

Sam Houston State University
A Member of The Texas State University System

Finance & Operations Human Resources Policy B-5
Employee Development

SUBJECT: Staff Employee Professional Development

PURPOSE: To provide for the development of employees job-related professional abilities and skills and to enhance capacity to perform assigned job duties.

POLICY: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University (SHSU) to provide professional development training promoting professional growth in support of life-long learning and to enhance the competency and expertise of its employees. Further, it is also the policy of SHSU that no person shall be discriminated against in opportunities for professional development activities on the bases of race, creed, ancestry, marital status, citizenship, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Personnel actions are reviewed to ensure Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) compliance.

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1. Requirements

Annual professional development is required of all staff employees, including administrators. Non-supervisory staff employees must complete eight (8) hours of training and all supervisors, managers, and other executives (administrators) must complete twelve (12) hours of professional development job-related training annually. Training to meet this requirement may be accomplished through online learning, instructor-led training, college courses, CEU courses, external workshops, conferences or seminars.

Completion and documentation of the required hours of professional development will be included as part of the employee's **annual performance appraisal (APA)**. Completion of hours above those required will also be recognized and recorded on the APA. Supervisors are responsible for monitoring their employee's professional development progress.

Employees are responsible for keeping their professional development records current. Documentation of professional development progress is maintained utilizing the University's learning management database application, **Talent Management**. Employees' professional development hours are tracked through their **Talent Management** transcript. Supervisors are able to monitor professional development progress of their employees using **Talent Management**.

2. Eligibility

All employees are eligible, with supervisor approval, to attend professional development training applicable to individual professional development needs. Educational training and development programs are frequently offered during an employee's regularly scheduled work hours. To the extent possible and practical, supervisors and managers are encouraged to allow their employees time away to participate in professional development programs. Employees attending such programs with the supervisor's authorization are not required to make up time spent in training and development.

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3. In-House Professional Development

SHSU offers in-house training in several areas on a regular basis and in special areas on an as-needed basis. The Training Calendar and registration are available in Talent Management.

Purposes that may be served by in-house and outside training include, but are not necessarily limited to, preparing to deal with new technological and legal development, developing of additional work capabilities, increasing the number of qualified employees in areas designated by the University as having an acute shortage, and increasing the level of competence for current and prospective duty assignments.

Deans or Directors may approve in-house training and the Divisional Vice President may approve outside training requests.

- a. Work safety training is provided by the Risk Management Department.
- b. Software training is provided by the Division of Information Technology Services.
- c. Policy, procedures, benefits, and related training is provided by the Human Resources Department on an as-needed basis. For information regarding currently available courses or courses not currently available, contact the Human Resources Department.
- d. Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action Plan training for supervisors is provided by the Human Resources Department.
- e. New Employee and other required compliance training is provided online, as required by State law.
- f. SHSU courses are used as a method of training. Flex-time (variations in assigned work schedules) for one four (4) hour course per long semester may be granted when it does not interfere with work assignments and is properly approved. Refer to the university catalogue for admission/registration process.
- g. Special need training is used to convey information about changes related to the terms and conditions of employment. Notices are sent to employees who need to attend.
- h. Trainee positions may be established for on-the-job training. See Human Resources Policy WS-2, Staff Salary Administration for more information.
- i. The Continuing Education Department offers classes on a regular basis in a variety of subjects. Contact the Continuing Education Department for information.

4. Outside Professional Development

SHSU encourages employees to attend outside training when inside training is not available to satisfy the need. Examples include:

- a. Training provided by State agencies is used by SHSU employees to gain specialized knowledge and abilities required to perform their job duties.
- b. Professional seminars are available through many sources. Contact the Human Resources Department for assistance.
- c. Professional organization meetings offer a source of specialized training. SHSU encourages attendance at these meetings as a method of development.

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- d. Continuing education classes offered by civic organizations, community colleges, public schools, etc. are also a method of development for SHSU employees.
- e. Requests for outside training should be directed to the administrative supervisor with paperwork such as travel requests, registration forms, etc. being prepared and approved through regular procedures. The supervisor may also require an employee to attend training when it is necessary to achieve the ability to perform the job duties.

5. Employee Education Assistance Program

This program is for full-time (1.0 FTE) benefits-eligible staff and faculty employees, through the rank of Professor, who desire to enroll in university credit courses at SHSU. Applicants must have a minimum of one year full-time continuous employment at SHSU by the first class day.

- a. Coursework must relate directly to the employee's current or prospective job duties within their department. Work release time related to the *Employee Education Assistance Program* requires department head approval (see below).
- b. Undergraduate and graduate participants may take up to nine (9) credit hours per semester. **Participants are responsible for the payment of statutory tuition only, with other tuition and fees waived by SHSU. Waiver is based on successful completion of all coursework (grade of C or better). Participants are required to repay SHSU the full cost of tuition and fees for course results of less than C or incomplete (please contact the Bursar's Office for repayment instructions).** Unpaid repayments may be subject to the university's normal collections activities.
- c. Each semester, staff employees seeking release time must submit an [Employee Development Participation & Teaching Request Form](#) to their department head for consideration. Department heads will complete the approval section and retain the form in department files. Submission deadlines are as follows:

Fall Semester – August 1st
Spring Semester – December 1st
Summer Semester – May 1st

- d. The university may release full-time regular staff employees to take one course during regular work hours (department head approval required). Department heads are encouraged to promote professional growth of employees. Accordingly, approval is required from the Associate Vice President for Human Resources and Risk Management to **decline** eligibility for release time. Under this provision, the department will release a full-time staff employee for up to three (3) hours per week during each semester. Employees participating in this program and who take advantage of release time may not use time away from work for other activities, i.e. wellness programs.
- e. Staff employees also may, with the approval of their supervisor, utilize a flex-time work schedule if it does not interfere with job assignments or department activities for one course each semester.
- f. Employees may take courses outside regular working hours provided that attendance does not interfere with successful completion of assigned SHSU duties.
- g. Participants must meet all admission and registration requirements, and maintain a minimum 2.0 grade point average (GPA) for undergraduate courses. Graduate students must maintain a 3.0 GPA.

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- h. SHSU's Employee Education Assistance Program will be administered in a manner that ensures compliance with IRS code. A portion of the fees waived under this benefit may represent taxable income to the recipient. Please consult IRS Publication 970 or your tax advisor for more information.
- i. Any employee participating in the Employee Education Assistance Program who terminates employment with the university prior to the end of the semester for which tuition and fees were waived must reimburse the university for all waived tuition and fees. For purposes of this policy, the semester ends on the last day of all scheduled finals.
- j. Terminating employees must contact the Bursar's Office to make arrangements for repayment of amounts owed. Outstanding tuition and fees are subject to the university's normal collections activities where applicable. Please see the Bursar's website for details.

Reviewed by: David M. Hammonds, Associate VP for Human Resources & Risk Management – 07/20/2016
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