



# EDITORIAL STYLE GUIDE



AUBURN

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	Page 2
Writing Style	Page 3
News Stories Template	Page 15
Auburn News and Auburn Connection	Page 19
Expert Answers Template	Page 20
Media Advisory Template	Page 23
Media Events Guidance	Page 26
Photos and Captions	Page 28
Video	Page 29
Resources	Page 31

*(v4\_January 2024)*

# Introduction

The Office of Communications and Marketing hopes you will find this style guide helpful as you prepare news releases, feature stories and short announcements for external and internal communications. You'll also find information about photography and videography to accompany your text, as well as media event procedures.

This style guide is meant to bring consistency to everything written for and about Auburn University. Following these standards will promote uniformity and clarity and strengthen the effectiveness of communications.

The Office of Marketing and Communications follows "The Associated Press Stylebook," with some exceptions unique to the campus. For example, AP style says to lowercase family when referring to a particular family, such as the Hare family, but under Auburn's style guide, family is capitalized when, and only when, referring to the Auburn Family.

For questions not answered in this guide, contact the Office of Communications and Marketing at 334-844-9999. Additional contact information is located at the end of this style guide.

# Writing Style

## Academia

In referring to academic life in general, use the term “academia” rather than “academe” or “the academy.”

## Academic Degrees

Use an apostrophe in bachelor’s degree or master’s degree. There is no possessive in Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts or an associate degree.

Master of Business Administration or MBA is acceptable on first reference.

Majors after the degree are lowercase – Bachelor of Science in zoology or bachelor’s degree in psychology – unless they contain a formal noun, such as English or French. (See Majors, Minors and Courses)

Use “doctorate” or “doctoral degree,” not “doctorate degree” or Ph.D. Doctorate is a noun. Juris doctor also is a noun – no need to add the word “degree.”

## Academic Programs

Capitalize the entire name of formal programs, except the word program. Example: Industrial Design program.

## Advisor

Use “advisor” rather than “adviser.”

## Alumni, Alumnus, Alumna, Alumnae and Alum

“Alumni” refers to a group – consisting of men and women – that has graduated. Use “alumnus” when referring to a man; the plural is “alumni.” Use “alumna” for a woman; the plural is “alumnae.”

“Alum,” which applies to either a man or woman, should not be used for external media due to sounding too informal.

## **Auburn Names**

**AU** - Do not substitute AU for Auburn in the middle of a formal name. Example: Auburn University Libraries, instead of AU Libraries.

**Auburn** - It is acceptable to say "Auburn" for "Auburn University" on second reference. University isn't needed on second reference.

**Auburn Creed** - Capitalize each word. Lowercase "creed" if used alone.

**Auburn Family** - Capitalize each word.

**Auburn Oaks at Toomer's Corner** - Do not use Toomer's Oaks.

**Auburn spirit** - Do not capitalize "spirit."

**Auburn sports teams** - Lowercase the sport and use the word "team." Example: "The men's basketball team will play Georgia." Do not write "Auburn Basketball will play Georgia."

## **Academic Subjects**

Lowercase the subject unless it is a formal noun. Examples: He is a professor of history. She is a professor of English. (See University, College, Department and Office)

## **Acronyms**

Acronyms aren't all bad, but it is best to avoid excessive use of them as it may confuse readers. Example of what not to do: "OCM has been informed that HCOP had a water leak, but COSAM, CLA and COE were unaffected."

We suggest a number of acronyms in this guide, but for second reference and sparse use. If an acronym isn't necessary for a second reference, don't offer one. Example: If the Office of Communications and Marketing isn't referred to again, I don't need to introduce it as (OCM) or use OCM later in the story.

To avoid excessive use of acronyms, use the full college, department, campus unit or organization name on first reference. Use "the college", "the department," "the office" or "the organization" on subsequent references if you are on the verge of overusing an acronym.

Example: In a story about the Harrison College of Pharmacy, if you plan to refer to the college throughout the story, include (HCOP) after the first reference and then use "HCOP" or "college" on subsequent references.

Acronyms are acceptable on second reference, if they are explained using parentheses. Acronyms aren't necessary if there is no second reference.

Office of Information Technology (OIT)  
Student Government Association (SGA)

"The Student Government Association (SGA) will host a program from the Office of Information Technology (OIT). The SGA and OIT are collaborating to educate students about cybersecurity."

Use the AP Stylebook for acceptable acronyms on first use, such as NASA and FDA.

### **Buildings, Places and Names Often Mislabeled**

Watch for misspelled or mislabeled buildings, places and names. Note these correct listings:

**Academic Classroom and Laboratory Complex** - ACLC is appropriate on second reference.

**Beard-Eaves-Memorial Coliseum** - Note the hyphens.

**Brown-Kopel Engineering Student Achievement Center** - Brown-Kopel or engineering student achievement center on second reference.

**Campus green** - The former "green space" by the Melton Student Center is referred to as the campus green.

**Christopher B. Roberts** - Use full name, with middle initial, of our president on first reference. Roberts on subsequent references.

**College of Sciences and Mathematics** - Note the "s" at the end of "Sciences." This also applies to Health Sciences Sector.

**Concourses** - At Auburn, we have the Haley Concourse, Roosevelt Concourse and Thach Concourse. In these cases, concourse is capitalized.

**Gameday** - One word. Capitalize if used in an official capacity: "The Gameday Committee." Lowercase for other uses: "The fans will have fun on gameday."

**Harold D. Melton Student Center** - Melton Student Center or student center on second reference.

**Horton-Hardgrave Hall** - Note the hyphen.

**The Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center** - This is the formal name with "The" capitalized. It is not the Auburn University Hotel. Do not use the acronym AUHDCC or AUHCC. Use the lowercased "hotel" on second reference.

**The Jule Collins Smith Museum of Fine Art** - Her name is Jule (like Jewel), not Julie or Jules. On second reference, use JCSM or "the museum."

**Ralph Brown Draughon Library** - Draughon Library on second reference. RBD is only for internal use.

**Shelby Center for Engineering Technology** - Shelby Center on second reference.

**Telfair Peet Theatre** - Note the British spelling of "theatre;" Telfair Peet or theatre on second reference.

**The Tony and Libba Rane Culinary Science Center** - No 's' on Science; Rane Culinary Science Center on second reference. Please avoid using Rane Center.

### **Choral Groups**

Only capitalize Auburn University Singers, which is a formal name. Do not capitalize men's chorus, women's chorus, etc.

### **Cities and States**

Always spell out states.

List the state with all cities and towns on first reference. Example: "The scholarship winner is from Anniston, Alabama." (See the AP Stylebook for cities that stand alone.)

*Note the use of commas:*

"The Auburn Alumni Association will meet in Columbus, Georgia, for the chapter meeting."

## Colleges at Auburn

College of Agriculture - agriculture or ag on second reference  
College of Architecture, Design and Construction - CADC for an acronym  
Raymond J. Harbert College of Business - Harbert or business on second reference  
College of Education - education on second reference  
Samuel Ginn College of Engineering - Ginn College of Engineering, engineering on second reference  
College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment - CFWE for an acronym  
Graduate School - grad school is acceptable on second reference  
College of Human Sciences - CHS for an acronym  
College of Liberal Arts - CLA for an acronym  
College of Nursing - CON for an acronym  
Harrison College of Pharmacy - HCOP for an acronym  
College of Sciences and Mathematics - note the 's' in Sciences; COSAM for an acronym  
College of Veterinary Medicine - veterinary medicine or vet med on second reference; CVM for an acronym; avoiding using vet school.

*Note:* There are no longer standalone schools at Auburn. There are schools located within some colleges, such as the School of Kinesiology in the College of Education.

## Commas

Do not use a comma before the word "and" in a series. "Auburn's mission is instruction, research and outreach."

Do not use a comma before or after "Inc." or "Jr." or similar. "Auburn University is partnering with Briggs and Stratton Inc. on the project." "Joe Smith Jr. will be the guest speaker."

\*\*If you need to justify this decision to your academics, tell them there is a difference in AP and APA styles.

## Copyright© and Trademark™ Symbols

Do not use the copyright symbol, ©, or the trademark symbol, ™, in news text. Use the words instead if they are needed.

## **Died vs. Passed Away**

"Passed away" is acceptable for internal university communications and college publications. "Died" is preferred for external news releases.

## **Editorializing Words**

Do not use editorializing words, such as "best," "beautiful," etc., unless they are in quotes or are attributed to someone.

## **Headlines**

Avoid using "to host," "to present," "to speak," etc. Use "hosting," "presenting" and "speaking." Example: Auburn History Club hosting fish fry April 10.

Use single quotes, not double quotes, in headlines or sub-headers. Example: Auburn professor speaking on 'Gone with the Wind' May 3

Be sure "Auburn University" is used in the headline for external news releases. Auburn is OK for internal purposes.

Use sentence case.

Correct: Auburn University researcher discovers new species of fish

Incorrect: Auburn University Researcher Discovers New Species of Fish

Do not use "the," "and" or "are" in headlines unless they are a part of the official name, such as The Hotel at Auburn University and Dixon Conference Center.

Headlines should be no longer than eight words. Six words or fewer is ideal.

Do not include punctuation in headlines. (No exclamation points!)

As a general rule, names should be avoided in a headline as the greater impact of a story is what was accomplished or determined and not by whom. Removing names also helps shorten the headline. Example: "*Psychology Professor John Doe says cognitive behavioral therapy is problematic*" could be rewritten as "*Auburn University psychologist: cognitive behavioral therapy problematic*"

Consider your audience. If the story is intended for a general audience, it should be less specific and more overarching in theme.



## **Institutions**

When referencing another institution, refer to the institution's website for the formal name. Example: For "The Ohio State University," the word "The" is capped.

In Alabama, we have the University of Alabama (UA), Alabama A&M University (The ampersand is acceptable here), Alabama State University (ASU), University of North Alabama (UNA), University of South Alabama (USA), University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), Auburn University at Montgomery (AUM), The University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH), et. al.

## **Majors, Minors and Courses**

Lowercase majors and minors unless they contain a formal noun. Example: "He has a degree in history, but she has a degree in English."

Use title case for courses. Example: "He is taking the course, Introduction to Animal Sciences, this semester." Courses are not capitalized in a general usage. "She learned a great deal from the psychology class." (See University, College, Department and Office)

## **Numbers**

In general, spell out the numbers one through nine. Use figures for 10 and above. However, use figures for percentages, measurements, a person's age and other exceptions noted in the AP Stylebook. Examples: 5%, 5 yards, 3 years old. (See "numerals" in the AP Stylebook)

Note: The girl is 3 years old, but she is a 3-year-old girl.

Spell out second, third, etc., as in "third annual." It's not first annual, but inaugural. If it is 10 or above, use the number, i.e., "11th annual." Note: Do not use superscript such as 14<sup>th</sup>. The script should be even with the number.

## **Punctuation**

Use commas or em dashes to separate asides within a sentence.

Correct: "The program's objectives, including teaching, research and outreach, are part of the university's mission." "The program's objectives – teaching, research and outreach – are part of the university's mission." Incorrect: "The program's objectives (teaching, research and outreach) are part of the university's mission."

Note: Use brackets in quotes if you need to add to what the person said. "We were happy the [Auburn] team won the game," Smith said.

Note: Use spaces before and after the em dashes. This is a 2023 OCM policy reversal.

See the sections labeled "Acronyms," "Phone Numbers" and "Quotes."

### **Phone Numbers**

Use this format: 334-844-9999. Please include the area code in external news releases. For internal news items only, do not include the 334 area code for 844 numbers.

Do not use periods in phone numbers.

### **Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor and Other Titles**

Capitalize title before a name, but not after. Examples: "Professor Bruce Smith" "Linda Jones, an associate professor in the college." On subsequent references, use the last name only. "Smith will continue the study next year."

Capitalize named professorships, including Alumni Professor and Distinguished University Professor, even if the title occurs after the person's name. Use the word "the" before the named professorship. "Pradeep Lall, the John and Anne MacFarlane Professor in Auburn University's Department of Mechanical Engineering, ..."

Or

"Pradeep Lall, the John and Anne MacFarlane Professor in mechanical engineering, ..."

Capitalize professor emeritus before names. Do not capitalize after names.

Do not use "Dr." except for medical doctors, veterinarians and dentists, but not those with Doctor of Pharmacy degrees. You may choose to use Dr. on your sites, but anything submitted to OCM or external-facing items should follow this rule.

Do not put Ph.D. after a name. Do not put professional affiliation acronyms after a name, such as CPA.

Lowercase “fellow” in casual references. Example: “He is a fellow in the Society of Professional Engineers.” For official named fellowships, however, it may be capitalized, such as, “Schweitzer Fellow Wade Berry ...”

For titles after names, lowercase the role, but uppercase the office or unit. Example: Taffye Benson Clayton, associate provost and vice president of Inclusion and Diversity, .... Steve Taylor, senior vice president of Research and Economic Development, ...

### **“For” versus “of” in leadership titles:**

Please check the person’s appropriate title and office name as listed on the university website, beginning with <http://www.auburn.edu/administration/>. Examples: Senior Vice President for Student Affairs Bobby Woodward. If the title follows the name, lowercase senior vice president but capitalize Student Affairs. Example: Bobby Woodward, senior vice president for Student Affairs. If a person’s title does not include an office or division name, then lowercase the title after the name. Example: Preston Sparks, director of university communications services.

## **Quotes**

### **Placement of name and title:**

Place the name of the person being quoted after the first sentence in the quote. “Sentence,” Smith said. “Sentence(s).”

If the person will be identified in the quote, place the title before the name and use capitalization if the title is fairly short. “Sentence,” said Auburn University President Christopher B. Roberts.

If the title is lengthy, place the title after the name and do not use capitalization. “Sentence,” said Vini Nathan, Auburn University provost and vice president for academic affairs.

If the sentence ends with a question mark, do not use a comma before the end quote. Example: “To be or not to be,” said William Shakespeare. “Is that the question?”

### **Brackets:**

Use brackets, not parentheses, if you need to add a word to a quote. “We were happy the [Auburn] team won the game,” Smith said.

Remember, you can create or edit the quote to make it read as you wish. Just be sure to have it approved by the person being quoted.

**Said vs. says:**

Use "said" with direct quotes. "This research will have a tremendous economic impact," Jones said.

Avoid using says with attributed sentences. Example: Jones says the research will have a tremendous economic impact.

**Room Numbers, Auditorium and Ballroom**

Place the room number before the building. Examples: 23 Samford Hall, 2222 Student Center.

Lowercase "auditorium" and "ballroom" unless it is part of the formal name. Examples: Foy Hall auditorium, Student Center ballroom, the John Smith Auditorium.

**Spacing after Periods**

Use one space after periods at the end of sentences. Do not use a space in initials such as U.S. or P.O. Box.

**Seasons and Semesters**

Lowercase seasons and semesters. "The spring semester will begin Jan. 13." "The class will begin in the fall."

**There**

Never start a sentence with "There are" or "There is" or anything similar. Move the subject in front of the verb.

Incorrect: "There will be refreshments at the event."

Correct: "Refreshments will be served at the event."

**Time, Dates and Years****Times:**

Use "a.m." and "p.m." Do not use "am" or "pm" or "AM" or "PM."

Time period: Use a short dash with no spaces. 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; 3-6:30 p.m. Do not use “:00” for times on the hour, i.e., 2 p.m. Use noon and midnight instead of 12 a.m. and 12 p.m.

**Years:**

1995; 1990s - no apostrophe; '95 - note the direction of the apostrophe, which is curved away from the year.

**Dates:**

For exact dates in months use: Jan., Feb., March, April, May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. Example: Jan. 15.

Use numbers only. Do not add letters to the numbers, such as 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th.

For months only, spell out the month.

*Note the placement of commas:*

Use this format listing the day if the date is in the upcoming week: “The event will be held Friday, Jan. 15, in the auditorium.”

Use this format if the date is beyond a week: “The event will be held March 3 in the auditorium.” Do not list the day.

If the date has passed, do not list the day even if it was during the past week: “The event was held March 10.” Using recent or recently is acceptable. “The students attended a recent conference.”

If the date is within a year, do not list the year: “The event will be held July 1.”

If the date was held the previous year (ex. December 2022), do not list the year unless you are past that month. (It is February now, so it’s safe to say December or last December.)

Do not use commas in month and year listings. “He will begin in April 2024.”

**Don’t lead with dates:**

Do not start a story or a paragraph with “On Thursday, Dec. 12, ...” Sometimes, but rarely, it can be used to start sentence within a paragraph. Put the date after verb. “The event will be held Thursday, Dec. 12.”

**Weeklong:**

Write as one word as an adjective.

### **Titled vs. Entitled**

Use "titled" when referring to a title. "The book is titled 'To Kill a Mockingbird.'"

Use "entitled" for a right or privilege. "He feels entitled to receive the prize."

### **United States, U.S. and US**

In the body of a story, both "United States" and "U.S." are acceptable. Use "US" in headlines.

### **University, College, Department and Office**

Capitalize formal names: Auburn University, College of Veterinary Medicine, Department of Pathobiology. Do not capitalize university, college or department if they stand alone.

Use the correct name of departments. Correct: Department of History. Incorrect: History Department. However, it is correct lowercase: "history department."

Note the difference in academic subjects and academic departments. Example: "He earned a degree in anatomy in the Department of Biological Sciences."

Office of the Provost, not Provost's Office. However, it is correct to lowercase on second reference as "provost's office."

Office of the Senior Vice President for Research and Economic Development. On second reference, it can be lowercase as "research office." Avoid the acronym OSVPR.

See the section labeled "Majors, Minors and Courses."

# News Release

## Template

*Feel free to include a short media pitch/summary above the release.*

MM/DD/YR

### **Media contact:**

Name, office or college name, phone number (email address)

**(If needed) Media note:** A downloadable photo of \_\_\_\_\_ is available online.

**(Insert a brief headline here, no more than 10 words, bolded, not to read as a complete sentence) Auburn University \_\_\_\_\_**

AUBURN, Ala. - (This is the lead of the story ... Insert a concise sentence here, summarizing the most important news/message you are wanting to convey)

[Quote from an Auburn representative on the importance of the news].

[Provide more details on the news in a few paragraphs. Further explain the impact of the news here]

[Include any relevant statistics or data to support the news].

[Enter second quote here that supports the previous paragraph and gives an expert view on the news topic you are announcing].

{Close the release with the least important information you want to share. You might also include some sort of contact or call to action here}

###

Auburn University is a nationally ranked land grant institution recognized for its commitment to world-class scholarship, interdisciplinary research with an elite, top-tier Carnegie R1 classification, life-changing outreach with Carnegie's Community Engagement designation and an undergraduate education experience second to none. Auburn is home to more than 30,000 students, and its faculty and research partners collaborate to develop and deliver meaningful scholarship, science and technology-based advancements that meet pressing regional, national and global needs. Auburn's commitment to active student engagement, professional success and public/private partnership drives a growing reputation for outreach and extension that delivers broad economic, health and societal impact.

## Example

7/10/23

### **Media contact:**

Preston Sparks, director of university communication services, 334-844-9999  
([pjs0027@auburn.edu](mailto:pjs0027@auburn.edu))

- **Media note:** Photos to accompany this release are [available for download](#).

### **Auburn University signs deeds for donation of Dye's Crooked Oaks Farm**

AUBURN, Ala. - The [Auburn University Real Estate Foundation \(AUREF\)](#) and the [College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment \(CFWE\)](#) has accepted a gift of 415 acres of [Crooked Oaks Farm](#), legendary Auburn football coach Pat Dye's homestead. Located in Notasulga, the farm property includes Dye's main house, a guest cabin, lodge, pavilion, gazebo, two barns and a nursery office.

"We had been longtime supporters of Auburn University through our charitable trust and in hosting fundraising events, and the timing was right to make the gift," said Nancy McDonald, Dye's longtime partner and retired nursing educator at Auburn University at Montgomery.

AUREF is holding the gift from the Dye/McDonald Trust and McDonald on behalf of the university and the college. The college plans to continue its operations as an event venue, while expanding its use for student instruction and community outreach.

"We both knew we would donate the farm to the College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment and seeing the work CFWE leaders have done since accepting the proposal, I could not be more confident that the land will be valued and held to the standard Pat and I always wanted to see," McDonald said. "I feel his spirit in this, and I know what's happening is something he would be proud of."

Pat Dye Jr. added, "given everything that Auburn has done for dad and our family, he would be thrilled to know that Auburn will be great stewards of his beloved farm, hopefully for many generations."

Dye began developing the property in 1998 and continued to improve all aspects of the land until his death in 2020. Ponds, pastures and woodlands contain numerous Japanese Maples, azaleas, camellias, native azaleas, boxwoods, gardenias, magnolias, oaks, pines, beeches, river birches and firs. Included in the area adjacent to the nursery is a two-acre retreat of walking paths along a stream with falls and pools winding among 200 mature Japanese Maple specimen trees of 71 Japanese Maple cultivars.

When McDonald retired and moved to Crooked Oaks in 2004, the couple worked together on the farm and continued its development into a beautiful retreat and sanctuary for wildlife and rescued dogs, cats, donkeys and horses.



"To me, living on this place is like living in paradise," Dye wrote of Crooked Oaks in his 2014 book, "After the Arena." "The good Lord created it and then I just put a few touches on it so I can enjoy it and appreciate it, because no one can paint a picture like Mother Nature."

When not in use for private events, leaders within the CFWE plan to conduct educational programs and other activities at the farm.

"This incredible gift will have a tremendous impact on the college, our students and our academic programs," said Janaki R.R. Alavalapati, the Emmett F. Thompson Dean of the College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment.

"Our college is well-known for the experiential learning opportunities we provide for our students and this property will not only allow us to increase those offerings, but will also help us engage with our broader community and the state. We are grateful to Coach Dye and Dr. McDonald for their generosity and for entrusting the legacy of Crooked Oaks with us."

The Auburn University College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment is a flagship institution for natural resources-based degrees including forestry, and the natural resource, wildlife enterprise and parks and recreation management majors. Its mission is to create next-generation professionals and leaders, develop new knowledge and disseminate science-based solutions to its stakeholders to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of citizens in Alabama and beyond.

The AUREF is a nonprofit organization that facilitates real property donations and receives gifts, bequests and other transfers on behalf of the Auburn University Foundation, Auburn University, Auburn University at Montgomery and the Tigers Unlimited Foundation.

(Written by [Kendra Carter](#))

###

Auburn University is a nationally ranked land grant institution recognized for its commitment to world-class scholarship, interdisciplinary research with an elite, top-tier Carnegie R1 classification, life-changing outreach with Carnegie's Community Engagement designation and an undergraduate education experience second to none. Auburn is home to more than 30,000 students, and its faculty and research partners collaborate to develop and deliver meaningful scholarship, science and technology-based advancements that meet pressing regional, national and global needs. Auburn's commitment to active student engagement, professional success and public/private partnership drives a growing reputation for outreach and extension that delivers broad economic, health and societal impact.

## **Submitting and Distribution**

Audience is a driving factor in where stories, releases and other items are distributed. If an item only impacts the campus community, the internal digest is the best place for it. These items must be submitted through [the online form](#). Ideally, such items live on your websites and links are submitted to be included in the digest.

If the story or news release is of interest to the Auburn-Opelika community or other Alabama cities, please use Cision to find these media outlets. Cision can also be used to identify industry publication or niche writers, if the story or news release applies to a particular industry or topic.

If the story or news release has national appeal, please [contact Neal Reid](#) in Communications and Marketing to discuss. Our staff is dedicated to developing relationships with these outlets and would lead the pitching process.

# Auburn News and Auburn Connection

## Auburn News

All Auburn employees receive this e-newsletter on Tuesdays only.

### Guidelines:

The deadline is two business days prior to publication, but one week works best.

Stories and announcements are submitted through the online form. Submissions should generally be a link to the story or announcement on your own website. If your site doesn't have a news section, you can use the online form to send the story or announcement to OCM. We will then publish the items to our Newsroom or Campus Notices pages.

### Example:

#### **#GINNING Podcast: Everybody Loves Rahman**

<https://www.eng.auburn.edu/news/2023/06/ginning-podcast-akond-rahman.html>

(Note: This link goes directly to the College of Engineering's News Center)

#### **Liberal Arts faculty educate national, international election administrators**

Outreach work in the College of Liberal Arts' Department of Political Science has professionalized election administration, trained leaders in efficient election processes and aided developing countries in free and fair elections.

<https://cla.auburn.edu/news/articles/securing-our-elections-2023/>

(Note: This link goes directly to the College of Liberal Arts' News Articles)

## Auburn Connection

Auburn Connection is a monthly e-newsletter for alumni and friends. A call for content will be issued a couple of weeks before the publication date, which is generally around the first week of each month.

Contact the Office of Communications and Marketing or the Auburn Alumni Association with any questions.

# Expert Answers

Expert Answers are meant to utilize Auburn faculty as resources on current topics for media use. It is a generally a question-and-answer format with a high-resolution photograph. The final product can be sent to media through Cision, posted on our [experts page](#), published in Auburn News and posted on social media platforms.

## Template

MM/DD/YR

### **Auburn-related headline here**

*General sentence about the topic and why it's currently in the news. Secondary sentence about your Auburn expert and what their work does/says about the aforementioned topic, with their name linking to their bio page via an embedded hyperlink. Third sentence about what their discoveries are or how their work is "novel" or advances the national, regional or statewide narrative. Final sentence setting up the Q&A.*

To arrange an interview with (last name), contact (media contact), (title), (college/unit), (email). An image of (last name) is available for download (embedded hyperlink).

### **Question 1**

**Last name:** xxxxxxxx

### **Question 2**

**Last name:** xxxxxxxx

### **Question 3**

**Last name:** xxxxxxxx

*\*Try not to use more than 3-4 questions, as media won't want/need a 1,000-word Q&A.*

## Example

04/03/23

### **Is the egg market about to crack? An Auburn poultry expert weighs in**

Many people have heard the children's rhyme about Humpty Dumpty, the large egg who had a "great fall" from a wall and cracked his shell. If Humpty Dumpty were real, that crack would be costly in today's market. At the height of the egg market, that egg would have cost 140% more on average than one year ago (\$1.80 per dozen then versus \$4.25 per dozen). Both literally and figuratively, that's not chicken feed.

The low supply of eggs, combined with the higher prices is not the result of a feed company or egg company conspiracy. The steep increase in egg prices is simply economic supply and demand, working as expected, according to [Dennis Brothers](#), an Alabama Cooperative Extension System associate professor. The main culprit in this story is Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, or HPAI.

Brothers specializes in farm and agribusiness management, specifically poultry. He has conducted research on the commercial poultry industry since the COVID-19 pandemic began to influence the national market.

To arrange an interview with Brothers, contact Preston Sparks, director of university communications services, at [preston.sparks@auburn.edu](mailto:preston.sparks@auburn.edu). An image of Brothers is [available on Flickr](#).

### **What kind of effect does HPAI have on the egg market?**

HPAI is a wild fowl influenza virus that is easily spread to domestic fowl, with 100% mortality as the result. Even though HPAI has been a hot topic in the poultry industry for over a year now, it has been around for longer than 2022. However, HPAI was typically a seasonal concern with a limited range and impact. In 2022, the virus seemed to overcome its seasonality and expanded its impact and range in the United States and North America. The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service estimates the loss of over 58 million U.S. domestic fowl to the virus in 2022. Most of these losses are due to the mandated total depopulation of any infected flock as the only containment measure available to prevent the spread of the disease. Of those bird losses, it is estimated that 43 million were table egg laying hens. This brought an approximately 29% lower table egg inventory for 2022. The losses have continued into 2023.

### **What are poultry producers doing to help this issue?**

Many of the largest egg producers are now molting their hens to extend their productive life and bolster the egg supply. The purpose of molting is to increase egg production over the life of the hen (e.g., eggs per hen housed) by extending her productive life. However, this process can only serve as a limited stopgap for lost production and cannot replace all the eggs losses. The bottom line for the egg industry is simply that dead hens lay no eggs. Since it takes a chicken approximately 22 weeks from hatch to laying the first egg, the hen losses won't be quickly replenished in the field. It's going to take some time before sufficient hens are back in full production.

### **How have market conditions impacted egg demand?**

On the demand side, the United States has been on an egg-consuming tear for several years. Demand for eggs has gone up since 2009. The industry had a slight downturn during and after the early COVID-19 era, but as people began cooking more at home, they also needed more eggs. As people started eating out again – often at sit-down restaurants – more eggs were used. High demand was then met by the sudden low supply in 2022. Low supply

meeting high demand leads to higher prices as more buyers compete for a diminished resource.

On the production cost, egg producers have had to contend with inflationary increases in all areas of production. Corn and other feed ingredients have been at sustained high price levels for a couple of years now, labor has been short and the current increases in fuel and transportation prices have only compounded the problem of producing eggs at a profit for the farmer.

### **What will happen to egg prices going forward?**

While the future is hard to predict, a few things could reasonably be expected. In the short term, egg prices are starting to decline and may reach a reasonable level soon. As egg producers aggressively molt and repopulate their birds as fast as possible, the lower post-holiday demand period may help keep prices down. However, we are quickly approaching the Easter season with historically the highest demand for eggs all year. That increase in demand on the not-so-fully replenished hen numbers may push prices back up for a short period. Long-term, many of the table egg producing farms suffering HPAI losses are family operations with aging owners. Some of these farms may not be repopulated. Others may change ownership and/or shrink in size.

For some farms, expansion is the goal, however, increasing interest rates and increasing calls for “cage-free” egg production – which cost more to build and yields fewer eggs – may be barriers to further expansion regardless of egg prices. As consumers have responded to the high prices by substitution, particularly in the powder egg market, there may in fact be an over-supply of eggs by the early fall leading to a significant price decrease. There is also a possibility that HPAI vaccines may be on the horizon as well, helping decrease that risk. All of these factors contribute to an uncertain future for egg supplies and egg prices.

# Media Advisory

A media advisory is essential an invitation to the media for an upcoming event. Do not send an advisory if you don't want media to attend. Like any good invitation, the advisory contains all the pertinent details: who, what, where and why.

## Template

MM/DD/YR

### **\*\*Media Advisory\*\***

***Auburn-related headline here that quickly summarizes the what, when, where of the event***

*Text here at most describing the event you are promoting - the what, the when, the where, the why.*

**WHAT:** Name of the event/ceremony

**WHEN:** Day, Date, Time

**WHERE:** Location, to include address and any special instructions for media parking

**WHO:** List the names of those who will be participating in the event

First name, title

**INFORMATION:** More details are available online at (enter event website here, if available)

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Name, office, phone number (email address) *This is who the media can reach out to before and at the event.*

###

Auburn University is a nationally ranked land grant institution recognized for its commitment to world-class scholarship, interdisciplinary research with an elite, top-tier Carnegie R1 classification, life-changing outreach with Carnegie's Community Engagement designation and an undergraduate education experience second to none. Auburn is home to more than 30,000 students, and its faculty and research partners collaborate to develop and deliver meaningful scholarship, science and technology-based advancements that meet pressing regional, national and global needs. Auburn's commitment to active student engagement, professional success and public/private partnership drives a growing reputation for outreach and extension that delivers broad economic, health and societal impact.

## Example

4/28/23

Media note: Not for publication prior to the event.

### **\*\*Media Availability\*\***

Kreher Preserve and Nature Center Grand Opening Celebration of the Pond Pavilion

The Auburn University College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment's Kreher Preserve and Nature Center, or KPNC, will host a Grand Opening Celebration of its Pond Pavilion from 2-3 p.m. on Thursday, May 4.

The event will proceed as follows: a media meet-and-greet at 1:50 p.m.; reception at 2 p.m.; opening remarks beginning at 2:45 p.m. with Janaki Alavalapati, the Emmett F. Thompson Dean of the College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment; following special guest remarks by a representative from the F. Allen and Louise K. Turner Foundation; KPNC Advisory Board President and former Auburn Opelika Tourism Board President John Wild; KPNC Manager Michael Buckman and KPNC Education Director Sarah Crim; and closing remarks and a ribbon cutting by City of Auburn Mayor Ron Anders Jr. at 3 p.m.

**What:** Grand Opening Celebration of the Pond Pavilion

**When:** Thursday, May 4, from 2-3 p.m.  
Media meet-and-greet with Mayor Ron Anders and Janaki Alavalapati, the Emmett F. Thompson Dean of the College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment at 1:50 p.m.

**Who:** Invitation only;  
Mayor Ron Anders Jr., Janaki Alavalapati, John Wild and Becky Richardson, representative of the F. Allen and Louise K. Turner Foundation

**Where:** Kreher Preserve and Nature Center  
North Entrance on Farmville Road, Auburn, AL 36830

The KPNC, located on a 120-acre parcel of land, was donated to Auburn's College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment by Louise Kreher Turner and her husband, Frank Allan Turner, in 1993. Its mission is to promote a sense of stewardship toward nature through quality environmental education, recreation and outreach programs with Auburn University and its community partners. Since its endowment, the Kreher Preserve and Nature Center has continued to evolve into a first-class discovery and nature center with exciting programs offered throughout the year. In keeping with its mission, the KPNC fosters a greater sense of appreciation and understanding of our environment with many nature-based programs such as a nature preschool, school programs, discovery hikes, youth camps and adult workshops and classes.



Contacts:

Jamie Anderson, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Environment, 334-844-9248  
([ja0015@auburn.edu](mailto:ja0015@auburn.edu));

Preston Sparks, university communications services, 334-844-9999 ([pjs0027@auburn.edu](mailto:pjs0027@auburn.edu))

# Media Events

1. News release – Interview the key Auburn sources and write a news release draft. Have it approved by the interviewees.
2. Photos – Take photos or ask Photographic Services (844-4560) to take some.
3. Video – A video may be needed for larger stories. This might need to wait until the day of the media event. It depends mainly on the number of people involved in the story – one person is easy to line up for a pre-event shoot and media-event-day shoot; several people are much more difficult to line up for two shoots. The Office of Communications and Marketing can assist in making the video.
4. Material submission – Aside from the news releases you distribute and post yourself, send the event information as a campus notice through the submission site for Auburn News. Post the story on your site first and send the link with a headline through the submission portal.
5. Parking – Arrange media parking if necessary. Contact Arishna Lastinger of Parking Services and let her know.
6. Media Advisory (see page 21 for an example)
  - Prepared by the person who writes the news release.
  - This alerts media to the event. It includes who, what, when, where, etc., and a brief description of the event subject.
  - Put “Embargoed until \_\_\_\_\_ (date and time)” if needed. The date and time will be the time of the media event.
  - Send it to media two days before the event. Besides dailies, weeklies and broadcast media, industry press can be invited as well.
7. Event Day
  - If warranted, take 10-12 copies of the news release to distribute to media. A full press kit can be assembled if the event is expected to draw media unfamiliar with Auburn.
  - Introduce Auburn interviewees to media. This can be done by a Communications and Marketing representative, college communicator or a key faculty member or administrator.
  - When possible, the main interviewee should give a brief overview to all media before doing individual, on-camera interviews.
  - After the event, send the news release to the same lists used for the media advisory and post it online with downloadable photos.

- If Communications and Marketing has prepared a video, we will use YouTube or file sharing to make it and/or clips available to broadcast media who cannot attend.

# Photos and Captions

Use high-resolution image files only. Please provide photos that have enough room on the sides for cropping, if necessary. Avoid sending “grip and grin” photos – the ones where everyone is smiling at the camera, generally in a check or award presentation.

## Captions

Identify everyone in the photo if possible. Each caption must include enough information to be able to stand alone, unless the photo is a portrait shot. For portrait shots, you can use the name alone or a brief caption.

Example: “Auburn University researchers are working with the iK9 company on awake-dog MRI scanning to possibly determine a dog’s detection ability prior to training. Pictured, from left, are Assistant Professor Gopikrishna “Gopi” Deshpande of Auburn’s Samuel Ginn College of Engineering; Ashton Jakcsy, Melanie Friedman and President Roland Beason of iK9; and Paul Waggoner, co-director of Canine Performance Sciences in Auburn’s College of Veterinary Medicine.”

## Alt text captions

Photos should always have an alt text caption. This is a federal accessibility requirement.

Example: Professor John Smith looks through a microscope in a lab.

## Photographic Services

Photographic Services is available to take shots for news releases and feature stories.

# Video

College communicators are welcome to submit a completed video file with their stories.

All videos must be transcribed in an SRT file and sent to Communications and Marketing; this is closed captioning for federal accessibility requirements. If you plan to post the video on your site or YouTube page, you will need to close caption it before sending the link to Communications and Marketing. Please note that federal regulations require that all videos on your sites have closed captioning.

## Tips for making a good video

### **Length:**

News videos should be 1-2 minutes in length.

Limit the interviewee's on-camera comments to 30 seconds if the video will have a narrator. Ideally, try to focus on having one clear thesis sentence of around seven to 10 seconds. The interviewee may want to rehearse before filming. Brevity is the key, and it works best for social media.

### **Ask the interviewee to:**

Say and spell their first and last name and say their title at the beginning of taping. This helps make sure the on-screen names and titles are correct.

Give a brief introduction at the beginning, such as "I'm Jane Smith, professor of physics at Auburn University..."

Avoid jargon, acronyms, complex scientific terms – anything over the middle school level – and historical background. The key is to talk about something in a manner the general public understands.

### **Use a dedicated microphone and a tripod:**

If possible, use a video camera with an external microphone along with a microphone attached to the interviewee's lapel or situated next to the person. Hide the cord by running it under the person's coat or shirt.

If you have to use a cell phone, be aware of ambient sounds. They may ruin your recording. It is best to find a quiet area shielded from noisy distractions.

Use a tripod to avoid camera any unnecessary movement.

**Framing:**

The person talking is the most important object in the frame. It should show the person from the head to the mid-section, with the head in the upper third of the shot.

Try to shoot in a lab or field but avoid showing non-related items that will distract the viewer away from the person. If the person is describing a piece of lab equipment, go ahead and put the person in front of it.

**B-roll:**

Shoot b-roll – video without audio – showing the interviewee in action, i.e., conduct research, teaching or walking on campus. Try to show students when possible.

**Write a script or outline before editing:**

A script or outline may help you in editing, as it's a chance to plan the outcome of the video.

**Broadcast Services**

If a professional video is needed for high-profile news stories, contact your Communications and Marketing liaison or Broadcast Services at 844-9999.

# Resources

## **Auburn Stories**

Previously called the Newsroom, the [Auburn Stories page](#) is the university's portal for stories. Visitors can access external news clips, campus notices, expert answers, the university's events calendar and the submission site from here.

## **Office of Communications and Marketing News Staff**

**Richard Campbell ([rtcampbell@auburn.edu](mailto:rtcampbell@auburn.edu)), 844-9996**  
Chief Communications Officer

**Preston Sparks ([preston.sparks@auburn.edu](mailto:preston.sparks@auburn.edu)), 844-9976**  
Director of University Communications Services

**Amy Weaver ([amy.weaver@auburn.edu](mailto:amy.weaver@auburn.edu)), 844-7806**  
Senior Editor

**Neal Reid ([neal.reid@auburn.edu](mailto:neal.reid@auburn.edu)), 844-9984**  
Senior Editor