

EXPLORATORY FRESHMAN ADMISSION AND CONDITIONAL ADMISSION

Two Proposals from the Academic Standards
Committee, October 2014

Genesis of the Proposals & Proposal Development Process

- The 2013-2018 Auburn University Strategic Plan establishes promoting academic success as its first priority. It includes the following:
 - ▣ Strategic Goal 1.D: “Develop a Freshman Advising Center for Undecided Students.”
 - ▣ Strategic Commitment B.2: “Revise first-year orientation programs to emphasize not only academic success, but also career and professional readiness.”
- During 2013-2014 *ad hoc* groups developed plans in response to both Strategic Plan objectives.

Ad Hoc Committee Memberships

Ad Hoc Freshman Advising Center Committee

Melissa Adams, Incoming Chair, Advisors Caucus
Melissa Baumann, Asst. Provost for Undergraduate
Studies & Director of the Honors College (Chair)
Nancy Bernard, Director, Auburn University Career
Center
Jim Carroll, Architect, Facilities
Bob Karcher, Assistant Dean, Samuel Ginn College
of Engineering
Susan Hubbard, Chair, University Undergraduate
Advising Council
Kathryn Jarvis, Director, Academic Support
Joni Lakin, Assistant Professor, EFLT
Patrick Michael, Student Government Association
Bret Smith, Associate Dean, College of Architecture
Ruthanna Spears, First Year Experience Office

Ad Hoc Orientation Review Committee

Mark Armstrong, First-Year Experience Office
Nancy Bernard, Auburn University Career Center
Lady Cox, Student Affairs
Tracy Donald, office of Accessibility
Jeremy Downes, English Department
Andy Gillespie, Office of International Programs
Beth Guertal, Crop, Soil, and Environmental
Science
Kathryn Jarvis, Academic Support
Katie Lackey, Advisors Caucus
Will McManus, SGA
Stacey Nickson, Biggio Center
Paul Patterson, College of Agriculture
Constance Relihan, Associate Provost for
Undergraduate Studies (chair)
Susan Villaume, College of Education
Matthew Cox, Graduate Intern

Genesis of the Proposals & Proposal Development Process

- The *ad hoc* committees developed recommendations, submitted to the Provost, in Spring 2014.
- Specific proposals relating to Exploratory and Conditional Admission were then prepared and submitted to the Academic Standards Committee.
- The proposals were discussed, revised, and approved unanimously by the Academic Standards Committee.
- The proposals were submitted to the Senate Steering Committee where they were discussed, further revised, and recommended for consideration by the full Senate.
- *(Other recommendations—such as to create a “Finish in Four” program, to move more orientation materials online, to increase just in time orientation opportunities for all students, etc.— are still being studied.)*

Senate Committee Reviews

Academic Standards Committee

Sabit Adanur, Polymer & Fiber Engineering
Wayne Alderman, Dean of Enrollment Services
Nadine P. Ellero, Library
Xing Fang, Civil Engineering (Chair)
Xing Ping Hu, Entomology & Plant Pathology
Lisa Kensler, Educational Foundations &
Leadership Technology
Brian Parr, Curriculum & Teaching
Amysue Reilly, Special Ed., Rehabilitation, &
Counseling
Paula Peek, Consumer Affairs
Constance Relihan, Associate Provost for
Undergraduate Studies
Margaret Ross, Educational Foundations &
Leadership Technology

Senate Steering Committee

Michael Baginski, Electrical &
Computer Engineering
Timothy Boosinger, Provost
Gisela Buschle-Diller, Polymer & Fiber
Engineering, Senate Secretary
Larry Crowley, Civil Engineering, Immediate
Senate Past Chair
Patricia Duffy, Ag Economics & Rural Sociology,
Senate Chair
Emily Myers, Sociology
Laura Plexico, Communication Disorders, Senate
Secretary-elect
Larry Teeter, Senate Chair-elect, Forestry & Wildlife
Science
Sara Wolf, Educational Foundations &
Leadership Technology
Kevin E. Yost, Finance

Recommended Policy:

Exploratory Freshman Admission

*Individuals applying to Auburn as first-time College students would be eligible to select “Exploratory” as a major option on their Auburn application for admission form. Exploratory students would not be aligned with an existing College/School, but would exist within a unit reporting to the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies. Advising for these students would be assigned to the Freshman Advising Center, where they would be provided with intensive advising and career counseling provided by a cadre of advisors cross-trained in the rudiments of all majors on campus. Student-to-advisor ratios must be appropriate to meet these requirements. **Students would be required to select a college/major and transition into a College or School by the time they have completed two semesters at Auburn.***

Rationale: Exploratory Freshman Admission

- 20% of incoming freshmen change their major *before* they attend Camp War Eagle
- Many students change their major 3-4 times.
- The longer it takes a student to find the right major, the longer it takes a student to graduate.
- Helping students find the right major in their first year should decrease the length of time students need to complete their undergraduate degree, thereby reducing student cost.
- Institutions permitting exploratory admission: Purdue, Florida State, Virginia Tech, Mississippi State, Georgia State, Indiana State
- Moving freshmen who are uncertain about their major out of colleges will permit college-level advisors to focus on students committed to their majors and lower advising ratios in the colleges.

Practicalities: Exploratory Freshman Admission

- Exploratory Freshman & the Freshman Advising Center would not be housed in an existing College (this would prevent steering students toward particular majors), they would be in a unit that reports to the Provost
- “Undeclared CLA” and “Undeclared COSAM” would still be appropriate for many students
- The student to advisor ratio would be capped at 150:1; a career counselor would also be on the staff of the Center
- Students would undergo an individualized regimen of advising sessions and assignments, which would begin at CWE
- No student would be permitted to remain Exploratory after two semesters; no transfer student would be permitted to enroll as an Exploratory Student
- Auburn would begin admitting Exploratory students for Fall 2016 (the Freshman Advising Center will begin in a pilot fashion Fall 2015 with incoming students who opt to be advised in the Center)
- The location for the Freshman Advising Center is still being determined.
- This proposal has the support of the Admissions Office.

Recommended Policy:

Conditional Admission

Applicants who are first-time freshmen, and graduates of an accredited high school, but who do not qualify for admission because of inadequate SAT or ACT scores or high school records, but who do meet the first-time freshman curriculum requirements, may be admitted to Auburn University on a conditional basis.

Students who are admitted on a conditional basis are given an opportunity to demonstrate that they can perform college-level work and can reasonably be expected to make progress toward a degree; they may be required to successfully complete a summer “bridge” or other program prior to enrolling in their first fall or spring semester at Auburn. Applicants must demonstrate their ability to perform at the college level by obtaining an overall “C” grade point average (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) in 15 college credit hours. Upon completion of at least 15 college credit hours of approved courses at Auburn University with a grade point average of at least 2.0, students admitted conditionally will be in academic good standing at the University.

Rationale: Conditional Admission

- Students in this category would clearly know the performance levels needed to remain at Auburn after their first fall semester.
- The proposal would help us “clear a pathway to student success” as called for in the Strategic Plan by providing a more accurate category of admission for some students Auburn is already admitting.
- Students who begin college at a 4-year university are more likely to complete a bachelor’s degree than those that begin at a two-year school.
- Institutions with Conditional Admission policies: Texas A&M University, Clemson University, University of Maryland, Portland State University
- Conditional Admission will also be of benefit as we increase our number of international undergraduate students.
- This proposal would permit Auburn to support and monitor a group of students who may need some additional resources to help them make the transition to success at Auburn.

Practicalities: Conditional Admission

- Conditional Admission would only be available to first-time college applicants, not to transfer students.
- Conditionally admitted students could enroll in any major available to students in good standing; there is no connection between this proposal and the Exploratory proposal
- The “bridge program” for Conditional Admission students would build upon successful bridge programs already in place in Athletics, Engineering, COSAM, and the Office of Multicultural Affairs. It would continue the support and community-building structures through the fall semester.
- Academic support and Student Affairs would work together to develop and implement the bridge program and support structures for these students.
- This proposal has the support of the Admissions Office.
- No predetermined number of students will be admitted into this category; the intention is not to admit a larger number of additional students.
- The intention is to provide the support needed to increase our yield of students who, because of their academic profile, may be anxious about their ability to succeed at Auburn.

Recommended Action: Approve both recommendations in November

Exploratory Admission

- ❑ Permits first-time college students to enter Auburn without declaring a major or a college
- ❑ Provides advising for these students in a free-standing Freshman Advising Center
- ❑ Requires Exploratory students to select a college (if not a specific major within that college) by the end of their second semester of enrollment

Conditional Admission

- ❑ Permits some first-time college applicants who nearly meet Auburn's admissions criteria to have their full admission into Auburn linked to their successful completion of a summer and fall academic and college transition program