



Michael T. Stephenson

Dear Bearkat faculty and staff,

The semester is nearly half complete, cooler temperatures are in the forecast, and we begin thinking about holiday plans because they are just around the corner. This is also the time of the year when reality sets in and some students get behind with their classes. Inspired by CJ professor [Bree Bopppe](#), I would encourage you to take time this week to provide some extra encouragement to your students. I know they will appreciate it.

As we approach the midpoint of the semester, I wanted to provide you with a campus update.

No. 1 in Texas for Social Mobility

U.S. News & World Report ranked [SHSU No. 1 in Texas and No. 24 nationally](#) in advancing social mobility. I could not be more proud of our institution. This is why we do what we do.

Student Success

SHSU and the Academic Success Center were awarded a \$2.1 million [Strengthening Institutional Programs](#) grant from USDOE to expand our academic support services. Congratulations to co-investigators Brian Loft and Mary Catherine Breen. The [Academic Success Center](#), located in the newly renovated Newton Gresham Library, stands ready to help students with math, science, writing, humanities, language, and academic coaching.

Research Activity

Drs. Breen and Loft's USDOE grant provides further evidence that our sponsored research activity continues to grow. According to ORSP, compared to last year, the amount of externally awarded funding doubled, 84 proposals were awarded (up 25%), and 219 proposals were submitted (up 18%). Recently, [Dr. Khalid Kahn of COHS](#) was awarded a \$2.7 million R01 award for his research in population health. You can see the ORSP five-year impact report [here](#).

Fall Enrollment

While still unofficial, compared to last fall, [SHSU enrollment](#) increased in freshman, first-time transfer, and graduate student enrollment. Total enrollment is down slightly as fewer of last year's freshman class returned (72% this fall compared to 78.5% last year). Compared to last fall, students enrolled in 100% online classes increased by 22% and more students have opted not to take a full load of classes (12+ hours). Thank you to each of you who helped with calling, emailing, and texting this summer to tell our Bearkats that we were ready to welcome them back this semester.

Dean Searches

SHSU is conducting searches for two new deans to begin in fall 2022 – [one in COBA](#) and [one in COHS](#). COBA dean Mitchell Muehsam will retire at the end of this academic year. Emily Roper was named interim dean for COHS in August when Rod Runyan departed the university.

Visits to Colleges

[President White](#) will join me in visiting the colleges in the coming months. We look forward to meeting new people, seeing familiar faces, and having time for Q&A. Dates will be announced soon.

Tell Our Story

I hope you will join me in telling our story far and wide on social media. Please connect with the SHSU Provost page on [Twitter](#) and on [Facebook](#), tag us when you have something to share, and don't be shy about telling the Sam story. We care deeply for our students, we have amazing staff and faculty, and instilling a life of service is central to all that we do.

Thank You!

I have only been here three months, but please accept my genuine thanks for the warm welcome. Knowing how deeply everyone at this institution is committed to student success makes me incredibly proud to be a Bearkat!

With gratitude,

Michael T. Stephenson
Provost and Senior Vice President

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