



2009-2010

Report of Efforts Concerning Timely Graduation

The table below provides the average number of semester credit hours attempted and the average number of fall and spring semesters attended by a student completing the programs in the following CIP broad-based academic programs:

**Average Credits Attempted and Mean Semesters
Toward Baccalaureate Degree in Program Areas***

Degree Program	# of Grads **	Credits Attempted	Mean Semesters
Science & Math	88	159	11
Agriculture	125	151	10
Arts & Architecture	585	153	11
Business	480	147	10
Health	38	158	10
Social Sciences & Service	682	146	10
Technology	32	161	11
Total Graduates	2030		
Institutional Average		150	10

* Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

<http://www.txhighereddata.org/reports/performance/hb1172/BaccTimelyGradFY2008.xls>

Methodology:

<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/reports/PDF/1896.PDF?CFID=4217846&CFTOKEN=63491065>

** FY 2008

Strategies that have been newly implemented in Fall 2009 at Sam Houston State University include:

- Bearkat Camp
- HELP Program

Details about Bearkat Camp can be found below in Section 1 and more information on the HELP Program can be found below in Section 3.

1. To ensure that undergraduate students graduate in a timely manner.

Sam Houston State University (SHSU) has initiated a wide variety of proactive programs such as the joint admission program (<http://www.shsu.edu/joint/>), articulation agreements (<http://www.shsu.edu/prospects/transfer/>) and traveling advisors that enable students to easily transition from a community college to SHSU. These programs outline the way that community college work can be efficiently integrated into the students selected baccalaureate programs at SHSU.

SHSU has been making efforts to have more Friday and afternoon classes in order to ensure that there are more times available for students to choose from when making their schedules. This helps them to have complete schedules and not have to take classes that they do not need for their degree to be fulltime students. To help with this problem as well SHSU has been making the transition to 120 hour degree programs.

SHSU has established a new program for incoming freshman, Bearkat Camp (http://www.shsu.edu/~rca_ww/bearkatcamp/). This is a four day three night experience where incoming freshman will be introduced to Bearkat traditions, spirit and pride while being engaged in learning activities that are interactive and student led.

The Bearkat Learning Community (http://www.shsu.edu/fye_www/learningcommunities.html) is a program which provides incoming freshmen students the opportunity to take common classes with students living in the same residence hall. This group of students has a planned program of activities designed to enhance academics as well as provide a positive social atmosphere. Other non-residential learning communities are centered on academic disciplines to include criminal justice, business, and education.

SHSU also provides classes at The University Center (TUC) (<http://www.shsu.edu/ucenter/>), located in The Woodlands, it is shared by seven institutions of higher education. This location allows Houston-area students, with time constraints, to attend courses located closer to their home and/or work.

SHSU provides its students access to Career Services (http://www.shsu.edu/~ccp_www/), a fully-staffed office of career specialist to assist them in making the transition from college to career through a variety of programs, including career advising, resume development, workshops, career fairs, and employer recruiting. A clear goal of employment after graduation will encourage timely graduation.

SHSU offers a program hosted by the Office of the Registrar called Destination Graduation (http://www.shsu.edu/~reg_www/destination/). This allows prospective graduates to ensure that all necessary steps have been completed to earn their degree.

2. To ensure that undergraduate students do not attempt an excessive number of semester credit hours beyond the minimum number required to complete the students' degree program.

Studies show that a successful first year experience increases the chances of timely graduation so SHSU implemented FYE: First-Year Experience (http://www.shsu.edu/~fye_www/). FYE offers a variety of courses and support services designed to help first-year students make a successful transition to university life. Two of the main programs are as follows:

- SAM 136 is a 3 hour, elective freshman seminar concentrating on enhancing reading, writing, and communication skills needed to succeed in an academic program (http://www.shsu.edu/~fye_www/sam136.html).
- Freshman Learning Community (FLC) (http://www.shsu.edu/~fye_ww/FLC.htm) is a non-residential educational experience specifically designed to foster the intellectual development of student through increased interaction with fellow students, faculty and staff.

SHSU also offers a variety of Academic Support Services such as The Math Lab (http://www.shsu.edu/~mth_www/mathlab.html) which is a program that helps students with understanding their Mathematics and Statistics courses during their Freshman and Sophomore years, The Reading Center (http://www.shsu.edu/~rdg_www/) which helps students find effective reading strategies to help them succeed, The Writing Center (<http://www.shsu.edu/~wctr/>) helps students develop their writing abilities, Developmental classes that help students develop necessary skills to succeed in university-level courses and access to other academic tutoring offered by different departments.

SHSU follows the Five Q-drop Rule where students are allowed no more than five Q-drops during their academic career at SHSU. This is designed to encourage students to exhaust all necessary means to successfully complete a course prior to dropping the class.

3. To provide academic counseling concerning timely graduation.

The Counseling Center (<http://www.shsu.edu/~counsel>) offers personal counseling, academic and career services, and outreach/consultation programs to students. These services give students that needed support to overcome various personal or academic obstacles.

The SAM Center (http://www.shsu.edu/~sam_www/) is a centralized location that offers academic advising and a variety of study enhancement programs. The SAM Center offers Mandatory Advisement for students who do not meet their academic requirements and short courses on Academic Survival Skills (http://www.shsu.edu/~sam_www/studyskills/html). The SAM Center coordinates Community College Counselor Workshops, where community college advisors come to the SHSU campus to learn more about the degree programs offered to their transfers. The SAM Center also offer these programs Monitored Academic Progress (MAP) (http://www.shsu.edu/~sam_www/faqs.html) which monitors the academic progress of students returning from academic suspension, the HELP program (http://www.shsu.edu/~sam_www/faqs.html) designed to support and monitor students as they first enter academic probation and First Alert (http://www.shsu.edu/~sam_www/firstalert.html) which is a

intrusive advising program based on referrals from faculty members who are concerned about a student's lack of academic progress.

SHSU also provides several types of orientations for incoming students to participate in. The Summer Orientation and Transfer Orientation are just two of the main orientations that SHSU promotes. SHSU also has several programs that have separate orientations and centers, Centers for Foster Children and Centers for Veterans (http://www.shsu.edu/~reg_www/veterans.html).

4. To develop an online student degree progress report which compares the courses taken and credit received by a student to the courses completed and needed for degree and graduation requirements for each academic term.

SHSU has implemented an on-line degree audit program allowing students to view which degree requirements have been met and which requirements have yet to be fulfilled. This is a valuable tool for both students and advisors to keep students on the right track for timely graduation.

SHSU also has an online catalog (<http://www.shsu.edu/catalog/>) that is a maintained listing of all current information designed to help students understand degree requirements and procedures.

5. To implement tuition policies that encourages timely graduation.

SHSU has initiated the 45/30-Hour Rule where The Texas Education Code states that an institution of higher education, under specific condition, may charge a resident undergraduate student a higher tuition rate than the rate charged to other resident undergraduate students. The higher tuition rate may not exceed the rate charged to nonresident undergraduate students.

SHSU has also implemented tuition rebates for certain undergraduate students. The purpose of this program is to provide tuition rebate of \$1,000 that will provide a financial incentive for students to prepare for university studies while completing their high school work, avail themselves of academic counseling, make early career decisions, and complete their baccalaureate studies with as few extraneous courses as possible. (http://www.shsu.edu/~reg_www/)

The Third Attempt Rule has also been implemented by SHSU. Students enrolled in the same course for the third or more time will be charged the non-resident tuition rate for the hours associated with the course even if the student normally qualifies for in-state tuition. Resident students who reach the "excessive hour limit" will be charged non-resident tuition.

6. To provide Meta-Coordination of all SHSU initiatives aimed at improving student success:

The Office of Student Success Initiatives will help to coordinate the many, and distinct, programs and initiatives SHSU has implemented, or will implement in the future, in order to improve student success, including academic support and enhancement programs as well as scholarship programs. Initiatives will target SHSU applicants who are accepted for admission; new transfer students; sophomore students; and new freshmen. The Office of Student Success Initiatives and its Advisory Board

are working on a student success plan that starts with pre-entry and extends to graduation. An outline of this plan can be seen at http://www.shsu.edu/~fye_www/SSI.htm