

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

All undergraduate degrees at SHSU, regardless of major, are comprised of the following elements:

- a. General Education Core Curriculum, consisting of 42 semester credit hours
 - (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 semester credit hours
- d. Electives, if applicable
- e. Minor, if applicable

3. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

3.01 All undergraduate degrees at SHSU contain the following minimum requirements:

- a. A minimum of 120 total semester credit hours
- b. A minimum of 42 semester credit hours of advanced coursework (3000-4000 level courses)
 - A minimum of 25% of semester credit hours completed in residence as defined in the applicable SHSU catalog of which at least 24 semester credit hours must be advanced

- A minimum of 12 semester credit hours of advanced coursework within the major field of study
 - A minimum of 6 semester credit hours 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 coursework taken at SHSU)
 - Overall GPA (all SHSU and transfer coursework) This is also known as the cumulative grade point average.
 - SHSU Major GPA (all SHSU coursework taken within the Major block of the degree plan)
 - Overall Major GPA (all SHSU and transfer coursework taken within the Major block of the degree plan)
 - SHSU Minor GPA (all SHSU coursework taken with the Minor block of the degree plan) Not all degree plans include a minor.
 - Overall Minor GPA (all SHSU and transfer coursework taken within the Minor block of the degree plan) Not all degree plans include a minor.

4. CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

- 4.01 For the purposes of this policy, the term certificate also includes micro-certificates.
- 4.02 A minimum 2.0 grade point average (GPA) is required in each of the following:
- SHSU GPA (all coursework taken at SHSU)
 - Overall GPA (all SHSU and transfer coursework) This is also known as the cumulative grade point average.
 - SHSU Certificate GPA (all SHSU coursework taken and applied toward the certificate)
 - Overall Certificate GPA (all SHSU and transfer 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 30 semester credit hours (SCH) of a student's undergraduate degree plan may be fulfilled by credit-by-exam. Students may appeal the 30-SCH limit by contacting the chair of the department that houses their degree 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 toward the degree.
 - 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 toward the degree 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 decimals (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 program.

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

DATE: 2/19/2024

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	Review Cycle:	Five years*
Reviewer:	Academic Affairs Council	Review Date:	Fall 2029

Approved: <signed> Date: 2/14/2024
Michael T. Stephenson, Ph.D.,
Provost and Sr. Vice President
for Academic Affairs

*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.