A Message from the Director

Dear Auburn Health Services Administration alumni, students and friends,

I am pleased to welcome you to the maiden edition newsletter of the Auburn HADM Program. With healthcare facing unprecedented changes, this is a very important time for our field. To ensure that our students are truly prepared for the health care environment of the future, our faculty have been making several changes to our program and curriculum, and we want you all to share in the excitement.

Among these changes is the addition of two new HADM faculty members, Ms. Jennifer Johnson and Dr. Cathleen Erwin. Their expertise has enhanced the program’s level of teaching and research, and has opened up several new opportunities for our students. With the input of our Advisory Council, alumni, and students, we have also developed a new HADM curriculum that went into effect in Fall 2010.

We hope that this newsletter will help you stay connected with the HADM program and keep you up-to-date as we move the program forward towards becoming the regional leader in undergraduate Health Services Administration education. I invite you all to become actively involved as our program continues to advance. Everyone who has been a part of the HADM program knows the pride and strength that comes from moving with a common purpose toward a common goal.

Welcome, Dr. Cathleen Erwin!

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Cathleen Erwin, the newest member of the Health Administration faculty! She holds a PhD in Administration-Health Services from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, an M.B.A. from Auburn University Montgomery and a B.A. in theatre from Auburn University. Prior to joining the faculty at Auburn, Dr. Erwin spent more than twenty-five years working in the fields of administration, development, public relations and communications for nonprofit health care, higher education and arts organizations.

Dr. Erwin is currently teaching the new Gateway to Health Administration course and the new Health Information Technology course in the Health Administration curriculum. We are overjoyed to have her in our department and program!

Students attend ACHE Luncheon in Birmingham with Dr. Cathleen Erwin (far left).
Program and Student News

HHAO Involves Students in the Community

The student organization for our program has been very active this past year, participating in two community service projects. Last Spring, they covered a wagon in Auburn decorations—complete with Coach Chizik’s signature—and presented it to Children’s Hospital in Birmingham. The wagons are used to transport children within the hospital.

Students also partnered with IMPACT, a service organization on campus, to host a Luau at Oak Park Retirement Community in Auburn. The students decorated and dressed in their best Hawaiian attire, to dance, enjoy music, and food with the residents. It was a memorable experience for all.

In addition to their service activities, HHAO hosts a guest speaker on campus each month. Recently, these speakers have included Danne Howard, Lobbyist for the Alabama Hospital Association; Mindy Fisher, Director of Medical

HADM Program Revitalizes Curriculum

The Health Administration program now has a new, enriched curriculum that we began implementing in Fall 2010. This new course of study was developed after surveying students, alumni, and professionals to discover ways to make the program more current. Building upon the strengths and foundations of our former curriculum, we have also added new classes that will make students more competitive and better prepared for graduate school and the job market.

Two primary changes distinguish the new course of study: First, a business minor is now part of the regular curriculum. Second, students are now required to complete a semester-long internship—a valuable experience that was optional in the past. Along with the newly-added requirements of business writing and an online medical terminology class, these changes will better prepare our students for the workforce. A final, exciting addition is the program’s first study abroad course, offered in collaboration with the College of Nursing. This class is on the Spanish health care system and takes place in Pamplona Spain. It will help broaden our students’ horizons academically and culturally.

Monthly Luncheon with Local MGMA

In addition to the Alabama chapter’s conference in Birmingham, Health Administration students have the opportunity to attend monthly luncheons with the local chapter of MGMA, Alabama—East, Inc. They are encouraged to join as often as their class schedules allow, and are always eager for the chance to connect with professionals in their field.
HADM Partners with AIT Program

Auburn’s Health Administration Program recently announced a new partnership with the Administrator-in-Training Program of the Alabama Board of Examiners for Nursing Home Administrators. Auburn HADM graduates will now be able to sit for the National Nursing Home Administrator’s Licensing Exam directly after graduation, instead of undergoing 500 hours of on-the-job training before taking the exam. To qualify, students must first take both of the HADM program’s long-term care classes. Their semester-long internship, which is required under the new curriculum, may then replace these 500 hours of job experience as long as the internship is with an approved preceptor in Alabama. Our graduates will benefit greatly from the ability to enter the industry directly after graduation. Auburn is one of three schools in Alabama to meet the rigorous standards of the AIT program, and we are very proud to have this option available to our students.

Students Attend UAB Graduate School Open House

Health Administration students attended an open house at the University of Alabama at Birmingham last semester to explore the dual program offered at UAB School of Public Health: a Master’s in Health Administration and an MBA. Along with undergraduates from other schools, our students toured UAB Hospital and Children’s Hospital, spoke with current students in the Master’s program over lunch, and learned more about their options for continuing their education in this field.

Internship Opportunities

Now that our students are required to complete an internship, the Health Administration program is establishing even more relationships with internship sites both in- and out-of-state. There are 11 students interning in Spring 2011 and 25 in Summer 2011.

Among others, we are happy to have rekindled our relationship with the Alabama Department of Public Health in Montgomery, AL, where we have a student working in the Cancer Prevention Department; and MedxSYS in Alabaster, AL, where two students will be working over the summer. We have also established new internships with Baptist Health System, Montgomery, AL; Southern Orthopaedic Surgeons in Montgomery, AL; Piedmont Heart Institute in Atlanta, GA; and Columbus Regional Health System in Columbus, GA.

We are grateful to our new supporters and all our faithful administrators who support us every year. You are contributing to the success of the HADM program and to the future success of our students.

Virtual Dementia Tour

In the Fall semester, the Long Term Care Policy class had the honor of attending the Virtual Dementia Tour, a unique experience hosted by the Area Agency on Aging. The Virtual Dementia Tour allows people to experience dementia, simulating its physical and cognitive symptoms with things like yellow-tinted goggles, taped-together fingers, and headphones that play a constant soundtrack of confusing noises. Listening to a lecture on dementia cannot compare to seeing and experiencing it firsthand. Our students walked away with a better understanding of the health implications of dementia and a greater appreciation for both the patients and caregivers affected by it. Thank you to Maria Davis, Long Term Care Ombudsman, for hosting our students!
Student Accomplishments

Capstone Project of the Year Awards

The Spring 2010 Capstone Award went to the Meadowbrook Geriatric Wellness Center, LLC. group members: Mary Alice McElheney, Rachel Morgan, Michelle Ragsdale, Larke Roney, Kelsi Shrout, and Elizabeth Wood. These students demonstrated initiative, creativity, and above all knowledge of the industry. The facility offered four main programs: Lifestyle Enrichment Activities, Mental Health, Nutrition, and Fitness. Great Job!

The Fall 2010 Capstone Award went to the Plains Primary Care, LLC. group members: Ariel Anderson, Taylor Chastain, Emily Stewart, Andy Roberts and Sydney Watkins. These students helped develop a state-of-the-art primary care facility incorporating e-health, health care information technology, and new phase appointment systems. Their innovative design, geared toward younger generations, showed a keen understanding of the future of health care. Congratulations!

Intern of the Semester Award

The MGMA Intern of the Semester Award, Spring 2010 award recipient was Laura Snapp. She completed her internship with the American College of Rheumatology in Atlanta, GA, and after graduation she continued working with the organization as a Practice Management Specialist.

The MGMA Intern of the Semester, Summer 2010, was Wendy Norred. She completed her internship with Baptist Health in Montgomery, AL, working with the COO/CNO for Baptist South. During Wendy's internship, she had the opportunity to assist in the hospital’s development of a new department.

Advisory Board Academic Achievement Award

The Advisory Board Academic Achievement Award for 2010 was awarded to Ensley Fleming, who is now working for Johns Hopkins University as a Financial Analyst.

Most Distinguished Student Award

The Southern Orthopedics Most Distinguished Student Award for 2010 was awarded to Brandon O’Ree. Brandon, the former President of HHAO, is a well-rounded and very accomplished student.

HA Honorary Society

Congratulations to our nine new inductees to Epislon Phi Delta, the Health Administration Honorary Society. Since our chapter began in 2004, we have inducted over 40 students.
Alumni Updates

Read for updates about your fellow alumni and their accomplishments!

Melissa Britton now works with the Pediatric Case & Utilization Management at Vanderbilt Children's Hospital.

Mark Didier is now Clinic Administrator at Southern Orthopedic Surgeons.

Ensley Fleming is now a Budget Analyst for the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

Wyman Hamilton is now the South East Regional Director of Brookdale Senior Living.

Courtney Lasiter is now Administrative Officer of the Credentialing & Privileging Program at the VA Hospital in Birmingham.

John Melton is now Administrative Manager of Outpatient Clinics at Mt. Sinai Hospital in Queens, NY.

Shilpa Patel is now a Specialist in the Patient-Centered Quality Division of the American College of Cardiology.

Becky Patterson is now Health Care Analytics Operations Manager at Alabama Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

Sean Tinnery is now President of St. Vincent Rural Hospital Operations.

Thank you to all of our alumni who get involved and provide internship opportunities, graduate school coaching, lectures, awards, job connections, frequent flyer miles, and so much more!

Get Involved!

Graduates, friends and current students can find many ways to support the Health Services Administration program and be an active part of the HADM family throughout their lives.

- **Join** us on campus as a guest speaker or lecturer.
- **Offer** valuable internship opportunities to current students.
- **Support** program development and current students through designated giving to the Health Services Administration program.
- **Mentor** our current students as they prepare for graduate school.
- **Sponsor** student awards and contribute to scholarship funds.
- **Network** with program graduates in your area or in your field of work.
- **Donate** frequent flyer miles to students for the ACHE conference.

For more information on how to get involved with the HADM program, please contact:

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Join our Facebook group to read program news, keep in touch with faculty and graduates, find job opportunities, and learn about events!