

**Sam Houston State University**

**Faculty Handbook**



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# Sam Houston State University

## University Mission

Sam Houston State University is a student-centered, community engaged institution whose mission is to offer accessible, quality higher education. The university offers a variety of innovative and flexible degree programs at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels focused on career readiness, personal and professional development, and service. SHSU provides integrated academic and student success services designed to support traditional and non-traditional students from diverse backgrounds.

## University Vision

Sam Houston State University will provide a transformative environment that enables students from diverse backgrounds to become leaders who serve their families, communities, and professions. We aspire to make SHSU both the best value in higher education and the top regional public university in the state of Texas. We will accomplish this through providing high quality, innovative, and flexible academic programs; a commitment to student success, scholarship and creative works; and engagement that solves the most critical challenges facing the world.

## **University Strategic Priorities**

- Prioritize Student Success and Student Access
- Embody a Culture of Excellence
- Elevate the Reputation and Visibility of SHSU
- Expand and Elevate our Service to the State and Beyond

## **History**

Sam Houston State University, located in Huntsville, Texas, is a member of The Texas State University System. The school was created by the Texas Legislature in 1879 as Sam Houston Normal Institute to educate teachers for the public schools of Texas. The baccalaureate degree was first awarded in 1919.

In 1923, the institution's name was changed to Sam Houston State Teachers College. Two years later, the college was admitted to membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) as an accredited institution of higher learning. A graduate degree was authorized in 1936, and the curriculum was expanded to emphasize preparation in a variety of fields.

Following World War II, an increase in students and faculty as well as a wide range of faculty-research activities provided impetus for the continued emergence of a multi-purpose institution. In recognition of these developments, the institution's name was changed by the Texas Legislature to Sam Houston State College in 1965. The number of graduate degrees conferred increased significantly in the late 1960s; and the Texas Legislature, recognizing the changes that had taken place, changed the name of the institution to Sam Houston State University in 1969.

In the 1970s, the University was granted permission to offer its first doctorate, a PhD in criminal justice. This program grew to be one of the largest and most recognized doctoral programs in the country.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the University completed a number of academic, athletic, and support facilities. With the improvement of faculty and facilities, the University set a vision to become one of the best regional universities in the country.

During the last five years of the twentieth century, the University expanded its reach by offering programs online, at The Woodlands in a multi-institutional teaching center, and various other off-campus sites. Beginning in 2000, the University expanded its building program and committed resources to develop and maintain nationally-recognized academic support programs. Sam Houston State University increased the number of doctoral programs, including programs in education and psychology, and experienced a tremendous surge in enrollment and name recognition.

Currently, Sam Houston State University is organized academically into eight colleges: Arts and Media, Business Administration, Criminal Justice, Education, Health Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, Osteopathic Medicine, and Science and Engineering Technology. Students are offered an extensive range of bachelor's and master's degrees, as well as doctorates in selected areas. The faculty and the University are recognized regionally, nationally, and internationally.

## **Faculty Handbook**

The Faculty Handbook is an official Sam Houston State University (SHSU) publication, maintained by the Faculty Senate, and designed to provide guidelines and explanations to the faculty concerning policies and procedures under which the University operates. Faculty may refer to the channels of administration, the various administrative offices and the committees described in this handbook for further information and guidance.

There is an expectation that each faculty member will become acquainted with and conform to all the policies and procedures, *Rules and Regulations* of the Board of Regents of the Texas State University System, and all other official publications relating to their appointment and to the accomplishment of their work and positions as faculty members of Sam Houston State University.

The policies in this handbook are current at the time of its publication; however all University policies and rules are subject to change without prior notice. Additionally, the Board of Regents will adopt changes to its *Rules and Regulations* and that will alter some of the policies stated herein. All effort has been made to address conflicts, but in the unlikely event of any conflict between the Faculty Handbook and the Board of Regents' Rules and Regulations, the Board of Regents' Rules and Regulations have precedence.

## **Official Policies and Procedures**

Official academic policies are found in the [Texas State University System Board of Regents' Rules and Regulations](#) and in the [University's Academic Policy Manual](#).

## **Academic Governance**

### **Introduction**

Final authority for Texas higher education rests with the Legislature, which creates all public institutions; makes all appropriations; determines policy; accepts or overrules decisions of the Coordinating Board; and influences appointments through the advice and consent powers of the Senate.

The Texas Legislature sets broad policy while delegating implementation to appropriate officials. The Legislature has responsibility for financing public higher education and authorizes funding methods to promote educational quality while demanding effective resource management and accountability.

### **Board of Regents – The Texas State University System**

The official governing body of Sam Houston State University is the Board of Regents of The Texas State University System. Institutions comprising The Texas State University System and governed by this Board are Lamar University; Lamar State College – Orange; Lamar State College - Port Arthur; Lamar Institute of Technology; Sam Houston State University; Texas State University; and Sul Ross State University. The Texas State University System's Rules and Regulations, adopted September 1, 1980, and revised annually, is both current and comprehensive in identifying, defining, and describing Board authority and policies of governance.

### **University Organization and Administration**

The [organizational structure](#) of Sam Houston State University is one of line and staff. The President is the chief operating officer of the University and reports to the Board of Regents of The Texas State University System. Reporting to the Office of the President are the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Chief Financial Officer and Vice President for Operations, Senior Vice President for Strategic Enrollment and Innovation, Vice President for Student Affairs, Vice President for University Advancement, Chief Strategy Officer, Chief Experience Officer, Chief Marketing Officer, and the Director of Athletics.

### **President of the University**

The President is directly responsible to the Board of Regents of The Texas State University System, by whom they are employed. The President is charged with the responsibility of developing and maintaining efficiency and excellence within the University. All administrative channels—academic, student, and fiscal—are ultimately responsible to the President who accepts responsibility for all facets of the University's operations. The President speaks for the University in its relations with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, with members of the State Legislature, and with the Governor and members of the Governor's Staff.

## **Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs**

The [Provost and Senior Vice President](#) for Academic Affairs is the chief academic officer, reports directly to the President of the University, and serves on the President's Cabinet. Responsibilities of this position include the supervision of all matters, policies, procedures, and activities within the Division of Academic Affairs.

## **Vice Provost**

The [Vice Provost](#) reports directly to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and oversees academic support activities.

## **Executive Director of the Newton Gresham Library**

The Executive Director of the Newton Gresham Library is responsible to the Vice Provost for library administration and operation and for the effective use of library facilities by faculty, students, and staff. Accordingly, the Executive Director of the Newton Gresham Library works with a University committee to develop and expand the library program as an integral part of the educational program of the University.

## **Academic Deans**

The Academic Deans are the administrative heads of the University's academic colleges. They report to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. They are responsible for all programs of instruction, research, and public service carried out by their respective colleges. These duties include the development, coordination and implementation of core curricula in all programs within their respective colleges and integration of instructional programs within and among the departments under their authority. Deans are expected to formulate objectives, policies and standards for their respective colleges, to supervise the current operations of the instructional programs, and to communicate with department chairs, program coordinators, faculty, and students under their jurisdiction. In faculty matters, their responsibilities include making recommendations to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs for employment, retention, and advancement of personnel assigned to the college in accordance with university policies addressing affirmative action, promotions, staffing, tenure, etc. Each dean also reviews, endorses, and forwards department chairs' proposals to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Each dean is responsible for the coordination and supervision of all graduate programs within their college, including the supervision of departmental advisement of graduate students, the review of graduate courses and curricula, the submissions of recommendations regarding the awarding of assistantships and fellowships after consultation with department chairs and the maintenance of student records of candidates for advanced degrees. These duties are performed within the general procedural guidelines established by the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.

A dean may call meetings of any number of department chairs and faculty within the college in order to seek advice, receive recommendations and initiate discussion concerning the policies and programs applicable to the departments/units within the college. Each dean assists in the preparation of the budget and is responsible for overseeing the judicious expenditure of funds allotted to the operation of each department within the jurisdiction.



## **Assistant and Associate Deans**

Assistant/Associate Deans in each college assist the dean with the administrative duties required for the effective and efficient management of the college.

## **Department Chairs**

Each department chair is responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the instructional programs under their authority. The department chair determines the teaching duties of the departmental faculty, holds regular staff meetings and directs academic counseling within the department unit.

Aided by the counsel of the faculty, they develop and revise the curricula of the department in a manner consistent with both current and long-range requirements. The chair takes the initiative in faculty recruitment and prepares dossiers on prospective faculty for the dean to present to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. The chair makes recommendations concerning the continuing employment or promotion and salary increments of faculty within the department and is responsible for ensuring compliance with affirmative action and equal employment policies and guidelines. In addition, the department chair is responsible for ensuring that all policies and procedures are followed in the performance appraisal process of adjunct, tenure-track, and tenured faculty.

## **Faculty Senate**

The Faculty Senate exists “In order to develop fully the freedom of discussion, participation, and examination of ideas by faculty, students, and administration in the search for truth...” to quote the Preamble to the Charter of the Faculty Senate of Sam Houston State University.

To locate more information on the Faculty Senate of Sam Houston State University, including meeting minutes, current roster and constitution and bylaws, see the Faculty Senate website at <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/faculty-senate/index.html>.

## **Academic Affairs Council**

The Academic Affairs Council serves in an advisory capacity to the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. Membership is by virtue of position and includes the vice provost, associate provosts, associate vice provosts, academic associate vice presidents, executive director of the library, deans, associate deans, department chairs, and chair and chair-elect of the Faculty Senate. The Academic Affairs Council provides a forum for the discussion of academic matters, serves as an initial academic policy development and review body as requested by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and provides a forum for communicating more effectively on all academic concerns.

## **Committee Structure of the University**

University committees are included in the [Committee Book](#). Each entry in the Committee Book includes a statement of the committee's purpose, appointment procedures, and current chair and committee members' names, along with term expirations.

## Faculty Academic Employment Policies

### Commitment to Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity

Sam Houston State University declares and reaffirms a policy of equal employment opportunity, equal educational opportunity, and non-discrimination in the provision of education and other services to the public.

Sam Houston State University reaffirms its policy of administering all educational programs and related supporting services and benefits in a manner which does not discriminate because of an employee or prospective employee's race, color, creed, ancestry, religion, sex, marital status, veteran status, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, hair texture, protective hairstyle, or other characteristic which cannot lawfully form the basis for provision of such service.

It is the University policy that each applicant will be considered for employment solely on qualifications for the position without regard to the above characteristics. The University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer, and vigorously supports non-discriminatory policies in the initial employment process and in advancement opportunities for our employees.

### Appointments to the Faculty

In the process of an appointment, the dean/director of the college/library will verify the preferred candidate's previous experience and performance with administrative officers for whom the candidate has previously worked. Prior consultation by the dean or director with the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs will verify that the candidate is indeed qualified and that the individual is the most suitable candidate for the position that has been properly publicized.

The dean or director will attach a letter of recommendation incorporating elements for rank and salary. It is to be clearly understood at all stages of negotiations that the President of the University has the sole power to recommend to the Board of Regents, and that the Board is the agent with the power to appoint. The institution cannot honor commitments from any other officer. For full coverage of this policy, please see The Texas State University System, Board of Regents' Rules and Regulations, [Chapter V, Subsection 4.13 "Appointments"](#), the Academic Policy Statements 800114, "Academic Instructional and Research Personnel" and 890301, "Hiring, Evaluation, Promotion, and Merit for Non-Tenure Track Faculty."

### Dismissal of Faculty

Termination of the employment of a tenured faculty member and of all other faculty members before the expiration of the stated period of their appointment will be only for good cause shown. The policy on dismissal and subsequent due process procedures are addressed in The Texas State University System, [Board of Regents' Rules and Regulations](#), Chapter V, Subsection 4.5 "Termination and Due Process Procedures", Chapter V, Subsection 4.6 "Termination of Faculty Employment Under Special Circumstances", and Chapter V, Subsection 4.282, "Performance Review of Tenured and Other Faculty." Additional policies addressing aspects of this issue may be found in Academic Policy Statements [900417, "Faculty Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion"](#) and [820317,](#)

[“The Faculty Evaluation System”](#), and [980204, “Performance Evaluation of Tenured Faculty.”](#)

### **Faculty Evaluation System**

The Faculty Evaluation System is important for purposes of faculty development, promotion in academic rank, adjustments in salary and, contract review for probationary, and non-tenured and non-tenure track faculty members. For complete coverage of this policy, please see The Texas State University System, Board of Regents' Rules and Regulations, Chapter V, Subsection 4.28 "Performance Reviews", and Chapter V, Subsection 4.3 "Promotion." See also SHSU's Academic Policy Statement [820317, "The Faculty Evaluation System"](#), Academic Policy Statement [900417, "Faculty Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion"](#), Academic Policy Statement [800722, "Merit Advances in Salary"](#), Academic Policy Statement 890301, "Hiring, Evaluation, Promotion, and Merit for Non-Tenure Track Faculty", and Academic Policy Statement [110720, "Market Advances in Salary."](#) There may also be guidelines regarding evaluation in individual programs, departments, and colleges, please refer to your director/chair/dean for specific information.

### **Tenure**

Policies regarding tenure are in Academic Policy Statement [900417, "Faculty Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion"](#) and The Texas State University System [Board of Regents' Rules and Regulations](#), Chapter V, Subsection 4.2, "Tenure."

### **Promotions in Rank**

The academic rank system serves as a guide for the placement of newly appointed faculty personnel and provides for the annual promotion and salary merit advances within rank. Promotions and salary advances in rank are awarded on the basis of merit, except on those occasions when the Legislature mandates periodic salary adjustments for all faculty. For an explanation of this policy, please see The Texas State University System [Board of Regents Rules and Regulations](#), Chapter V, Subsection 4.3, "Promotion", Academic Policy Statements [800722, "Merit Advances in Salary"](#), [820317, "The Faculty Evaluation System"](#), and [890301, "Hiring, Evaluation, Promotion, and Merit for Non-Tenure Track Faculty."](#)

### **Non-reappointment and Denial of Tenure**

"A non-tenured faculty member, who is notified of non-reappointment in accordance with Board of Regents', Rules and Regulations, Chapter V, Subsection 4.14, "Reappointments" or who is notified in accordance with Chapter V, Subsection 4.24, "Maximum Probationary Service", that tenure has been denied and that the subsequent academic year will be the terminal year of appointment, shall not be entitled to a statement of the reasons upon which the decision for such action is based."

([Rules and Regulations](#), The Texas State University System, Board of Regents, Chapter V, Subsection 4.27, "Non-Reappointment and Denial of Tenure"). See also Chapter V, Subsection 4.26, ""Non-Tenured Faculty" for further information on policy addressing non-tenured faculty in the Rules and Regulations of The Texas State University System's Board of Regents. Sam Houston State University's policy on non-reappointment is addressed in Academic Policy Statement, [900417, "Faculty Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion."](#)

## **Grievance Procedure**

Any faculty member of Sam Houston State University has the right to appeal and eventually grieve an administrative decision that directly affects the individual as a faculty member and that is considered to be a violation of University policy or a violation of professional rights and responsibilities. Please refer to the Faculty Grievance Procedures (<http://www.shsu.edu/dotAsset/2dd72dd1-e5b3-4278-99b7-c3b5ed316605.pdf>) for the applicable TSUS' Rules and Regulations to grieve different types of issues.

## **Interim Faculty Members**

For a complete explanation of interim faculty members benefits, please refer to Academic Policy Statement [830401, "Insurance Fringe Benefits, and Sick Leave Accrual for Interim Faculty Members"](#)

## **Outside Employment for Faculty**

The policy regarding outside employment is addressed in Academic Policy Statement [860811, "Outside Employment for Faculty."](#) This policy is in compliance with The Texas State University System Board of Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Chapter V, Subsection 4.83, "Outside Employment."

## **Summer Employment**

Faculty employed for the nine-month academic year are not guaranteed employment during the summer sessions, because enrollment is generally much less than during the long semesters. Guidelines for selection of faculty for summer school teaching assignments are as follows: Paramount among all considerations should be the needs of an individual department or instructional program as expressed in terms of requirements for course offerings.

Careful consideration should be given to how well the expertise of those faculty members who request summer employment matches the requirements of the department's instructional program. To the fullest extent possible, summer teaching assignments should be given to tenured or tenure-track faculty of the department. Attention should be given to developing an equitable rotation system for selecting faculty members for summer employment, provided that the system follows the above criteria. In the interest of answering compliance, each dean is asked to remind the chairs of these guidelines and to monitor carefully the appointment of all summer teaching faculty. The services of department chairs are generally required throughout the summer.

## **Professional Librarians**

Sam Houston State University professional librarians are accorded faculty status and therefore have the same privileges and responsibilities as regular faculty members. Professional librarians are considered full participants in the teaching function both directly, through their work with students conducting research, and indirectly, through developing the collection and organizing it for optimum access. For the complete policy coverage, please see Academic Policy Statement [810814, "Tenets for Faculty Status for Academic Librarians."](#)

## **Retirement and Emeritus Status**

Sam Houston State University adheres to the policy of The Texas State University System's Board of Regents' Rules and Regulations, Chapter V, Subsection 2.3, "Retirement and Recognition of Service," Chapter V, Subsection 4.9, "Honorary Titles and Emeritus Faculty" and Chapter V, Subsection 4.10, Miscellaneous, (3) "Retired Faculty" with Academic Policy Statements [800925, "Faculty Retirement and Emeritus Status"](#) and [840901, "Phased Retirement Program for University Faculty."](#)

## **Benefits, Leaves, and Awards**

### **Excellence in Teaching, Non-Tenure Track Teaching, Service, and Scholarly and Creative Accomplishments**

These awards are made annually to recognize one outstanding faculty member in each of the categories of teaching, research and scholarly work, and service. The recipients each receive a \$5,000 monetary award for excellence and a medal of commendation.

### **David Payne Academic Community Engagement Award**

This University award, with a cash stipend of \$5,000 and a commendation medal, honors a faculty member who has achieved excellence in service to the community through ACE (Academic Community Engagement) course work. Recipients of this award have made a difference in communities. They have taught SHSU students the value of community engagement and collaborated with community partners to meet community needs and improve the quality of life.

### **Minnie Stevens Piper Professor Award**

Organized in 1950, the Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation is a non-profit, charitable corporation focused on postsecondary education in Texas. Each year, the foundation selects ten Piper Professors from across Texas for their superior teaching at the college level. The Piper Professor Award recognizes professors for outstanding academic, scientific, and scholarly achievement and for dedication to the teaching profession. These awards are intended to provide increased recognition of teaching excellence, although the Foundation's Selection Committee also considers research, publication, and related activity.

### **Designation of Distinguished Professors**

Appointment to a University Distinguished Professorship is a special honor conferred upon active faculty in recognition of an extended period of service that may be marked by unusual and exemplary contributions to the University. For the full policy please see Academic Policy [860425, "Designation of Distinguished Professors."](#)

### **Faculty Administrative Leave**

Sam Houston State University is committed to providing faculty development opportunities whenever feasible. The program's purpose is to provide an opportunity for tenure or tenure-track faculty members, through a released-time arrangement, to acquire administrative experience and to contribute professional expertise by serving in a professional level administrative staff capacity in a selected

administrative area for a specified period of time. For complete coverage of this policy please refer to Academic Policy Statement [800215, "Faculty Administrative Leave Program."](#)

### **Faculty Development Leave**

In accordance with The Texas State University System, [Board of Regents' Rules and Regulations](#), Chapter V, Subsection 4.81, "Faculty Development Leaves", Sam Houston State University provides development leaves designed to enable faculty members to engage in study, research, writing and similar projects for the purpose of adding to the knowledge available to the faculty, students and the Institution. For complete coverage of this policy please refer to Academic Policy Statement [800328, "Faculty Development Leave Policy."](#)

### **Other Leaves of Absence**

For complete coverage of policies regarding sick leave, vacation leave, emergency leave, jury duty, maternity leave, military/volunteer firefighter leave of absence, leaves of absence without pay, the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and parental leave refer to Personal Time Off section of the University website.

### **Faculty Study**

To encourage faculty members to broaden their education, it is the University's policy to permit each faculty member to take one course each long semester, if the course does not interfere with the individual's working/teaching assignment. The State of Texas does not permit discounted tuition for State employees; however, faculty members through the rank of assistant professor are eligible to apply for the Employee Education Assistance Program. For more information on this program, please refer to Human Resources Policy [HR-12, "Employee Development."](#)

### **Faculty Travel**

Sam Houston State University is well aware of the value of professional meetings for faculty. Such travel, however, must be well justified and approval must be obtained in advance. Arrangements for classes to be missed must be finalized in advance of the trip. All travel is subject to the Finance and Operations Travel Policies found in the [Travel Procedures](#) section of the Office of Disbursements & Travel Services website. Procedures detailed on the webpage include the following:

Types of Travel Funding	Rental Car
Definition of Terms	Mileage
Classification of Travelers	Official Mileage Calculation Method
Travel Requisition	Mileage Rate
Request to Close a Travel Requisition	Driving vs. Airfare to Out-of-State Destination
Allowable Travel Expenses	Coordination of Travel Arrangements
Reimbursement Rates	Personal Travel Included in with Business Travel
Meals	Guest Traveler
Business Meal with Travel Status	Travel Requisition Approval
Lodging	Travel Expense Report Approval
Shared Lodging	State Funded Travel



Hotel Taxes	Travel Card
Registration Fee	Foreign Travel
Transportation	Expense Reports and Settlements
Commercial Airline	Exceptions

Since all travel must be approved in advance and flight arrangements made through the Concur booking tool, the faculty are encouraged to contact the departmental administrative assistant within academic departments for questions and assistance with travel. Additional assistance may be obtained from the [Office of Disbursements and Travel Services](#).

### Interim Faculty Members

For a complete explanation of interim faculty members benefits, please refer to Academic Policy Statement [830401, "Insurance Fringe Benefits, and Sick Leave Accrual for Interim Faculty Members"](#).

## Curriculum

### Syllabus Guidelines

The following information is to be included on all syllabi.

Course Identification	Course Name
	Course Number
	Credit Hours
	Semester and Year Department
	Class Location
Instructor Information	Name
	Contact Information
	Availability
	Course Description (i.e. 4000-level class for graduate credit, independent study)
	Learning Outcomes
Course Information	Required and Optional Text and other Resources Attendance Policy
	Grading Policy Make-up Policy
	Student-provided Technological Devices Policy Tentative Course Outline
	Faculty may opt to link to <a href="http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus">http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus</a>
	Students with Disabilities
Required Policies	Absences for Religious Holy Days

In addition to the above, individual colleges may have additional requirements. Faculty may opt to include additional information such as study tips, instructor evaluations, information about academic support services, availability of tutoring, and classroom rules of conduct. All syllabi must be placed on Blackboard. Any revisions to the syllabus must be communicated to the students and a revised copy placed on Blackboard.

## **Textbook Adoption**

When selecting a textbook for a course, there should be a reasonably close correlation between the contents of the textbook, the catalog description of the course, and the learning objectives listed on the syllabus. Care in the decision-making process for textbook selection should also include examination of the expense of the text materials, with an eye to selecting the text that balances content with a lower sticker price for our students.

Barnes & Noble, SHSU's bookstore provider, has implemented [Adoption and Insights Portal](#) to make the textbook selection and ordering process easier.

## **Curriculum Development and Evaluation**

Curriculum development typically is initiated by faculty at the departmental level and subsequently progresses through college and University reviews for internal recommendations and approval.

Issues of academic need and content, quality and effectiveness are addressed at each stage in the curriculum development process.

Once the department and college have completed their review of a new course or new program, the [Curriculum Committee](#) reviews submissions to determine if information provided for new courses and/or new programs is complete, to analyze proposed additions and changes in course titles to avoid possible overlap or duplication, and to work toward potential problem solutions before the matters are discussed by the [Academic Affairs Council](#). Committee members must be knowledgeable of their college's curriculum submissions and able to respond to most questions that arise. Conflicts between the final recommendations of the Academic Affairs Council and reports originally submitted by the deans, will be resolved individually between the Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and the appropriate dean.

The Curriculum Report which bears the endorsement of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs shall be prepared in proper format and will be presented to the President by the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs for inclusion in The Texas State University System's Board of Regents Meeting agenda.

## **Prerequisite Policy**

In order to ensure that instructors can present the required important course material at the appropriate level, students must demonstrate adequate preparation to take these courses. Students must meet the prerequisite requirements for a course. The Sam Houston State University Prerequisite Policy is addressed in Academic Policy Statement [100428, "Prerequisite Policy."](#)

## **Professional Responsibilities**

### **Academic Freedom and Responsibilities**

Sam Houston State University is committed to academic freedom and is in accord with the [Rules and Regulations](#) of the Board of Regents of The Texas State University System, Chapter V, Subsection 4.7,



“Rights and Responsibilities as a Teacher and Citizen.” This policy addresses specifically the academic freedom accorded a faculty member, and the responsibilities and duties required of a faculty member as both a teacher and a citizen.

To safeguard and protect the academic freedom of faculty members, Sam Houston State University adheres to the following policy of The Texas State University System as stated in the Board of Regents’ *Rules and Regulations*:

[Chapter V, Subsection 2.14: Grievances](#)

Every employee of each Component, individually or through a representative that does not claim the right to strike, shall be entitled to present grievances to a hearing officer designated by the President concerning such employee’s wages, hours of work, or conditions of work. Such grievances shall not involve formal hearings. [Faculty Grievance Form for Grieving Non-renewal or Termination of Employment TSUS Rules & Regulations, Chapter V, Sec 4.4](#)

### **Faculty Availability**

A faculty member is expected to publish hours and be available for student consultation during those times. Availability may include office hours, online conferencing, consultation time at The Woodlands Center or other offsite teaching venues, as well as scheduled times for student conferences via other communication media. It is expected that these hours be reasonable and consistent with the faculty member’s teaching schedule, venue, and workload designation.

### **Adherence to the Class Schedule**

Most faculty-student contacts are made in the classroom and in the faculty member's offices. Classes are scheduled to meet on specified days and for a specific length of time. Special holidays or other exceptions to the schedule, if not stated in the official calendar, are proclaimed in written announcements from the President or from the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Adherence to the final examination schedule and the proper completion of all duties associated with the opening and closing of a semester are required. Faculty are expected to hold all regularly scheduled class meetings.

### **Faculty Absences**

When the faculty member cannot hold a regularly scheduled class, the department chair should be contacted. The chair can assist the faculty member to make appropriate accommodations. The Board of Regents of The Texas State University System, in their [Rules and Regulations](#), has adopted the following policy concerning faculty absences, Chapter V, Subsection 4.82, “Absences.” Specific questions related to faculty absences and definitions of terms are addressed in Human Resources Personal Time Off policies.

### **Faculty Workload**

The faculty workload policy for Sam Houston State University is designed to comply with Vernon’s Texas Codes Annotated, Education Code §51.402, and will be reported to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and included in the operating budget for the University. The policy and guidelines reflect the essential nature of the University as a teaching institution but allow flexibility to permit

accommodation of related research activities essential to the effective operation of a multipurpose regional university. For complete coverage of the Faculty Instructional Workload Policy, refer to Academic Policy Statement [790601, "Faculty Workload Policy."](#)

### **Federal Aid Eligibility Validation**

While Sam Houston State University is not required by any accrediting agency to take attendance, federal guidelines demand that we must be able to verify that financial aid recipients are eligible for the financial aid that has been awarded and disbursed to them (Department of Education Federal Student Aid Handbook). This is why attendance feedback from instructors is mandatory. If we cannot verify students' academically-related participation in a class, they will lose financial aid eligibility, and the Institution will

be required to pay back the financial aid.

Relevant information and due dates for this process are located at the [Federal Aid Eligibility Validation](#) page on the University website.

### **Commencement Participation**

Participation in commencement exercises is an expectation of tenure-track and tenured faculty members. Please see [Academic Policy Statement 791221, "Faculty Participation in Commencement"](#) for a full explanation of this expectation.

### **Acceptance of Money from Students**

The [Rules and Regulations](#) of the Texas State University System Chapter V, Subsection 4.85, "Acceptance of Money from Students", states: "Faculty members shall not, without approval of the President or his/her designee, collect from students any fees or charges to be expended for Component purposes or sell to students books, notes, materials or supplies. Faculty of the rank of lecturer or above, and other instructional personnel as designated by the Component President, may not accept pay from students for extra instruction or teaching or students registered in the Component. With prior written approval of the President or his or her designee, instructional employees below the rank of lecturer may accept pay from students for extra-class instruction or coaching but only in courses or sections of courses with which they have no instructional connection. The faculty handbook of the Component shall specify the procedure for approval at the Component level."

The following describes the procedure for obtaining approval for accepting pay from students for extra-class instruction or coaching for instructional employees below the rank of lecturer:

Submit to Department Chair, in writing, a request to charge students for extra-class instruction, or coaching, within the parameters set forth in the above-cited Chapter V, Subsection 4.85 of the Rules and Regulations of the Texas State University System. In the request, include:

- 1) name and rank,
- 2) statement of which courses currently instructing,
- 3) list of course or courses for which extra-class instruction or coaching will be provided.

A written approval or denial of request will be issued within 10 working days.

## **Nepotism**

Sam Houston State University adheres to the policy of The Texas State University System, Board of Regents', [Rules and Regulations](#), Chapter V, Subsection 2.2., "Appointment of Relatives (Nepotism Rule)." For complete details, please refer to Human Resources Policy HR-01, "[Conflicts of Interest](#)."

## **Professional and Academic Center for Excellence (PACE)**

[PACE](#) provides professional development for faculty and staff. Focusing on evidence-based teaching and leadership strategies, PACE offers a variety of events including the Teaching and Learning Conference, faculty writing circles, faculty/staff book clubs, and IDEA workshops.

Further, PACE houses the Engaging Classrooms QEP and offers numerous opportunities (e.g., Association of College and University Educators, or ACUE Effective College Instruction among many others) for faculty to grow in their ability to help students learn and succeed.

## **Research by Faculty**

One of Sam Houston State University's goals is to "Provide an educational environment that encourages systematic inquiry and research," and tenured and tenure-track faculty are required to perform research or conduct creative work within their chosen disciplines and their individual interests. The faculty is also encouraged to seek funding for research and instructional projects through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP).

All faculty, staff and student research projects with human participants and animal subjects must be reviewed and approved for compliance with ethical principles before the research begins. Please see the [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) for requirements in the use of human subjects and [the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#) (IACUC) for animal subjects. Also refer to Academic Policy Statement [920808, "Ethical Conduct in Academic Research and Scholarship."](#)

Sam Houston State University strictly adheres to The Texas State University System's policies concerning copyrights and patents as stated in the [Rules and Regulations](#) of the Board of Regents, Chapter III, Subsection 11, "Copyright Policy" and Chapter III, Subsection 12, "Patent Policy."

## **Use of Proctoring Services**

Given that SHSU makes available to its distance and correspondence education students a number of free identity-verification options for proctoring services, faculty members may not require, as the sole option, a proctoring or identity verification service that requires a student charge.

## **Signatures**

To improve services and reduce costs, Sam Houston State University (SHSU) authorizes, accepts, and encourages the use of electronic signatures for internal transactions when the use of such technology complies with acceptable forms of signatures described in the [President's Office Policy PRE-18, "Signatures for Internal Transactions"](#) and improves efficiency.

The Texas State University System [Rules and Regulations](#), Chapter III, Subsection 6. (17), “Electronic Transactions” and Subsection 8, “Electronic Financial Transactions” outline specific transactions SHSU may conduct electronically. Individuals are accountable for their signatures, whether manual or electronic.

### **Use of Portable and Electronic Devices**

Faculty can elect to allow portable and electronic devices in the classroom, or disallow; it is the professor’s choice. Faculty should establish a clear policy for students to follow regarding portable and electronic devices and ensure it is on the course syllabus.

## **General Policies Affecting Faculty Members**

### **Alcoholic Beverage Policy**

The sale or service of alcoholic beverages on the Sam Houston State University campus is not permitted except in “special use” buildings or facilities designated and approved by the University President. The possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages on any property owned and/or controlled by Sam Houston State University are prohibited except where permitted explicitly by published policy. The legal age for purchase, consumption and /or possession of alcoholic beverages in the State of Texas is 21 years of age. Violators of this State law and University policy will be subject to University penalties and criminal charges.

### **Audit Policy**

All financial records, ledgers, and accounts shall be maintained in conformity with the rules and regulations of the State comptroller, State auditor, and other entities that have responsibility for setting financial management and reporting standards for State colleges and universities such as the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) and National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO). These records are to be made available to external auditors and the University’s Office of Audits and Analysis upon request.

Information regarding the functions, duties and, procedures of the Office of Audits and Analysis can be found in The Texas State University System, Board of Regents’ [Rules & Regulations](#), Chapter III, Subsection 7, “The Audit Function.”

### **Building Liaison Policy**

The Sam Houston State University Building Liaison Policy provides information on the selection, training and duties of building liaisons. For the full policy, please see Finance & Operations policy, [FO-FM-61, “Building Liaisons.”](#)

### **Campus Key Policy**

The Sam Houston State University Finance & Operations Policy, [FO-FM-24, Campus Key Policy](#) details information on building access, duplication and transfer of keys, campus master keys, key authorization

procedures, key issue and return procedures, lock box keys and the implementation of fees for lost keys.

### **Departmental Academic Distinction Program**

The Department Academic Distinction Program is an individualized learning experience available to academically outstanding students at Sam Houston State University. An Academic Distinction Program project provides qualified students with a comprehensive introduction to meaningful research under the guidance of a designated faculty advisor. For additional information, please refer to [Academic Policy Statement 800521, "Academic Distinction."](#)

### **Drug-Free Workplace**

Sam Houston State University policy prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance in the workplace. For complete coverage of this policy, please refer to Human Resources Policy ER-8, ["Drug Free Workplace."](#)

### **Emergency Closings**

To ensure the safety of students, faculty and staff, it may become necessary to cancel classes due to inclement weather or other emergencies. This policy is fully covered in the President's Office Policy [PRE- 07, "Emergency Closures Policy."](#)

### **Elliott T. Bowers Honors College**

Honors education at Sam Houston State University is designed to be a supplement to and an enhancement of University academic experiences for undergraduates. For complete information regarding Sam Houston State University's Honors College, please go to the [Elliott T. Bowers Honors College](#) website.

### **KatSafe (Emergency Management)**

Sam Houston State University uses the KatSafe system to alert the campus should there be an emergency. Depending on user preference, this notification is sent either by text message, phone call, or e-mail. Contact information and preferences can be updated online at ["Katsafe Communications Instructions"](#).

Emergency preparedness guidelines for situations such as active shooters, fire, hurricanes, tornado, and first aid are found on the Emergency Preparation [website](#).

### **Library Use Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to help ensure the maximum accessibility and use of library materials, resources and services to students, faculty, and staff of Sam Houston State University. For the complete policy, please see Academic Policy Statement [840606, "Library Use Policy."](#)

### **Medical Emergency Procedures**

A medical emergency that includes an accident, injury, or illness should be reported to the University Police Department at 936-294-1794 (on campus: 4-1794); **however, when time is critical in saving a**

person's life, immediately call 8-911.

### **Members Not Employed by SHSU Serving on Thesis and Dissertation Committees**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a procedure whereby highly qualified individuals not employed by Sam Houston State University (SHSU) may serve on SHSU thesis and dissertation committees. This will enable our students and faculty to interact with prominent individuals in the appropriate topic area. For full coverage of this policy, see Academic Policy Statement [950601, "Members Not Employed by SHSU Serving on Thesis and Dissertation Committees."](#)

### **Smoking Policy**

In order to promote a healthy, safe, and aesthetically pleasing work, educational, and living environment, Sam Houston State University (SHSU) will endorse a smoke free and tobacco free environment. This policy and its general rules are explained in the President's Office Policy, [PRE-19, "Tobacco Policy."](#)

### **Space Management Policy**

The Sam Houston State University Space Management Policy establishes a Campus Space Planner and a Campus Space Planning Committee to provide careful and efficient management of property and space on campus. For more information and full coverage of this policy, see Finance & Operations Policy, [FO- FM- 60 "Space Management Policy."](#)

### **University Publications**

The policy covering all University publications is found in Administrative Policy and Procedures, Integrated Marketing Communications Policy UA-05, ["University Publications and Marketing Communications."](#)

## **Academic Procedures**

### **Academic Advisement and Mentoring**

The Student Advising and Mentoring (SAM) Center provides academic advising and mentoring to undergraduate students to help them succeed in their academic programs. A cadre of professional advisors is available to help students with the planning and execution of their academic pursuits. Students have access to trained, expert advisors who can explain all aspects of the academic experience. Advisors become students' guides through their tenure at the University. The SAM Center offers a wide variety of mentoring programs for all students. The SAM Center designs programs to help individual students and works directly with faculty and administrators to help students with individual classes.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

The University expects students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experience both in and out of the classroom. Accusations of academic dishonesty, proceedings and subsequent disciplinary actions are addressed in The Texas State University System, Board of Regents, [Rules and Regulations](#), Academic Honesty, Chapter VI, Subsection 5.3, "Academic Honesty" and in the



University's Academic Policy Statement [810213, "Procedures in Cases of Academic Dishonesty."](#)

### **Academic Grievance Procedures**

Students are provided with a procedure to address any grievance they may have of an academic nature. This includes disputes over course grades, unauthorized class absences or tardiness, suspension for academic deficiency, and an instructor's alleged unprofessional conduct related to academic matters. The policy also includes disputes involving graduate comprehensive and oral exams, theses and dissertations. These and other matters pertaining to a student's academic grievance are addressed specifically in Academic Policy Statement [900823, "Academic Grievance Procedures for Students."](#)

### **Academic Probation and Suspension**

[Academic Policy Statement 910312, " Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination"](#), located in the Curriculum and Instruction section of the Academic Policy Manual, details the academic probation, suspension and termination regulations for undergraduate and graduate students at Sam Houston State University.

### **Attendance Policy for Class**

General requirements for class attendance are as follows:

- Faculty are required to establish attendance requirements in each course.
- Each faculty member will inform students of the course attendance policy at the initial class meeting and will include the information on the course syllabus.
- Each faculty member will announce to their classes the course attendance policies for accepting late work or providing make-up examinations and include this information on the course syllabus.
- Students are responsible for understanding the attendance policy for each course in which they enroll and for meeting the attendance requirements.
- Students are expected to show appropriate cause for missing class or delaying major assignments or examinations.
- Failure to meet the attendance requirements in a course may lower grade(s), including a final course grade.
- Faculty members are expected to monitor course enrollment and class attendance.

The policy can be found at [Academic Policy Statement 800401, "Class Attendance."](#)

### **Faculty-authored Class Materials**

Textbooks, notebooks, manuals, or other materials that have been written or prepared by a SHSU faculty member must be approved before they may be placed on the syllabus. Requests to use faculty-authored materials should indicate the proposed pricing and profits. Additional information can be found in Academic Policy Statement 860211, "Requisition of Course Instructional Materials."

### **Student Absences on Religious Holy Days**

Sam Houston State University abides by the Texas Education Code, Section 51.911, requiring an institution of higher education to excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for an observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. This policy is fully addressed in [Academic Policy Statement 861001, "Student Absences on Religious Holy Days."](#)

## **Student Rosters and Records**

In support of the University's [Federal Aid Eligibility Validation](#) (FAEV) policy, student rosters are available electronically. To access student rosters, faculty login to My Sam, click on the Faculty tab at the top of the page and then click on the link to the summary class list (roster) listed under the Faculty Self Service links.

Student Records are under the custody and care of the President of the University and their designee, the Registrar. For a full discussion of the policy related to student records, please see Academic Policy Statements [810806, "Student Educational Records"](#).

## **Use of Student-Provided Technological Devices**

Smartphones and similar devices (laptop computers, tablets, wearables, and others) have become increasingly a part of everyday life. In the academic classroom, however, these devices can become a serious distraction and during tests they can become a serious problem. To address these and other concerns, faculty are authorized and encouraged to institute and enforce a classroom policy on the use of such devices in the course syllabus for each class section.

## **Visitors in the Classroom**

In the event an unannounced visitor attends a class, the instructor should request identification in the form of a current and official Sam Houston State University Bearkat OneCard identification card. If the visitor is not a registered Sam Houston State University student, the faculty member should act at their own discretion or refer the visitor to the department chair. This procedure is not intended to discourage the occasional visiting of classes by responsible persons. Obviously, however, the visiting of a particular class should be occasional and not regular, and it should in no way constitute interference with registered members of the class or the instruction thereof.

## **Legal Compliance**

### **Sexual Misconduct Policies and Procedures**

Sam Houston State University is committed to creating and maintaining educational communities in which each individual is respected, appreciated, and valued. SHSU maintains an environment that promotes prompt reporting of all types of sexual misconduct complaints. The University, in accordance with the [Texas State University System Sexual Misconduct Policies and Procedures](#), will take prompt and appropriate action to eliminate sexual misconduct when such is committed, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects.

### **Academic Instructional Staffing**

The University assumes responsibility for academic instructional staffing, as addressed in Academic Policy Statement [800114, "Academic Instructional and Research Personnel"](#), and is also addressed in Sam Houston State University, Human Resources Policy [HR-22, "Affirmative Action Recruitment Plan."](#)

The Texas State University System, including its Components, is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and complies with all applicable federal and State laws regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and



Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and is specifically addressed in the [Rules and Regulations, Chapter V, Subsection 2.11, “Equal Employment Opportunity.”](#)

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified individuals shall, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic program or activity. To that end, the University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and has created Academic Policy Statement [811006, “Students with Disabilities Policy”](#), located in the Student Section of the Academic Policy Manual. For information regarding resources and services available to students, please contact [the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities](#).

### **Confidential Data Policy**

Sam Houston State University is committed to compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). For a complete explanation of the policy regarding confidentiality of student academic records, please see Academic Policy Statement [810806, “Student Educational Records”](#).

### **Faculty Contracts**

Sam Houston State University provides each faculty member with a statement in writing of the terms of employment, including special conditions, responsibilities, and any special prerequisites. The document will cover such items as rank, salary, tenure provisions, whether the position is full-time or part-time, and the inclusive dates of service.

In most cases, the contractual period of employment is the academic year, which means that one-half of the contractual salary will be paid each semester. Written faculty contract letters are used each academic year: one for tenured faculty, one for probationary tenure-track faculty, and one for interim faculty. Such contracts are in accordance with The Texas State University System, Board of Regents’ [Rules and Regulations](#), Chapter V, Subsection 4.13, “Appointments.”

### **Copyrights and Patents**

Sam Houston State University strictly adheres to The Texas State University System policies concerning copyrights and patents as stated in the [Rules and Regulations](#) of the Board of Regents, Chapter III, Subsection 11, “Copyright Policy” and Chapter III, Subsection 12, “Patent Policy.”

### **Sam Houston Logo and Trademarks Use**

For the full policy covering the use of Sam Houston State University trademarks or logos, please see Integrated Marketing Communications Policy [PRE-11, “Trademark Licensing Policy.”](#)

## **Open Records Policy**

Sam Houston State University conforms to the standards and requirements of the Public Information Act per Texas Government Code, Chapter 552, acknowledging the public's right to access government records. For this policy, its procedures and a short Open Records Training Video, please see the President's Office Policy [PRE-20, "Open Records Policy."](#)

## **Personnel Records**

A personnel file for each faculty member is maintained in the Office of the Provost. This file contains the faculty member's application for employment, academic transcripts, photograph, letters of recommendation, employment contracts, and records of scholarly achievement, both hard copies and digital. It is the responsibility of each faculty member to report as expeditiously as possible to the Office of the Provost, through channels, changes in status, i.e., newly earned academic degrees, publications and honors, change in marital status, change in address, and so forth.

The Human Resources Department also maintains a personnel file containing specific information a faculty member is required to furnish upon reporting for duty. This file contains information concerning options for insurance and retirement, mandatory State and federal documents and acknowledgements, I-9 INS Employment Eligibility Verification and an initial payroll action form. In addition, college deans/library director and/or department chairs may maintain a personnel folder for assigned faculty members.

## **University Records Retention Schedule**

Sam Houston State University maintains a [Records Retention Schedule](#) that is certified by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) and complies with and adheres to the records retention schedules as stated in the [Texas State Records Retention Schedule](#), 4th edition, published by the TSLAC, and stated in Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Chapter 6, Section 6.10.

## **Website Disclaimer Statement**

The Sam Houston State University web site, <https://www.shsu.edu/> is a public service. Users of this web site are responsible for checking the accuracy, completeness, currency and/or suitability of all information. SHSU makes no representations, guarantees, or warranties as to the accuracy, completeness, currency, or suitability of the information provided via this web site. Additional details are provided in the Information Resources Statement [IT-SO1, "Web Site Disclaimer Statement."](#)