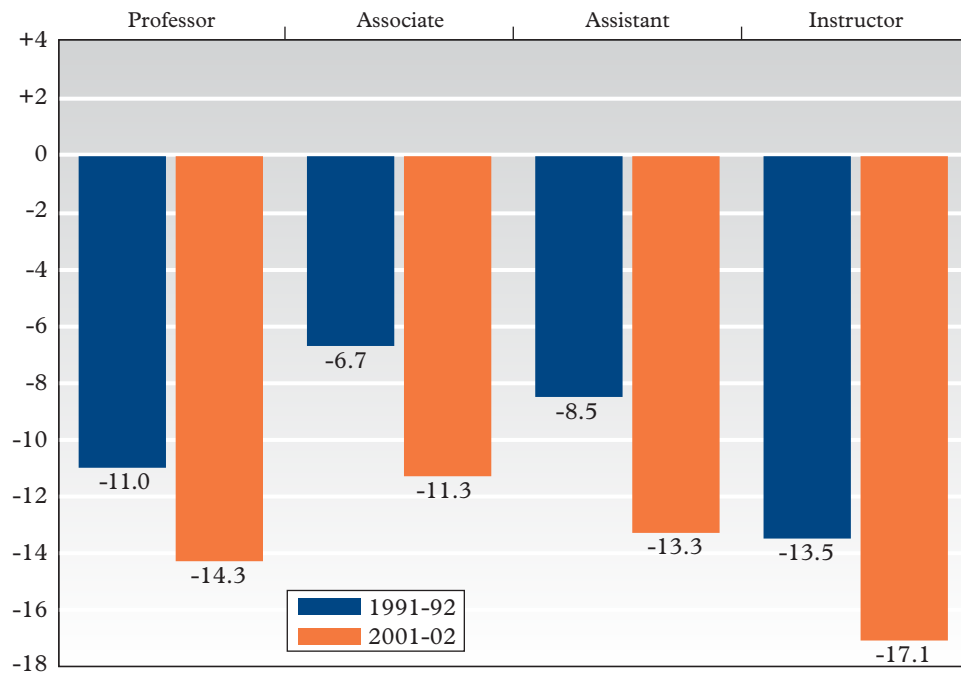


Figure 4-1: Shortfalls in Salaries Relative to Regional Averages

As Figure 4-2 demonstrates, no College or School at Auburn achieved the goal set by the Board of Trustees for faculty salaries, but some Colleges and Schools, especially Science and Mathematics, are much further from the goal than others. (Note the rank of instructor is not included on Figure 4-2 because in some Colleges and Schools the number of instructors may not be sufficient to make comparative data meaningful.)

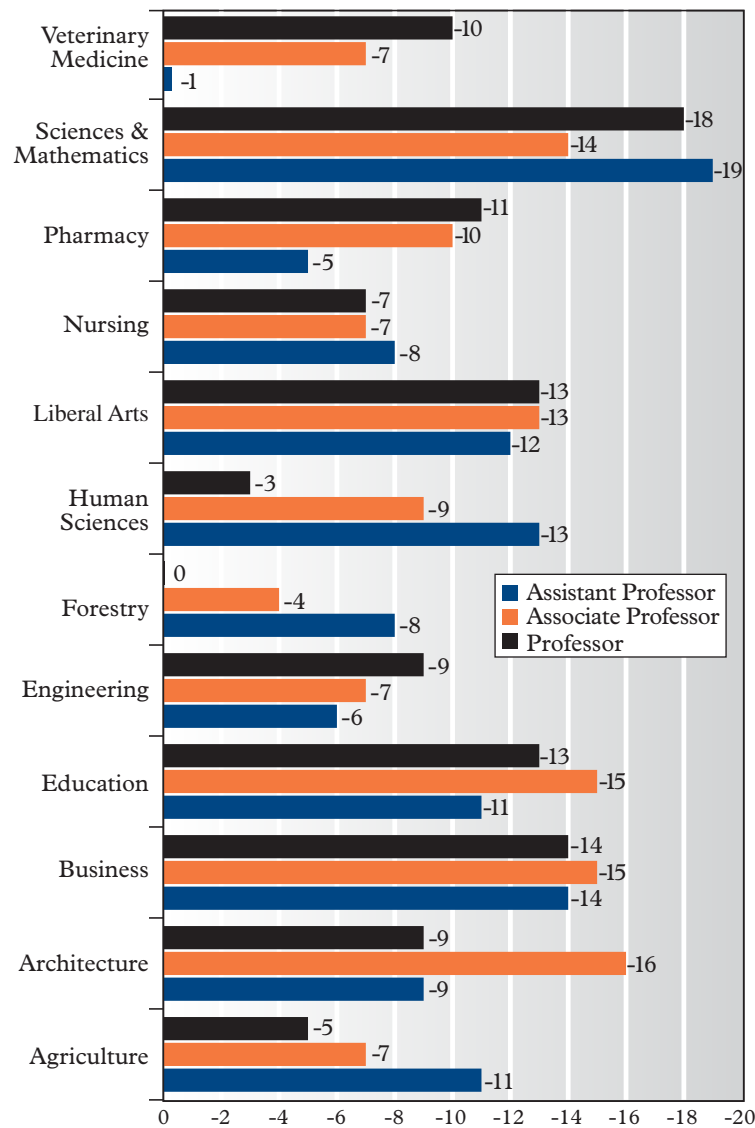


Figure 4-2: Auburn Salaries as Percentages of Regional Average

The preceding bar charts do not include library faculty, since not all the institutions included in the principal regional salary comparison data generated by the Office of Planning and Analysis are members of the Association of Research Libraries (to which Auburn belongs). ARL data, which includes private, as well as public institutions, would seem to indicate that problems of salary compression and inadequate salaries for experienced faculty also exist in the Libraries. An effort has been made to raise starting salaries to make them competitive with peer libraries. Nevertheless, even with beginning salaries that ranked 6th out of 112 ARL institutions in 2001, overall average salaries at Auburn in 2001 ranked only 66th out of 112 ARL institutions, indicating that senior faculty are likely to be in the lowest quartile. In contrast, however, a survey of salaries at the Southern University Group institutions that are ARL members indicates that Auburn salaries at the Librarian III rank are at 108% of regional average, whereas salaries for those holding Librarian II rank are at 93%.

Within some Departments, salary compression and inequities between the ranks reflect the increased discrepancy between Auburn and regional salary levels with advancing rank. New assistant professor

salaries in some units surpass those of assistant professors hired just a few years earlier. Occasionally, new hire salaries exceed some associate professor salaries. Although in recent years the institution has increased the increment associated with promotion, competitive market pressures steadily increase the salaries necessary to hire quality junior faculty. At the same time, the irregular pattern of state support for Auburn steadily erodes the relative position of senior faculty who choose to build careers at the institution.

A pattern has persisted at Auburn of years without salary adjustments, eroding any gains the University may have made previously in coming closer to regional averages. As Figure 4-3 shows, over the last 11 years, there have been four years in which there have been no raises at all.

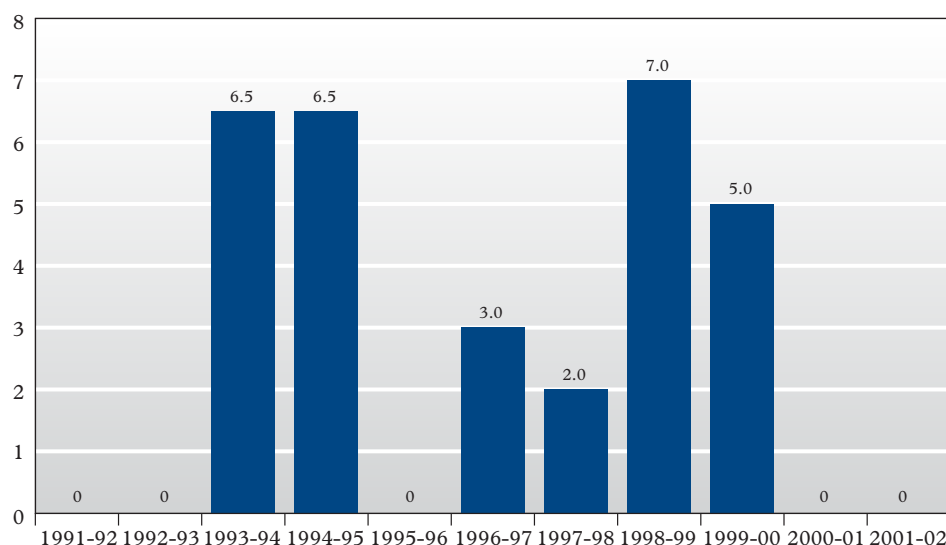


Figure 4-3: Auburn University Faculty Salary Percent Increases, 1991-2002

Salary levels should not be viewed in isolation from benefits, though it is, in some respects, difficult to make accurate comparisons of benefits packages at different institutions. One method that has long been used by the American Association of University Professors' widely respected annual survey of faculty compensation is to calculate benefits as a percentage of salary. By this measure, Auburn lags behind its peer institutions. As shown on Figure 4-4, in 1991-92, benefits represented 19% of salary at Auburn, while nationally at doctoral-level institutions the percentage was 23.3. In the mid-1990s Auburn made progress in this area, nearly approximating the national average in 1997-98. However, Auburn has again fallen back in this area, so that in 2001-02, benefits represented only 20.6 % of salary, in contrast to the national average of 24.8%.

One factor that at least partially accounts for some of the recent dramatic changes from year to year in the percentage of salary represented by benefits is the University's contribution to the Teachers' Retirement System of Alabama. While the University's contribution, but not the faculty member's, can vary significantly from year to year—thus causing benefits as a percentage of salary to go up and down—the actual value of the benefit provided to the faculty member does not change. The University provides a mandatory state retirement plan for faculty with a 50% or greater workload. This plan is described in the *Faculty Handbook* and is viewed quite favorably by faculty. 60% of respondents to the SACS Faculty Survey said that they are satisfied with the state retirement program; only 22% are not satisfied. Although state retirement program participants accrue benefits at a somewhat higher rate than programs in other states, families of individuals who die suddenly or who do not live 30 days after retiring are sorely penalized.

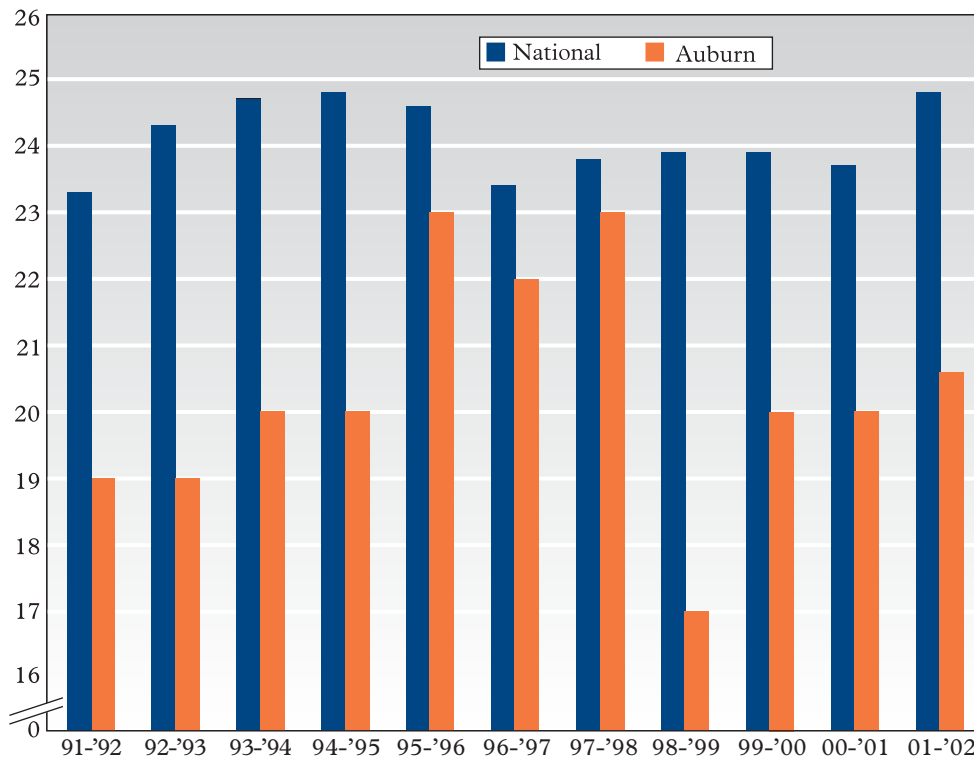


Figure 4-4: Benefits as Percentage of Salary, Auburn and National Averages, 1992-2002

In the last 10 years, the University has more than doubled its matching contribution (to \$1200 per year) for individuals who choose to take advantage of one of several tax-deferred annuity options made available through payroll deduction. Almost exactly half of the respondents to the SACS Faculty Survey express satisfaction with this program; only 30% are not satisfied.

The University provides health, life, and disability insurance coverage to all full-time faculty. These plans are described on the website of the Payroll and Benefits Office.

While the faculty seems generally satisfied with the state retirement system and tax-deferred annuities programs offered by the University, only 34% of respondents to the SACS Faculty Survey are satisfied with the health insurance program. In recent years, co-pays for doctor visits have repeatedly risen. Similarly, co-pays for pharmaceuticals have steadily increased, particularly for non-generic drugs. The aftermath of a hospital stay often features a stream of additional charges that are not covered by the insurance plan. Although a dental plan is in place, it is severely limited in its coverage. No vision plan is available for Auburn University employees.

In 2002, the University instituted a 50% tuition remission plan for employees and their immediate families. Although a welcomed benefit, the implementation of the program penalized recipients of other University-funded scholarships by deducting these awards from the recipient student's tuition benefit.

When total compensation for Auburn faculty is compared by rank to our regional peers, the picture is even worse than for salaries alone. As shown on Figure 4-5, instructors are at just under 83% of regional average; assistant professors are at less than 87% of regional average; associate professors are at less than 90% of regional average; and full professors are at less than 86% of regional average.

The previous discussion has focused on full-time faculty. The situation for part-time faculty is worse since they generally do not now qualify for most benefits. Part-time status should not continue to be a basis for denying faculty members essential fringe benefits, especially health insurance. The University Non Tenure-Track Instructors Committee reports that a “full 80% of the public research institutions, nationwide, provide health insurance benefits to part-time instructors working at least half time, and, of these 65% prorate the benefit.” It has estimated the cost to Auburn University per year to offer health insurance to part-time instructors whose FTEs are at least 50%. The prorated insurance cost would be \$64,982; the non-prorated cost would be \$78,719.

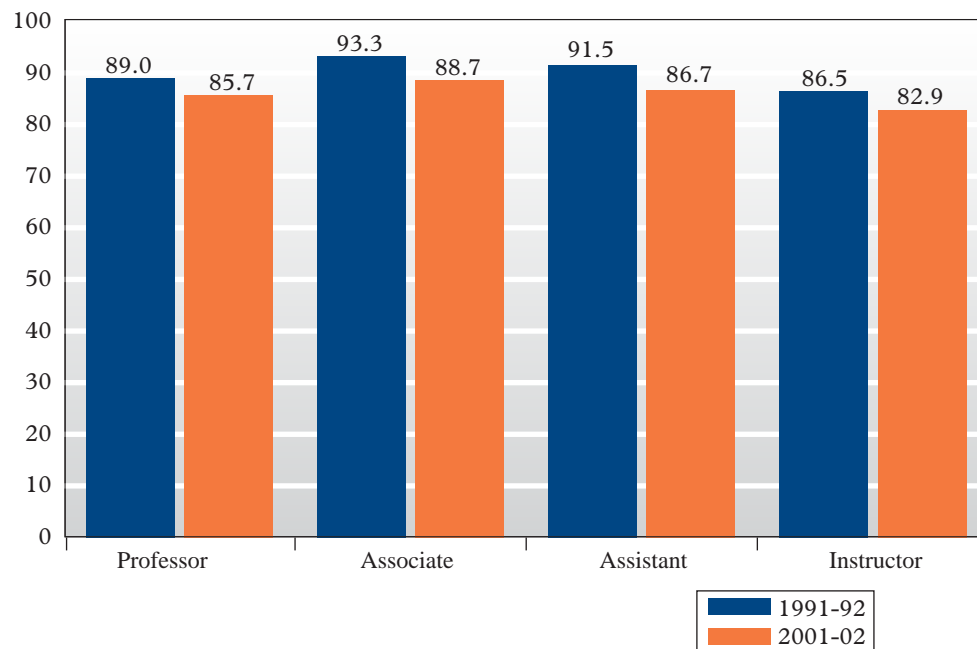


Figure 4-5: Total Compensation Relative to Regional Average

The *Faculty Handbook* requires that: “All Department Heads and unit Heads shall conduct at least one yearly review before April 30 with each faculty member to evaluate his or her performance and to discuss his or her future development.” Most faculty (77%) agree that such evaluations take place. A majority of faculty (55%) agree that the criteria for annual faculty evaluations are clearly stated.

Department Heads and Chairs are more positive in their assessment. Not a single Head or Chair disagreed with the statement that his or her Department had clearly stated criteria for faculty evaluation; 88% agreed or strongly agreed that their Departments did have clearly stated criteria. Faculty, however, were less positive in their views about merit raises being determined according to “clearly stated criteria.” Only 27% of respondents to the SACS Faculty Survey agreed that such was the case. In contrast, 72% of respondents to the SACS Department Heads and Chairs Survey stated that they used “clearly stated criteria for salary increments.”

In conclusion, as recommended by the American Association of University Professors: “Institutions should . . . devise ways to reward part-time faculty members who teach continuously over a number of years.” This is not consistently done at Auburn University. One possible method is “to ensure periodical raises for continuing part-time faculty, on either a seniority or a merit basis. This allows a measure of reward for the more senior part-time faculty member and acknowledges the contribution that

continuity of instruction makes to academic life. A system of merit pay would also help prevent the lapse of skills which may occur if part-time faculty continue to be treated as marginal and are given no incentive to maintain or improve their skills” (“The Status of Part-Time Faculty”).

In spite of the Board of Trustees’ stated commitment to bring Auburn salaries to the regional average, inadequate and inconsistent levels of state funding and relatively low tuition rates, which are at only 89% of regional average, continue to make it difficult for Auburn to remain competitive in terms of salaries and benefits with its peer institutions. Salary compression is especially serious at the senior professor level, where productive faculty are at a substantial disadvantage to their regional peers. Rectifying the cumulative impact of many years of budgetary instability and its consequent distortion of the salary structure will require vision and commitment.

Annual evaluation of faculty does take place at Auburn, and in most instances such evaluations seem to follow clearly stated criteria. However, many faculty do not see a clear link between their annual evaluation and the determination of merit pay increases.

Suggestion 4-18:

The Steering Committee suggests that the University should reaffirm its commitment to bringing salaries (and benefits) up to regional averages by rank within the next five years and develop a new strategy for implementing this goal.

Suggestion 4-19:

The Steering Committee suggests that, in order to provide a more stable source of funding to maintain competitive salaries and benefits, the University should proceed more quickly to raise tuition levels to the regional average for peer institutions.

Suggestion 4-20:

The Steering Committee suggests that each Department be required to provide to its faculty written criteria for the determination of merit pay increases and that a copy of these criteria also be provided to the responsible Dean.

Suggestion 4-21:

The Steering Committee suggests that part-time faculty should receive essential fringe benefits, and especially health benefits.

Suggestion 4-22:

The Steering Committee suggests that a systematic method should be developed for rewarding part-time faculty for continuous service.

Sources of Information

Documents

“The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession,” *Academe*, 1992-2002

Faculty Salaries, Auburn and Regional 1991-92 to 2001-02, Prepared by Office of Planning and Analysis

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results, Department Heads and Chairs Survey

“The Status of Part-Time Faculty,” American Association of University Professors, *Policy Documents and Reports* 9th ed. Washington, DC: AAUP, 2001

“Tuition and Fees Survey, 2001-02,” Southern University Group, Available from Office of Planning and Analysis

Websites

Business Office: Payroll and Benefits Information

http://www.auburn.edu/administration/iss/business_office/control/payroll/

4.8.6

4.8.6 Academic Freedom and Professional Security

Faculty and students **must** be free to examine all pertinent data, question assumptions, be guided by the evidence of scholarly research, and teach and study the substance of a given discipline.

An institution **must** adopt and distribute to all faculty members a statement of the principles of academic freedom as established by the governing board, ensuring freedom in teaching, research and publication.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Faculty generally express confidence in the University's support for their right to academic freedom with regard to teaching and research. This right is affirmed in the *Faculty Handbook*. Students are also protected in their right to examine all pertinent data and to question assumptions. The University provides a student academic grievance process described in detail in the *Tiger Cub*, which also affirms students' rights to free speech outside the classroom. Moreover, the size and quality of the Auburn University Libraries assure access to a wide range of sources on almost any subject.

However, faculty are more confident about the support for academic freedom at the Departmental level than at the level of the central administration, and some faculty members have expressed concerns that speaking out publicly on controversial matters relating to University governance might result in some form of administrative retaliation.

The President Pro Tempore of the Board of Trustees, the President of the University, the Interim Provost, and the two most recent former Chairs of the University Senate all affirm the University's support for academic freedom. The current *Faculty Handbook*, approved by the Board of Trustees in 1994 following a full-scale revision, now affirms the University's commitment to the *AAUP Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure*, which is quoted extensively in Chapter 3.

According to the SACS Faculty Survey, faculty members reported overwhelmingly that their Departments support academic freedom in research and teaching and institutional governance. 71% of respondents (approximately 50% response rate out of 1266 surveys sent) agreed that their Departments supported academic freedom as theory and practice. Yet, only 39% of respondents expressed similar confidence in the central administration's commitment to fostering "a climate that is supportive of academic freedom."

Many faculty have spoken out publicly in the ongoing controversy surrounding the Board of Trustees without seeming to experience interference or retribution by the central administration. Following a lengthy debate at the meeting of the University Faculty in the spring 2001, a vote of no confidence in the Board of Trustees passed by an overwhelming majority (366-yes, 29-no, and 1-abstention).

While no violations of academic freedom have been publicly reported, the contentious climate on campus has led faculty in some Colleges and Schools to voice concerns about possible attempts at intimidation to prevent them from publicly expressing their views on controversial matters relating to University governance. Concerns have also been expressed by a number of faculty about the implications for academic freedom of the lawsuit initiated by the President of the University against SACS.

At its fall meeting, the University Faculty voted 97 to 26 (with 6 abstentions) to urge “Interim President William Walker to withdraw the University’s lawsuit against SACS.” The University counsel’s insistence that any testimony taken as a part of a SACS investigation of Auburn be taken in a public setting is seen by some faculty as likely to discourage some individuals from providing evidence because of the lack of confidentiality. In spite of assurances by Interim President William Walker that no one providing information to SACS would be a victim of retaliation by any member of the administration, this entire matter remains a point of contention on campus.

In the context of this contention, the decision by the Board of Trustees to reject the recommendation of the University Senate and to insist that all salary raises be based on merit, with no across-the-board component for salary enhancements being allowed, was cited by some members of the University as providing a potential means for administrative retribution against outspoken faculty.

In conclusion, Auburn faculty generally enjoy the rights and protections of academic freedom in their teaching and research. Moreover, the highly publicized discussions concerning issues of University governance that have taken place recently on campus indicate that many faculty feel free to speak out on matters of concern to the University community. Nevertheless, when only 8% out of respondents to the SACS Faculty Survey agree that relationships among the faculty, administrators, and governing board are cooperative, conditions for academic freedom are not optimal.

Sources of Information

Interviews

James Bradley, Immediate Past Chair, University Senate, February 7, 2002

Bruce Gladden, Past Chair, University Senate, February 14, 2002

John Pritchett, Interim Provost, February 7, 2002

James Samford, President Pro Tempore, Board of Trustees, February 21, 2002

William Walker, Interim President, February 19, 2002

Website

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3, Section 1

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Minutes, University Faculty Meeting, March 13, 2001

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate/313min.htm>

Minutes, University Faculty Meeting, October 2, 2001

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate/102min.htm>

Minutes, University Senate Meeting, July 9, 2002

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate/7-09-02minutes.htm>

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results, Faculty Survey

http://auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm

Tiger Cub, Student Academic Grievance Policy, 91-94,

Speech and Demonstration Regulations, 99-100

<http://www.auburn.edu/tigercub/>

Institutional policies **must** set forth the requirement for faculty members to carry out their duties in a professional, ethical and collegial manner that enhances the purpose of the institution.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The *Faculty Handbook* in Chapter 3 clearly sets forth the professional responsibilities of all faculty members.

Source of Information

Website

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3, Section 2

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

- Although tenure policy is not mandated, each institution **must** provide contracts, letters of appointment, or similar documents to faculty members clearly describing the terms and conditions of their employment. All policies regarding employment, as established by the governing board, **must** be published and distributed to the faculty.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Chapter 3 of the *Faculty Handbook* states the requirement that new appointees to the faculty receive a formal letter of appointment describing the terms and conditions of employment. The University's general personnel policies are published in the *Faculty Handbook*.

Source of Information

Website

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

- If the institution uses faculty ranks and tenure, the policies and procedures for promotion, for awarding tenure, for providing adequate notice on non-renewal of a probationary appointment, and for termination of appointments, including those for cause, **must** be clearly set forth in the faculty handbook or other official publication.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Policies and procedures for promotion and tenure are clearly set forth in Chapter 3 of the *Faculty Handbook*, as are the requirements for appointment at the various ranks used by the University, provision of adequate notice in the case of non-renewal, and termination of appointments for cause. These policies are all consistent with AAUP's 1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure*.

In addition to the traditional ranks of instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor, the University has established separate series of non-tenure track titles for faculty involved almost exclusively in either research or clinical work. The conditions for appointment and advancement in these titles are also spelled out in detail in the *Faculty Handbook*.

Sources of Information

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

1940 *Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure*, AAUP

<http://www.aaup.org/statements/Redbook/1940stat.htm>

- Termination and non-renewal procedures **must** contain adequate safeguards for protection of academic freedom.

Auburn University is in compliance.

Chapter 3 of the *Faculty Handbook* clearly spells out procedures for termination and non-renewal that are consistent with the safeguards recommended by the AAUP.

Source of Information

Website

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

4.8.7 Professional Growth

4.8.7

An institution **must** provide faculty members the opportunity to continue their professional development throughout their careers and **must** demonstrate that such development occurs. The general tone and policies of an institution **must** make it clear that individual faculty members are to take the initiative in promoting their own growth as teachers, scholars and, especially in professional and occupational fields, practitioners.

Auburn University is in compliance. However, currently, the Professional Improvement Leave policy, as it has been implemented, does not provide adequate opportunity for faculty to continue their professional development.

The *Faculty Handbook* (Chapter 8) sets policy and provides criteria for various opportunities for faculty to take the initiative in promoting their own professional improvement and growth.

The policy set forth in the *Faculty Handbook* establishes eligibility for faculty members to apply for paid Professional Improvement Leave after four calendar years of full-time service. Faculty members may elect to take Professional Leave for one semester with full pay, or for two semesters with half pay. However, these leaves are awarded based upon the availability of resources at the unit level, and consequently, there is great disparity among Departments. Some Departments extend available resources by granting leaves of one-half semester, while others grant no leave whatsoever. And, while the Office of the Provost and Academic Affairs is supportive of the leave policy, that Office does not provide funds to assist the units in the granting of leave. The Interim Provost has stated that the University must find avenues to support the approved Professional Improvement Leave policy and that “the existing situation must change.” In an era where resources are scarce and needs are extensive, the funding of Professional Improvement Leave has not been an institutional priority. Consequently, one could argue that the University is not fully in compliance with the spirit of the must statement in the area of Professional Improvement Leave, even though it is approved University policy.

Leave without pay can be granted for up to two years if the leave is intended for professional improvement and brings benefits to the University through the faculty’s gained expertise and experience while away.

Faculty members are allowed to enroll in courses offered at the University, and up to five semester hours may be taken without cost. However, course fees (which are sometimes required) are not waived. For loads above the five semester-hour limit, the standard per hour rate is charged.

Numerous opportunities exist throughout the campus for programmatic research support, consulting, or outreach. For example, most Colleges and Schools house institution-sponsored research and outreach centers. Examples include the Center for Arts and Humanities, Space Research Institute, Environmental Institute, and Water Resources Research Institute. All Colleges and Schools can cite additional examples as means of providing opportunities for faculty who seek continued professional growth in research.

Competitive seed grants sponsored annually are also available through the Office of the Vice President for Research. This program is divided into two distinct areas in that a portion of the available funds (\$90,000 in academic year 2001-02) is administered through a competitive RFP program. The remaining funds (\$60,000 in academic year 2001-02) are awarded in a discretionary manner. In a recent interview, the Vice President for Research expressed concern that the funds available should be in the range of \$500,000 for an institution the size of Auburn and with the programs that the institution attempts to support.

Other University-sponsored programs also exist in outreach and extension. Examples include the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service, Dixon Conference Center, Center on Aging, Center for the Study of Rural Southern Architecture (Rural Studio), and the Economic Development Institute.

The University has in recent years offered many opportunities for faculty wishing to develop new expertise in the area of information technology. Regular workshops and the Summer Academy, which pays faculty to work on course-related IT skills, provide significant possibilities for faculty who wish to take the initiative to engage in this form of professional development.

Additionally, Auburn University provides opportunities for consulting. The *Faculty Handbook* describes policies and procedures for consulting release time and compensation.

The SACS Faculty Survey asked respondents for their perceptions regarding opportunities for professional growth at Auburn. When asked about opportunities for professional growth (including travel for scholarly activities) at the Departmental, School, or College level, the responses were generally positive, with 58% agreeing and 28% disagreeing. The remaining respondents (14%) either were neutral or did not know. When asked about the level of support and encouragement for professional growth beyond the Department and College or School level, the responses were much less positive. Only 37% of respondents agreed; 39% disagreed; and 23% were either neutral or did not know.

All Colleges and Schools have policies regarding the provision of funds for scholarly travel. For example, the School of Nursing makes available an annual sum of \$500 per faculty member for such travel. Other Colleges and Schools fully fund the travel costs for all faculty who have refereed papers accepted for presentation. Still others request that the faculty cover a portion of the expenses. In general, those units with the greatest resources (either from annual fund or research monies) have the most generous policies regarding faculty travel. According to the SACS Faculty Survey and the SACS Department Heads and Chairs Survey, Deans and Departments Heads and Chairs are diligent in the use of minimum resources to maximize opportunities for professional growth. There is, however, the strong perception by faculty that their professional development is supported by the College, School, and Department at a much greater degree than by the central administration.

Ongoing professional development does, in fact, take place among the faculty. The annual evaluation process discussed in **Section 4.8.10** and the procedures for tenure and promotion not only encourage such development, but also provide documentation that faculty members in each of the Departments successfully pursue means of enhancing their capabilities as teachers, researchers, and practitioners in their professional fields.

Suggestion 4-23:

The Steering Committee suggests that the required resources to fully fund the approved Professional Improvement Leave program be provided and that funding for Professional Improvement Leave be emphasized as an institutional priority.

Suggestion 4-24:

The Steering Committee suggests that the Research Incentive Seed Funding program be emphasized by more adequate funding.

Suggestion 4-25:

The Steering Committee suggests that faculty have access to programs in career counseling and career development to gain new skills and expertise.

Sources of Information

Documents

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results,
Department Heads and Chairs Survey

Interviews

Michael Moriarty, Vice President for Research, February 5, 2002

John Pritchett, Interim Provost, February 7, 2002

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 8, Section 6

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results, Faculty Survey

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm

4.8.8 The Role of the Faculty and Its Committees

4.8.8

Primary responsibility for the quality of the educational program **must** reside with the faculty. The extent of the participation and jurisdiction of the faculty in academic affairs **must** be clearly set forth and published. Much of their business will normally be conducted through such structures as committees, councils, and senates, operating within the broad policies determined by the administration and governing board.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The faculty has primary responsibility for the quality of the education program. However, a number of problems have arisen regarding the governance processes through which the faculty carries out its primary responsibility for the institution's educational programs.

The *Faculty Handbook* spells out in detail the mechanisms for, and scope of, faculty participation in academic affairs. Through these established mechanisms, faculty members play a major role in insuring the quality of the University's research and instructional programs. However, the standing committee structure is, on occasion, bypassed through the establishment of ad hoc committees on which faculty representation is more problematic, and faculty have expressed strong concerns about particular Board of Trustees' actions that might be interpreted as inappropriate micromanagement of academic affairs.

Chapter 2 of the *Faculty Handbook* begins with the following statement:

Faculty members at Auburn University are involved to a significant degree in the formulation and review of institutional policies which affect the academic and professional welfare of the University and the Faculty. This involvement is achieved primarily through the organizations of the University Faculty and the University Senate, which are described in the University Faculty Constitution and the University Senate Constitution. University policy concerning the academic functioning of the University is adopted with the participation of the elected representatives of the University Faculty.

The University Senate, which dates back to 1968, represents the University Faculty and other members of the University community. According to the Senate Constitution, which was thoroughly revised in 1993-94:

The voting members of the Senate shall consist of one elected senator from each formal academic Department having at least four full-time faculty equivalents; one elected senator from each School lacking formal Departments; one elected senator from the University Libraries; one elected

senator from the non-tenure track faculty members of the Cooperative Extension Service who are not included in academic Departments; one elected senator from the non-tenure track faculty in University Extension who are not included in academic Departments; one elected senator from the non-tenure track faculty of the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station who are not included in academic Departments; and the following ex-officio members: the Provost, the Dean of Libraries, the Student Government Association President, the Graduate Student Organization President, the Chair of the Staff Council, the officers of the Senate, and the appointed members of the Senate Steering Committee. There shall also be nine members appointed by the President of the University from among the University Vice Presidents and Deans of Colleges and Schools, excluding the Provost.

The standing committees of the Senate are:

- Steering
- Rules
- Academic Program Review
- Academic Standards
- Administrator Evaluation
- Calendar and Schedules
- Core Curriculum Oversight
- Curriculum
- Faculty Salaries
- Faculty Handbook Review
- Graduate Council
- Lectures
- Academic Computing
- Library
- Non-tenure Track Instructors Committee
- Professional Improvement Leave [no longer operative]
- Competitive Research Grant
- Retention
- Teaching Effectiveness
- Faculty Grievance
- Faculty Welfare

In addition, the *Faculty Handbook* lists the following standing committees that report to the President of Auburn University and whose faculty members are appointed by the President from nominees provided by the Rules Committee of the University Senate. Shown adjacent to the name of each standing committee is the University officer currently designated by the President as the official responsible for the relevant committee.

- Academic Honesty (Provost)
- Admissions Appeals (Vice President/Student Affairs)
- Advisory Committee for Drug-free Campus and Workplace (Vice President/Research)
- Alumni Professorships (Provost)
- Campus Planning (President)
- Concessions Board (Vice President/Executive)

Cultural Diversity (President) [changed to Multicultural Diversity]
 Discipline (Vice President/Student Affairs)
 Distinguished University Professor (Provost)
 Faculty Dismissal Hearing (President)
 Faculty Dismissal Inquiry (President)
 Fraternities and Sororities (Vice President/Student Affairs)
 Graduation (Provost)
 Institutional Animal Care and Use (Vice President/Research)
 Institutional Biosafety (Vice President/Research and Vice President/Administrative Services)
 Institutional Review Board for Use of Human Subjects in Research (Vice President/Research)
 Insurance and Benefits (Vice President/Executive)
 Intercollegiate Athletics (President)
 International Student (Vice President/Student Affairs)
 Orientation (Vice President/Student Affairs)
 Patent and Invention Disclosure (Vice President/Research)
 Persons with Disabilities (President)
 Promotion and Tenure (President)
 Radiological Safety (Vice President/Research)
 Recreational Services (Vice President/Student Affairs)
 Residency Appeals (Vice President/Student Affairs)
 Space Allocation (President)
 Student Academic Grievance (Provost)
 Student Communications Board (Vice President/Student Affairs)
 Student Financial Aid (Vice President/Student Affairs)
 Student Health (Vice President/Student Affairs)
 Student Social Life (Vice President/Student Affairs)
 Traffic and Parking (Vice President/Administrative Services)
 Traffic Appeals (Vice President/Administrative Services)
 Union Board (Vice President/Student Affairs)
 University Budget Advisory (President)
 University Instrumentation (Vice President/Research)
 University Safety (Vice President/Administrative Services)

According to the SACS Faculty Survey, respondents agreed by a two to one margin that faculty sets agendas, chooses representatives and leadership, and establishes procedures for committees that oversee those areas of the educational program in which the faculty should have primacy, though 24% expressed no opinion. However, an overwhelming majority (77%) disagreed that the Board of Trustees uses established mechanisms to ensure a faculty voice in matters of shared concern, consulting representatives who have been selected or approved by the faculty. Approximately 17% did not know or were neutral.

President Pro Tempore James Samford acknowledges that the Board of Trustees has “made some mistakes” with regard to “shared governance,” but both President Pro Tempore Samford and Interim President William Walker believe that progress has been made in the past year in this regard. Yet, the fact remains that when only 6% of faculty respondents agree with the statement concerning the Board’s use of established mechanisms to ensure a faculty voice, it is clear that a serious problem exists.

Undoubtedly, the action contributing most to the faculty perception that the Board fails to recognize faculty input in matters of University governance is the manner in which the Board terminated former President William Muse. While the Board was clearly acting within its constitutional powers in this matter, the lack of any consultation whatsoever with the elected faculty leadership caused significant unrest on campus.

Another matter in which the Board was acting within its legal authority, but which raised concerns about the Board's acceptance of the faculty's primacy in the area of educational programs involved the adoption of an academic forgiveness policy. As James Samford indicated, the Student Government Association initiated discussion of such a policy, and the policy ultimately adopted did go through the University Senate, but the Senate, which had previously rejected the development of an academic forgiveness policy, acted only because of pressure from the Board of Trustees.

A related problem involves faculty participation in appointments to administrative positions with responsibility for academic matters. Only 9% of respondents agreed that administrative appointments at the College, School, or University level are free from outside influence.

While there is an extensive system of standing committees (appointed by the University Senate or the President), some faculty have questioned the administration's practice of establishing ad hoc committees to deal with issues that might otherwise be dealt with by the existing governance structure. For example, the standing Campus Planning Committee appears to have had little if any involvement in the development of a proposed master plan for the campus. The creation of the various Directions Committees by the President (see description of these committees at <http://www.auburn.edu/administration/directions/>) is perhaps the most significant example of this trend.

The Rules Committee of the University Senate has often been bypassed in the process for selecting faculty to these ad hoc committees, even though the *Faculty Handbook* requires that in the case of all standing University committees appointed by the President, faculty nominees come from names provided by the Rules Committee, and that in cases where the establishment of an ad hoc committee is necessary, faculty members be appointed by "administrators involved in the issue at hand, in consultation with the Senate Rules Committee, as appropriate." Even before the establishment of the Directions Committees, such consultation was especially problematic in the appointment of ad hoc committees dealing with various aspects of the University's research mission.

In conclusion, the University has a well established system of faculty committees that is described in detail in the *Faculty Handbook*. In the day-to-day carrying out of the University's academic mission, these committees normally provide faculty an effective means of exercising primary responsibility for the institution's educational programs. However, the system of shared governance has been undermined by occasional, but serious, instances in which the Board of Trustees has demonstrated a problematic attitude toward the faculty's appropriate role as guardians of the academic programs of the University.

Suggestion 4-26:

The Steering Committee suggests that a joint workshop involving the Board of Trustees, the President of the University, and the leadership of the University Senate be held to discuss the principles of shared governance. This workshop should be planned by the mutual agreement of the President Pro Tempore of the Board of Trustees, the President of the University, and the officers of the University Senate and should include national experts representing a variety of perspectives.

Suggestion 4-27:

The Steering Committee suggests that the Chair of the University Senate be made an ex-officio, non-voting, member of the Board of Trustees.

Suggestion 4-28:

The Steering Committee suggests that more effective use be made of the numerous already existing standing Senate and Presidential committees so that ad hoc committees are appointed less frequently.

Suggestion 4-29:

The Steering Committee suggests that, when the President, Provost, or Vice Presidents establish ad hoc committees on which it is appropriate for faculty to serve, faculty appointments should be made in consultation with the University Senate Rules Committee.

Sources of Information

Interviews

James Bradley, Immediate Past Chair, University Senate, February 7, 2002

Bruce Gladden, Past Chair, University Senate, February 14, 2002

John Pritchett, Interim Provost, February 7, 2002

James Samford, President Pro Tempore, Board of Trustees, February 21, 2002

William Walker, Interim President, February 19, 2002

Websites

Directions Group

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/directions/>

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 2

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

Minutes, University Faculty Meeting, March 13, 2001

<http://www.auburn.edu/administration/governance/senate/313min.htm>

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results, Faculty Survey

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm

4.8.9 Faculty Loads

4.8.9

An institution **must** provide a faculty of adequate size to support its purpose. It **must** have procedures for the equitable and reasonable assignment of faculty responsibilities—including classroom instruction, academic advising, committee membership, guidance of student organizations, and research and service to the public. The institution **should** have policies to protect faculty members from assuming or being assigned internal or external responsibilities which might encroach upon the quality or the quantity of the work they are employed to perform for the institution. The calculation of instructional loads **should** take into account such factors as number of preparations, number of students taught, nature of the subject, and help available from secretaries and teaching assistants.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The student-faculty ratio at Auburn University has been about 16:1 the past several years. Student-faculty ratios at peer institutions in the Southeast ranged from a low of 12:1 at the University of Georgia to a high of 22:1 at Florida State. Auburn's figure was slightly better than the median of 17:1. On this basis, the faculty appears to be of adequate size with respect to the size of the student body. Calculating it in a slightly different way, by looking at the number of students per full-time faculty member, we find that this ratio has been fairly steady over the past 10 years, with a median of 19.3 to 1. However, the ratio suddenly increased in 2001-02 to 20.1 to 1. This increase, together with a publicly announced targeted enrollment of 25,000—about 2,500 above current levels—gives cause for concern, particularly because most of the increase will be in graduate enrollment, which necessitates smaller classes taught by graduate faculty, and because providing adequate office space for any additional faculty will be difficult.

There were different and somewhat conflicting reports in the SACS Department Heads and Chairs Survey and the SACS Deans Survey on the issue of sufficient faculty to support Auburn's missions. The Department Heads and Chairs agreed, by a 56% to 33% margin (with 48 out of 55 responding), that there is an adequate number of faculty to support instruction, while Deans (all except one responding) disagreed by 64% to 18% that the number of faculty is currently adequate. Also, 62% of Department Heads and Chairs disagreed that there is an adequate number of faculty to support research, while only 21% agreed. (The Deans were not asked this question.) In any case, one could conclude that Department Heads and Chairs and Deans agree that Auburn University needs more faculty to achieve excellence in carrying out its various missions.

Regarding procedures for assignment of faculty responsibilities, the *Faculty Handbook* contains no policy for determining faculty workloads, nor does there appear to be University-wide guidelines on the matter. Workloads are set primarily by Department Heads and Chairs in consultation with individual faculty. The SACS Faculty Survey indicated that the majority of faculty (by approximately two to one of those expressing an opinion) feel that teaching/workload assignments in their Departments appear to be equitably distributed and that their assigned teaching load reflects a proper balance between teaching, research, and service. Faculty also generally felt that their Departments provide sufficient resources to satisfy their teaching responsibilities. So the majority of faculty appear to be satisfied with the present system for determining workloads. The Deans surveyed agreed, by a 64%-36% margin, that teaching loads are fair in comparison with other universities.

In conclusion, the University may be in compliance with **Section 4.8.9**, but the size of the faculty appears to be barely adequate to support its purposes and missions of teaching, research, outreach, and service.

Suggestion 4-30:

The Steering Committee suggests that any further increase in student enrollment toward the targeted 25,000 level be matched by a corresponding increase in faculty.

Suggestion 4-31:

The Steering Committee suggests that new or existing funding sources be identified to increase the size of the faculty to enhance support for teaching, research, and outreach.

Suggestion 4-32:

The Steering Committee suggests that any increase in faculty be accompanied by a corresponding increase in infrastructure support (for example, office/lab space, secretarial help).

Sources of information

Document

AU Report, March 25, 2002

(article on Interim President William Walker's State of the University address)

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results, Department Heads and Chairs Survey

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results, Deans Survey

Websites

Historical Enrollment, Fall Terms, 1859-2001(a),

Prepared by the Office of Planning and Analysis

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/he.htm>

Number of Employees by Type, Fall 1991-2001,

Prepared by the Office of Planning and Analysis

<http://www.panda.auburn.edu/noebt.htm>

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results, Faculty Survey

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm

US News, Best Colleges 2002

<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/college/rankings/rankindex.htm>

4.8.10 Criteria and Procedures for Evaluation

4.8.10

An institution **must** conduct periodic evaluations of the performance of individual faculty members.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The *Faculty Handbook* requires that: “All department heads and unit heads shall conduct at least one yearly review before April 30 with each faculty member to evaluate his or her performance and to discuss his or her future development.” Most respondents to the SACS Faculty Survey (77%) agreed that such evaluations do take place. Faculty are also required to have the University’s computerized Teaching Effectiveness Survey administered to at least one class each year (Chapter 4 of *Faculty Handbook*).

Sources of Information

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3, Section 7 and Chapter 4, Section 4

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results, Faculty Survey

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm

The evaluation **must** include a statement of the criteria against which the performance of each faculty member will be measured. The criteria **must** be consistent with the purpose and goals of the institution and be made known to all concerned.

Auburn University is in compliance.

55% of respondents to the SACS Faculty Survey agreed that the criteria for annual faculty evaluation in their Departments are clearly stated. Respondents to the SACS Department Heads and Chairs Survey were more positive in their assessment. 88% of Heads and Chairs agreed that the criteria for annual faculty evaluations were clearly stated; no one disagreed. However, there is some cause for concern that a substantial minority of faculty did not believe that criteria for annual evaluation are clearly stated.

For faculty seeking tenure and/or promotion, the criteria for evaluation are described in detail in Chapter 3 of the *Faculty Handbook*. These criteria are clearly consistent with the University’s missions of instruction, research, and outreach/service.

Suggestion 4-33:

The Steering Committee suggest that policies be adopted to ensure that Department Heads and Chairs clearly state, and in writing, the criteria for annual faculty performance evaluation. These criteria should be distributed to faculty members at the beginning of the academic year.

Sources of Information

Documents

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results,

Department Heads and Chairs Survey

Websites

Faculty Handbook

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results, Faculty Survey

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm



The institution **must** demonstrate that it uses the results of this evaluation for improvement of the faculty and its educational program.

Auburn University is in compliance.

The evaluation process described in the *Faculty Handbook* includes the requirement that Department Heads and Chairs meet annually with faculty members to discuss ways of improving faculty performance. 44% of respondents to the SACS Faculty Survey agreed that the annual performance evaluation contributes to their professional development. Only 28% disagreed, while 27% expressed no opinion.

Sources of Information

Websites

Faculty Handbook, Chapter 3, Section 7

<http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/handbook.html>

SACS Reaffirmation and Accreditation, Surveys and Results, Faculty Survey

http://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/sacs/2002_sacs/survey.htm

4.9

4.9 Consortial Relationships and Contractual Agreements



A member institution which enters into consortial relationships or contractual agreements **must** have sufficient control of relationships/agreements so as to maintain compliance with the *Criteria* when offering educational programs through such arrangements. All consortia and contracts **must** be evaluated regularly.

If an institution plans to participate in consortial relationships or enter into contractual agreements for educational programs, it **must** follow reporting policies and procedures related to substantive change.

Auburn University is in compliance. See narrative and documentation cited below.

4.9.1

4.9.1 Consortial Relationships



A member institution seeking to participate in a consortium degree or certificate program **must** enter into such a relationship only with regionally accredited institutions offering degrees or certificates

at the same level. Exceptions **must** be approved by the Commission in advance of the formation of or participation in the consortium.

The member institution **must** maintain the quality of all courses/programs offered through the consortium. Educational courses/programs offered through a consortial relationship **must** be related to the teaching purpose of the institution and comply with the *Criteria*.

Auburn University is in compliance.

It is a member institution of the Dauphin Island Sea Lab (DISL) and the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL).

The DISL serves the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium (MESC) with facilities located on Dauphin Island, Alabama. The Consortium was founded in 1972 by Alabama's legislature to maximize the marine science capabilities of Alabama institutions and to minimize duplication of programs. MESC is comprised of 22 Alabama colleges and universities and other member institutions outside Alabama.

Both undergraduate and graduate courses are offered at the DISL. Students from DISL member schools register for DISL classes at their respective institutions and receive academic credit from their home institutions. Auburn University has approved the following courses to be taken at the DISL site:

- BIOL 2425 Marine Biology (4 hrs)
- BIOL 3075 Introduction to Oceanography (4 hrs)
- BIOL 4515 Marine Invertebrate Zoology (4 hrs)
- BIOL 4525 Dolphins and Whales (2 hrs)
- BIOL 4535 Coastal Zone Management (2 hrs)
- BIOL 4545 Coastal Ornithology (4 hrs)
- BIOL 4565 Marine Vertebrate Zoology (4 hrs)
- BIOL 4575 Marine Ecology (4 hrs)
- BIOL 4970 Coral Reef Ecology (4 hrs)
- BIOL 4970 Introduction to Neurobiology (4 hrs)
- BIOL 4970 Coastal Birds of Alabama (4 hrs)
- BIOL 6425 Marine Botany (4 hrs)
- BIOL 6455 Marsh Ecology (4 hrs)
- BIOL 6525 Marine Behavioral Ecology (4 hrs)
- FISH 4715 Commercial Marine Fisheries of Alabama (2 hrs)
- FISH 6215 Marine Aquaculture (2 hrs)
- FISH 6425 Marine Fish Diseases (3 hrs)
- FISH 7235 Marine Analytical Instrumentation (3 hrs)
- FISH 7755 Biological Oceanography (3 hrs)
- GEOL 1200 Marine Technical Methods (2 hrs)
- GEOL 1220 Coastal Climatology (2 hrs)

Program quality is assured through the Program Committee Members. Each member institution appoints one faculty member to serve as a liaison between the member institution and the Sea Lab. These members advise the Sea Lab's Director on planning and implementing educational programs. New courses are offered on a three-year probationary basis before they are assigned course numbers and placed in the course listings on a permanent basis. If a new instructor takes over an existing course, the instructor's curriculum vita and teaching experience are reviewed by the Program Committee to ensure that they are acceptable. Additionally, program quality is addressed by each institution's academic procedures. At Auburn University, this procedure requires that all courses taken

by Auburn students be approved by the University Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Council, if appropriate.

The Gulf Coast Research Laboratory is located in Ocean Springs, Mississippi. Auburn University is an affiliate institution of the GCRL. Courses offered at the GCRL have been approved by the University of Southern Mississippi. Courses are listed in the individual member institution's academic catalogs. Course credits earned by students while studying at GCRL are transferred back to member institutions. Auburn University has approved the following courses to be taken at the GCRL site:

BIOL 2015 Marine Science I: Oceanography (5 hrs)
BIOL 2415 Marine Science II: Marine Biology (5 hrs)
BIOL 2445 Coastal Ecology for Teachers (4 hrs)
BIOL 4055 Marine Science for Teachers (3 hrs)
BIOL 4395 Marine Faunistic Ecology (5 hrs)
BIOL 4425 Marine Fisheries Management (4 hrs)
BIOL 4435 Special Topics in Marine Science (1-6 hrs)
BIOL 4445 Special Problems in Marine Science (1-6 hrs)
BIOL 4465 Parasites of Marine Animals (6 hrs)
BIOL 4475 Marine Ichthyology (6 hrs)
BIOL 4485 Marine Ecology (5 hrs)
BIOL 4495 Comparative Histology of Marine Organisms (6 hrs)
BIOL 6375 Marine Science for Elementary School Teachers (3 hrs)
FISH 6725 Marine Ichthyology (6 hrs)
FISH 6735 Principles of Marine Aquaculture (6 hrs)
FISH 6745 Marine Fisheries Management (4 hrs)

Program quality is assured through review of courses by the University Curriculum Committee. Additionally, the courses listed complete a similar institutional review process by the University of Southern Mississippi, a SACS-accredited institution.

Sources of Information

Document

Articles of Incorporation of the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium

Interview

Raymond Henry, Alumni Professor, Biological Sciences, August 21, 2002

Websites

College of Marine Science, Admissions, University of Mississippi

<http://www.coms.usm.edu/GCRL/academic/admissio.htm>

Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, 139-41, 174-75, 182

http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin

4.9.2 Contractual Agreements

4.9.2

Educational services and programs offered through a contractual agreement with another institution or organization **must** support the purpose of the institution. The member institution **must** maintain the quality of programs/courses offered through the contract and ensure ongoing compliance with the *Criteria*.

If an institution enters into a teach-out agreement with another institution, it **must** submit the agreement to the Commission for approval.

Auburn University does not have teach-out agreements with other institutions; therefore, this **must** statement is not applicable to the University.

