

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish requirements for graduate program admission, enrollment of graduate students in thesis or dissertation courses, and graduate degree completion time limits at Sam Houston State University (SHSU). Requirements for College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) students are not addressed in this policy, but instead are addressed in COM policies 6.3 and 9.1-1.

2. GRADUATE ACADEMIC PROGRAM ADMISSIONS

- 2.01 Graduate academic programs include but are not necessarily limited to: graduate micro-certificates, graduate certificates, master's degrees, specialists' degrees, and doctoral/professional degrees.
- 2.02 The Dean of Graduate Studies shall regularly review, study, evaluate, and make recommendations concerning admission standards of graduate students. The recommendations shall be sent to the Provost and Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs for review and approval, who shall seek advice from the deans, and appropriate academic support and student affairs units, before forwarding it to the President for review. All changes to admission standards must be approved by the Texas State University System (TSUS) Board of Regents.
- 2.03 Admission standards shall be publicly available in the Graduate and Professional Catalog, on the University's admissions website, and via any other relevant publications.
- 2.04 For graduate admission, SHSU requires an undergraduate GPA from the baccalaureate-granting institution of 2.5 (on a 4.0 point scale) or a GPA of at least 2.8 from the last 60 hours of courses taken at the baccalaureate degree-granting institution. Only the hours received at the baccalaureate degree-granting institution may be used to calculate for the 2.8 GPA requirement admission option. The minimum GPA may be waived upon petition and approval of the academic dean, as well as approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies. Circumstances that may qualify for a waiver include, but are not limited to, demonstration of related professional experience, subsequent academic work in a related field, demonstrated intellectual contribution to the field, and auditions for or portfolios of creative activities, as appropriate.

- 2.05 Academic programs may require credentials or a GPA higher than the University minimum requirements stated in 2.04. Such program specific requirements shall be publicly available in the Graduate and Professional Catalog, on the academic program website/landing page, and via any other relevant publications.
- 2.06 Admission to graduate and professional studies at Sam Houston State University and any of its sponsored programs is open to qualified individuals without regard to race, creed, ancestry, marital status, citizenship, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, veteran status, disability status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

3. THESIS/DISSERTATION COURSE ENROLLMENT

- 3.01 Once a student enrolls in a thesis/dissertation course, the student must enroll in such course in each subsequent fall, spring, and summer semester until the thesis/dissertation is successfully completed. The academic dean and Dean of Graduate Studies may waive the continuous enrollment requirement when appropriate.
- 3.02 When a thesis or dissertation course is required by the degree program, students are required to enroll in the appropriate thesis or dissertation course in the semester in which the student is approved for graduation. If the degree in question is not awarded at the end of that semester, re-enrollment in the appropriate thesis or dissertation course is required during the subsequent semester in which the degree is again expected to be awarded.
- 3.03 Failure to meet continuous enrollment requirements may result in the department or program dismissing the student on grounds of insufficient progress towards graduation.
- 3.04 Any student dismissed on grounds of insufficient progress on a thesis or dissertation may appeal per the process outlined for academic dismissal appeal in section 10 of APS 910312, *Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination*.

4. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A student who is unable to work on the thesis or dissertation for a period of time may present to the appropriate academic dean a written request for a leave of absence of up to one (1) year. The dean's approval of such a request must also be in writing. An approved request must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar through the Dean of Graduate Studies. Additional requests for leaves of absence may be approved but must be resubmitted after the previous leave has lapsed.

5. GRADUATE DEGREE COMPLETION TIME LIMITS

- 5.01 A student is required to complete the master's degree within a six-year period, measured from the date of initial enrollment for graduate credit in a particular degree program. The period of time a student is on an approved leave of absence will not be counted as time accumulated towards that six-year deadline for completion of the degree.
- 5.02 A student is required to complete the doctoral degree within an eight-year period, measured from the date of initial enrollment for graduate credit in a particular degree program. The period of time a student is on an approved leave of absence will not be counted as time accumulated towards that eight-year deadline for completion of the degree.
- 5.03 Any extension of either the master's degree six-year deadline or the doctoral degree eight-year deadline must be approved in writing by the appropriate academic dean and the Dean of Graduate Studies. A student on a leave of absence will be considered an active student for purposes of official records but will not have access to University services.

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

DATED: 6/12/2024

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: January 29, 1993
Reviewer: Academic Affairs Council

Review Cycle: Five years*
Review Date: Spring 2026

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

Date: 6/12/2024

*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.