

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish requirements and specifications for earning undergraduate degrees and certificates at Sam Houston State University (SHSU) so students and their academic advisors may devise successful plans of study.

2. DEGREE ELEMENTS

2.01 All bachelor's degrees at SHSU, regardless of major, are comprised of the following elements:

- a. General Education Core Curriculum, consisting of 42 semester credit hours (SCH)
 - (1) Course substitutions or exceptions are not permitted within the General Education Core Curriculum.
- b. Degree-Specific Requirements
- c. Major-Specific Requirements, consisting of at least 30 SCH
- d. Electives, if applicable
- e. Minor, if applicable

2.02 All academic associate degrees at SHSU contain the following minimum requirements:

- a. General Education Core Curriculum, consisting of 42 SCH
- b. Major-Specific Requirements
 - (1) Curriculum must be associated with a discipline or field of study leading to a baccalaureate degree.

2.03 All applied associate degrees at SHSU contain the following minimum requirements:

- a. General Education Core Curriculum, consisting of at least 15 SCH that include at least 3 SCH in each of the following areas:

- Humanities/Fine Arts (Communication*; Language, Philosophy, and Culture; or Creative Arts)
- Social/Behavioral Sciences (American History, Government/Political Science, or Social and Behavioral Sciences)
- Natural Science/Mathematics (Mathematics or Life and Physical Sciences)

* Note: For purposes of meeting this requirement, courses in basic composition that do not contain a literature component, courses in oral communication, and introductory foreign language courses may not be the one course designated to fulfill the humanities/fine arts requirement.

- b. Major-Specific Requirements, consisting of 50% to 75% of course credits from a common technical specialty identified by the program Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code.

3. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

3.01 All bachelor's degrees at SHSU contain the following minimum requirements:

- a. A minimum of 120 total semester credit hours (SCH)
- b. A minimum of 42 SCH of advanced coursework (3000-4000 level courses), with the exception of the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences (BAAS) which requires a minimum of 36 SCH of advanced coursework
 - A minimum of 25% of SCH completed in residence as defined in the applicable SHSU catalog of which at least 24 SCH must be advanced
 - A minimum of 12 SCH of advanced coursework within the major field of study
 - A minimum of 6 SCH of advanced coursework within the minor field of study (if applicable)

- c. A minimum 2.0 grade point average (GPA) in each of the following (unless a higher GPA is required by the degree program):
- SHSU GPA (all undergraduate coursework taken at SHSU)
 - Overall GPA (all SHSU and transfer undergraduate coursework) This is also known as the cumulative grade point average.
 - SHSU Major GPA (all SHSU undergraduate coursework taken within the Major block of the degree plan)
 - Overall Major GPA (all SHSU and transfer undergraduate coursework taken within the Major block of the degree plan)
 - SHSU Minor GPA (all SHSU undergraduate coursework taken with the Minor block of the degree plan) Not all degree plans include a minor.
 - Overall Minor GPA (all SHSU and transfer undergraduate coursework taken within the Minor block of the degree plan) Not all degree plans include a minor.

3.02 All academic associate degrees at SHSU contain the following minimum requirements:

- a. A minimum of 60 total SCH
- b. A minimum of 25% of SCH completed in residence as defined in the applicable SHSU catalog
- c. A minimum 2.0 grade point average (GPA) in each of the following (unless a higher GPA is required by the degree program):
- SHSU GPA (all undergraduate coursework taken at SHSU)
 - Overall GPA (all SHSU and transfer undergraduate coursework) This is also known as the cumulative grade point average.
 - SHSU Major GPA (all SHSU undergraduate coursework taken within the Major block of the degree plan)
 - Overall Major GPA (all SHSU and transfer undergraduate coursework taken within the Major block of the degree plan)

3.03 All applied associate degrees at SHSU contain the following minimum requirements:

- a. A minimum of 60 total SCH
- b. A minimum of 25% of SCH completed in residence as defined in the applicable SHSU catalog

- c. A minimum 2.0 grade point average (GPA) in each of the following (unless a higher GPA is required by the degree program):
- SHSU GPA (all undergraduate coursework taken at SHSU)
 - Overall GPA (all SHSU and transfer undergraduate coursework) This is also known as the cumulative grade point average.
 - SHSU Major GPA (all SHSU undergraduate coursework taken within the Major block of the degree plan)
 - Overall Major GPA (all SHSU and transfer undergraduate coursework taken within the Major block of the degree plan)

4. CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

- 4.01 For the purposes of this policy, the term certificate also includes micro-certificates.
- 4.02 A minimum of 25% of SCH completed in residence for undergraduate certificates as defined in the applicable SHSU catalog
- 4.03 A minimum 2.0 grade point average (GPA) is required in each of the following:
- SHSU GPA (all undergraduate coursework taken at SHSU)
 - Overall GPA (all SHSU and transfer undergraduate coursework) This is also known as the cumulative grade point average.
 - SHSU Certificate GPA (all SHSU undergraduate coursework taken and applied toward the certificate)
 - Overall Certificate GPA (all SHSU and transfer undergraduate coursework taken and applied toward the certificate)

5. CREDIT-BY-EXAM SPECIFICATIONS

- 5.01 A grade of A shall automatically take precedence over credit-by-exam grades.
- 5.02 Grades of B or C shall take precedence over credit-by-exam grades unless otherwise approved. Students shall have the option to request credit (via credit-by-exam) in lieu of a grade of B or C by contacting the respective department of the course to request the change.

- 5.03 Credit-by-exam grades (CR) shall automatically replace grades of D and F. Although credit-by-exam removes letter grades of D and F (and B and C when requested and approved), from calculations of the student's GPA, it does not remove the letter grade from the student's transcript.
- 5.04 No more than 25% of a student's degree or certificate (e.g., 30 SCH of a baccalaureate degree, 15 SCH of an associate degree) may be fulfilled by credit-by-exam. Students may appeal the 25% SCH limit by contacting the chair of the department that houses their degree or certificate program. All decisions by the department chair are final. In addition, the total number of SCHs awarded via credit-by-exam will be considered in conjunction with the total number of transfer hours. The cumulative number of hours (i.e., credit-by-exam hours and transfer hours) shall not exceed total transfer hour limits as described in the Undergraduate Catalog.
- 5.05 Currently enrolled students may appeal credit-by-exam decisions made prior to the enacting of this policy by contacting The Testing Center.

6. PROCEDURES AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 6.01 The grade point average (GPA) is calculated by dividing the quality points earned by the total GPA hours attempted.
 - a. Quality points are calculated by multiplying the value of the letter grade earned by the number of credit hours of the course. Letter grades have the following values: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0.
 - b. The total GPA hours attempted does not include developmental courses or courses assigned grades of CR (credit) or NC (non-credit). The grade point average is carried out to two decimal places (ex: 2.00) and is not rounded.
- 6.02 Specific degree and certificate requirements are listed in the student's degree or certificate plan. Degree and certificate plans are published in the Undergraduate Catalog and the institution's degree audit software.
- 6.03 A student has the option of meeting the academic requirements for any degree or certificate as outlined in the catalog at the time of admission or those listed in any later catalog provided the requirements are met not later than six (6) years from the

effective date of the selected catalog. Shorter time limits may apply depending on the degree or certificate program.

- 6.04 The student bears the sole responsibility for assuring that all degree or certificate requirements are fulfilled.

APPROVED: <signed>
Alisa White, Ph.D., President

DATE: 5/5/2025

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

This academic policy statement (APS) has been approved by the reviewer listed below and represents SHSU's Division of Academic Affairs' policy from the date of this document until superseded.

Original: May 31, 1995
Reviewer: Academic Affairs Council

Review Cycle: Five years*
Review Date: Fall 2030

Approved: <signed>
Michael T. Stephenson, Ph.D.,
Provost and Sr. Vice President
for Academic Affairs

Date: 4/28/25

*Effective January 2018, Academic Policy Statements will be reviewed on a rotating 5-year schedule. To transition to a distributed review load, some policies may be reviewed prior to the 5-year timeframe, with subsequent reviews transitioning to the 5-year schedule.