



Michael T. Stephenson

Sam Houston State University

MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Office of the Provost

Good morning and welcome to the spring 2025 semester!

I hope your winter break included precious time with loved ones and meaningful rest. Most first- and second-year College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) students began classes last Monday while all other students begin today. As we start a new semester, here are a few updates from the Division of Academic Affairs:

Dean Searches. Three candidates for the College of Arts & Media (CAM) dean will be on campus the week of Jan. 21. The following week of Jan. 27, five candidates for the College of Health Sciences (COHS) dean will visit SHSU. Faculty and staff in CAM and COHS will receive emails with the details for their respective college's open forums in the coming days. I anticipate naming both new deans in February. I would like to thank members of both search committees for their truly important work.

BRIDGE 2.0. To foster interdisciplinary research and position our institution for success in obtaining large external funds, I am pleased to announce the second year of BRIDGE Program (Building Research, Innovation, Discovery, and Growing Engagement), funded by the Provost Innovation Fund. This year, we will provide up to \$250,000 in one-time dollars to fund a center proposal. Additional details are available [here](#). The first round of BRIDGE grants in 2023 were successful in helping SHSU faculty generate external research grants. Collectively, the individuals who received first-round grants have since generated \$1.8M in external funds.

IDEA Course Evaluations. Based on the recommendations of the Course Evaluation Best Practices working group in spring 2023, SHSU pilot tested the shorter version of IDEA during spring and fall 2024 as a mechanism for assessing student perceptions of teaching. A review of the data collected show a very strong, positive correlation between the shorter and longer versions of the instrument, and response rates marginally improved with the shorter version. After consulting with Faculty Senate and the academic deans in November, I have authorized the use of the shorter version as the university's primary instrument *effective spring 2025*.

Reallocation Working Group Update. The Academic Affairs (AA) working group on reallocation completed a draft of their report just before the holiday break. The final AA report will be submitted to President White and the Cabinet upon completion of the report from the university-wide working group chaired by Vice President for Student Affairs Dannie Moore.

Accreditation. Our fifth-year interim report is due to SACSCOC in March. Thank you to Somer Franklin, her team, and a group of very dedicated SHSU faculty and staff for the time they are spending to complete the detailed report. This semester, we will also submit our application to renew

our Carnegie Community Engaged designation. Joyce McCauley, Lee Miller, and their team in the Center for Community Engagement have worked tirelessly on this document, which is due in August. Thank you all for your contributions to these efforts.

Promoting SHSU. Since August, SHSU has signed new or renewed transfer partnerships with 13 institutions and another five are in progress. Additionally, SHSU has signed partnership agreements with ISDs in Madisonville, New Waverly, Hurst-Euless-Bedford, Willis, and Waller to add to the existing partnerships that we have with Huntsville ISD and Goose Creek CISD.

Thank you for continued dedication and hard work. Have a good semester!

Michael T. Stephenson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MTS', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Box 2087 | 936.294.1001 | provost@shsu.edu

1905 University Ave. | Huntsville, TX 77340 US

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