



Michael T. Stephenson

Welcome back faculty and staff!

Classes begin Wednesday as scheduled. I am grateful for all of your hard work in preparing our campus community to return. As we begin a new year and a new semester, I'd like to briefly check in on what's happening in Academic Affairs.

### COVID-19 Absence Policy for Students

The policy for COVID-19 related absences has been adjusted. The new version is as follows:

*For COVID-related absences that require a student to submit documentation to their faculty, the student should seek this documentation from the medical clinic or a medical provider where they received their care. If the student did not see a medical provider and requires documentation, they should utilize the Absence Request Notification Form and process through the SHSU Student Advocacy Office (formerly the Dean of Students Office). The Student Health Center is only able to provide documentation for students who had a medical appointment with our clinic.*

To keep up-to-date on the latest SHSU policies and practices related to COVID-19, visit the [SHSU COVID-19 website](#).

### Academic Policy Revision Open Forums Scheduled

Thank you to all of the faculty members who took the time to fill out the survey regarding the four academic policies under review. I feel confident that the shared opinions and insights from faculty across campus will be valuable for the work group. As I've mentioned in [previous emails](#), the work group of representative faculty and administrators begins work this week on drafting recommendations.

Upon completion, the drafts will be circulated and then discussed at open faculty forums in March. The open forums will take place Tuesday, March 8 from 8-9 a.m. and again from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Additional forums will be held on Wednesday, March 9, from 8-9 a.m. and again from 3-4 p.m. All forums will be held in LSC 241.

### College Visits

I have invited President White to join me in meeting with faculty and staff from each college at the end of January and early February. Please keep an eye on your inbox for an email invitation from me in the coming weeks with the date, time, and location for your college.

Thank you for your continued passion and engagement as we work together to serve our students and their academic dreams. As you do so, share your stories of Bearkat successes and perseverance with your communities and with @SHSUProvost on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). We have an incredible story to tell.

Sincerely,

Michael T. Stephenson  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

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*This email has been approved for distribution to Faculty and Staff  
by Michael T. Stephenson, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.*

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