



Sam Houston State University

College of Osteopathic Medicine
Student Handbook

Academic Year 2024 – 2025

Note: It is a student's responsibility to read this handbook; be knowledgeable of its contents; and comply with the standards set forth herein.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
MESSAGE FROM SHSU ACADEMIC AFFAIRS.....	4
WELCOME.....	5
SHSU-COM Mission.....	5
SHSU-COM Goals	5
SHSU-COM Objectives	5
SHSU-COM PROGRAM OVERVIEW.....	6
Accreditation	6
General Information	7
Clerkship.....	9
FACULTY & STAFF.....	10
SHSU-COM CURRICULA	11
The Seven Osteopathic Core Competencies for Medical Students	11
Attendance Guidelines.....	13
Leave of Absence.....	16
Grading Policies	19
Examination Procedures and Policies.....	21
Test Administration.....	23
Promotion, Remediation, Probation, Graduation, and Dismissal.....	25
Academic Honor Code	29
Academic Standing.....	30

COMLEX-USA Examinations	31
Student-Provided Technological Devices.....	32
Graduation Requirements	32
Resignation From the Program.....	32
RESEARCH & FUNDING	34
Student Research Eligibility	34
Research Ethics and Compliance	34
Student Travel and Funding.....	34
Presenting Research and Travel.....	36
STUDENT SERVICES & RESOURCES	37
Physical and Mental Health Resources	37
Academic Resources and Support	39
Financial Aid and Debt Management	40
Newton Gresham Library	40
Student Organizations.....	41
Reasonable Accommodations and Disability Services.....	41
Student Travel, Contingency Plan, and Housing.....	42
Behavioral Intervention	43
ACADEMIC STANDARDS & STUDENT DEVELOPMENT	44
Professionalism.....	44
Immunization Requirements.....	45
Background Checks and Drug Testing	46
Health Insurance	47
Needle Stick/Exposure	47
Malpractice Insurance Coverage Policy	48

Dress Code.....	48
Course and Faculty Evaluations	50
Participation.....	50
Reproduction of Materials	50
Compliance and Training.....	50
SHSU ACADEMIC POLICIES	52
Academic Good Standing.....	52
Academic Honesty.....	53
Academic Probation/Suspension/Termination	53
Graduate Degree Enrollment and Completion Requirements	53
UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES.....	54
Course Load.....	54
Transfer Credit.....	54
Leave of Absence.....	54
Resignation	55
State Statutory Refund Schedule of Tuition and Fees	55
Appeal of a Grade.....	56
Classroom Rules of Conduct	56
Religious Holy Days.....	56
Notice to Persons with Disabilities.....	56
TITLE IX: Sexual Misconduct	57
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).....	57

MESSAGE FROM SHSU ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The *Sam Houston State University College of Osteopathic Medicine Student Handbook* outlines the AY 2024-2025 policies and procedures for all SHSU-COM students and supersedes previously published handbooks.

The provisions of this handbook do not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between any applicant, student, faculty member, or staff employee and Sam Houston State University, including the College of Osteopathic Medicine, or the Texas State University System. In the event of a conflict between the provisions of this handbook and the Texas State University System Rules and Regulations (<https://www.tsus.edu/about-tsus/policies.html>), the latter shall govern.

University-wide policies can be found in the last section of this handbook. Additional information can be found in the current graduate and professional catalog, Sam Houston State University's *Academic Policy Manual*, and on the Dean of Students' Office website.

WELCOME

SHSU-COM Mission

The mission of the Sam Houston State University (SHSU) College of Osteopathic Medicine (SHSU-COM) is to prepare students for the degree of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine with an emphasis toward primary care and rural practice, to develop culturally aware and compassionate physicians, who follow osteopathic principles, that are prepared for graduate medical education, and will serve the people of Texas with professionalism and patient-centered care.

A significant part of the mission of the COM is to increase the physician workforce in the eastern region of Texas and to increase access to primary care. The COM will accomplish this by recruiting qualified applicants from areas to which they would likely want to return and establish their practice.

SHSU-COM Goals

The goals of SHSU-COM are to:

- Recruit candidates nationally, while targeting underserved communities in the SHSU-COM service region.
- Include qualified candidates from underrepresented populations with a focus on East Texas in the selection pool.
- Demonstrate academic excellence.
- Develop an orientation toward primary care and service to the community.
- Instill a need for life-long learning.
- Imprint the philosophy of holistic care of the individual and the principles of osteopathic practice.
- prepare students for graduation and residency training.

SHSU-COM Objectives

The objectives of SHSU-COM are to:

- Provide an excellent academic experience based on early clinical training and an integrated curriculum taught by highly skilled and experienced lecturers and clinicians.
- Reinforce the quality of the academic experience through biomedical and clinical research.
- Collaborate with SHSU faculty wherever possible.
- Create opportunities with clinical and community partners.
- Facilitate the success of our students through recognition of their achievements and preparation for GME.

SHSU-COM PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Accreditation

Process and Approval

SHSU-COM has been approved to recruit, matriculate, teach, and graduate students in the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) program by the following entities:

- The Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) – the American Osteopathic Association’s (AOA) accreditation body as codified in 34 CFR §602, ensuring that all COMs have met or exceeded the Commission’s Standards for educational quality;
- The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) – the regional body for the accreditation of degree-granting higher education institutions in the Southern states; and
The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board – a Texas agency that oversees all public post-secondary education in the state.

The College was codified through Texas House Bill 2867 (effective March 29, 2019), which allows access to residency funding and other resources relevant to Texas medical schools. Texas Senate Bill 1563 was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor on May 19, 2023, providing the college access to formula funding.

For more information regarding SHSU-COM’s accreditation status, please visit <https://www.shsu.edu/academics/osteopathic-medicine/divisions/educational-affairs/accreditation>. For more information regarding COCA accreditation, please visit <https://osteopathic.org/accreditation/>.

Policy on Student Complaints Regarding Institutional Compliance with Accreditation Standards

The Dean of the SHSU-COM, or other designated COM officials, will address expressed, informal concerns of students regarding institutional compliance in accordance with current COCA COM Continuing Accreditation Standards. If the complaints are determined to have merit, the Dean or designated institutional official will institute any required changes in institutional policy or procedures to bring the SHSU-COM into compliance with COCA accreditation standards and COCA policies and procedures. Formal complaints filed through the COCA Secretary will be in accordance with COCA Accreditation Standards and COCA Policies and Procedures. All records of the proceedings regarding receipt, adjudication, and resolution of student formal and informal complaints in these matters will be maintained in the Office of the Dean.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities in Reviewing Standards and Policies of Accreditation

Students have the right to review the standards and policies for accreditation of the institution as published by the COCA. Copies of accreditation standards and procedures are available online through the Office of Assessment, Evaluation, and Accreditation of SHSU-COM. Individual students or their class representatives may register formal or informal concerns or complaints regarding the compliance of the institution with accreditation standards or procedures as published by the COCA. Informal concerns should be addressed to the Dean of the SHSU-COM, preferably in writing. Formal concerns or complaints should be filed in accordance with the policies and procedures of the COCA described in *Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: COM Policies and Procedures*. These concerns must be in writing, signed, and should be submitted directly to the COCA by contacting the American Osteopathic Association (AOA)/ Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA), 142 E. Ontario St., Chicago, IL 60611, at predoc@osteopathic.org or (312) 202-8174. The COCA Policies and Procedures may be found at: <https://osteopathic.org/accreditation/standards/>.

General Information

SHSU-COM Honor Code

The SHSU-COM Honor Code will be developed by students as a set of ethical principles governing the SHSU-COM community based on ideals that define what constitutes honorable behavior within the SHSU-COM community.

Students are expected to maintain good moral character throughout their medical school career by adhering to the ethical and professionalism standards set forth in this handbook.

Student Code of Conduct

The SHSU Student Code of Conduct has been established and is maintained by the SHSU Dean of Students' Office. The Dean of Students' Office receives reports of student misconduct. If you have witnessed a violation of the SHSU Code of Student Conduct or if you wish to report suspicious activity involving social or academic misconduct, please contact the Dean of Students' Office at (936) 294-1785 or at doso@shsu.edu. You may also complete and submit a Behavioral Intervention Form to report your concern. <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/behavioral-intervention.html>

Academic Calendar

Students should reference the published SHSU-COM academic calendar for an overview of the academic year and important dates and deadlines. Students should reference Blackboard for details regarding specific course and clerkship events.

Holidays

For pre-clerkship years, students should reference the SHSU-COM academic calendar for designated religious and national holidays. There are no designated religious or national holidays approved by SHSU-COM during clerkship. Attendance requirements on clinical services during religious or national holidays are at the discretion of the preceptor and/or training facility in compliance with federal law.

Vacations and Breaks

For pre-clerkship years, students should reference the SHSU-COM academic calendar for designated breaks. Pre-clerkship SHSU-COM breaks do not apply to clerkship years. Students are assigned four (4) weeks of vacation during their first six months of fourth year clerkships. Students are encouraged to use this time to schedule residency interviews. Vacation time may be rescheduled and used if extra time is needed to prepare for NBOME exams.

Emergency Preparedness

In the case of an emergency, important information can be found through KatSafe. To increase the success of the KatSafe notification system, it is important to keep all contact information current.

Inclement Weather

The SHSU-COM is committed to the safety and security of its students, faculty, staff, and visitors. At times, severe weather may result in closures to SHSU facilities, roads, and services. When the campus is impacted due to inclement weather, notification will be sent to students directly from KatSafe, the emergency notification system.

Unless scheduled to be on campus, students participating in clerkship rotations are to follow the instructions of their preceptor at their designated clerkship rotation site with regard to inclement weather.

Grievances

See Academic Policy 900823, Academic Grievance Procedures for Students (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/900823%20Academic%20Grievance%20Procedures%20for%20Students.pdf>). To file an academic or nonacademic grievance, visit <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/grievances.html>.

If the complaint involves discrimination or sexual misconduct, SHSU recommends that you report your complaint as provided in the SHSU Nondiscrimination Policy and/or the TSUS Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures available here: <https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/>.

If there is an immediate threat to health and/or safety or you require emergency assistance, please contact University Police at 936-294-1800 or dial 911.

Clerkship

Students in years 3 and 4 should refer to the SHSU-COM Clerkship Manual for additional policies, procedures, and resources.

FACULTY & STAFF

Faculty and Staff Directory

The SHSU-COM faculty and staff directory may be accessed at:
<https://www.shsu.edu/academics/osteopathic-medicine/about/directory/>
Short biographies are available by clicking on the individual photos.

Faculty-Student Research Collaboration Opportunities

Information including research bios, certifications and expertise, and scholarly highlights are available through the Newton Gresham Library “Scholarship @ SHSU-COM” which may be accessed at:
<https://shslibraryguides.org/c.php?g=1077324&p=8064559>

COM research programs and activities as well as research highlights may be reviewed at: <https://www.shsu.edu/academics/osteopathic-medicine/about/research-programs-and-activities>

Faculty-Student Relations

Learning Communities (<https://www.shsu.edu/academics/osteopathic-medicine/current-students/learning-communities>) offer peer, faculty, and staff mentoring opportunities. In addition, participation in student organizations enables students to work with and collaborate with faculty and staff. Students also receive a faculty advisor who helps provide individualized coaching and advising throughout their medical school experience.

SHSU-COM CURRICULA

The Seven Osteopathic Core Competencies for Medical Students

The *Seven Osteopathic Core Competencies for Medical Students* and the Healthy People Curriculum Task Force's *Clinical Prevention and Population Health Curriculum Framework*, as prepared by the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine in conjunction with all U.S. Osteopathic Medical Schools, include:

- I. Osteopathic Principles and Practices
- II. Medical Knowledge
- III. Patient Care
- IV. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
- V. Professionalism
- VI. Practice-Based Learning and Improvement
- VII. Systems-Based Practice

Detailed descriptions of each, including sub-competencies, may be found at <https://www.aacom.org/docs/default-source/old-documents/old-core-competencies/corecompetencyreport2012.pdf>.

Responsibilities and Technical Standards

Responsibilities

An osteopathic physician must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care. To perform the activities described below, candidates for the DO degree must be able to...

- quickly, accurately, and consistently learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data;
- facilitate the attainment of optimum care and safety;
- exhibit high moral and behavioral standards reflecting the position and status of an osteopathic physician; and
- demonstrate respect for individuals and groups irrespective of race, ethnicity, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, national origin, age or disabilities, and religion.

Non-Discrimination Policy

SHSU is committed to an educational and work environment that provides equal opportunity and access to all qualified persons. SHSU pursuant to and in accordance with applicable federal and state law (including Title VII and Title IX) and institutional values, prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, creed, ancestry, marital status,

citizenship, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, veteran's status, hair texture/protected hairstyle, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression in employment, educational programs, activities, and admissions. The SHSU PRE-29 - Non-Discrimination Policy may be found here:
<https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/documents/PRE-29%20Non-Discrimination%20Policy.pdf>.

Each supervisor, faculty member, employee, and student are responsible for maintaining an environment that is free of discrimination and for addressing behaviors that violate this obligation in accordance with this policy.

Academic Credentials

To be considered for admission to any program offered by SHSU, a student must possess the academic credentials and professional attributes deemed essential by the respective program admission's committee for selection to the program.

Technical Standards

Every student of the SHSU-COM is expected to possess those intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and to achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty. The SHSU-COM has adopted the following technical standards with due consideration for the safety and well-being of the patients cared for by its graduates, to include any reasonable accommodation for those with a qualifying disability as required by applicable state or federal law:

- **Observation and Visual Integration:** Students shall have sufficient visual capabilities to observe demonstrations, experiments, and laboratory exercises in the basic and clinical sciences, as well as proper evaluation and treatment integration in order to assess asymmetry, range of motion, and tissue color and texture changes.
- **Communication:** Students shall be able to speak, hear, and observe patients in order to elicit information, examine patients, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive nonverbal communication.
- **Motor Function:** Students shall have sufficient motor function to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients.
- **Strength and Mobility:** Students shall provide medical treatments, such as osteopathic manipulative medicine and cardiopulmonary resuscitation, which often require upright posture with sufficient upper and lower extremity and overall body strength and mobility.
- **Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:** Students shall be able to concentrate, analyze and interpret data, and make decisions within areas in which there is a reasonable amount of visual and auditory distraction. They must perform these functions under a time limitation and do so under a reasonable amount of stress.

- **Behavioral and Social Attributes:** Students shall possess the emotional health required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients with the ability to develop mature, sensitive, and effective professional relationships with patients.
- **Participation in Osteopathic Clinical Courses:** Active participation in Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine and Clinical Medicine skills training sessions are a requirement. During these sessions, it is imperative that students examine each other. This type of learning requires active participation where students palpate and will experience palpation by their peers and instructors of all genders to enhance the development of their own palpatory skills.

Individuals with who have significant limitations in these areas may require evaluation to determine if they are otherwise qualified and able to perform essential functions of the program, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Access the *Educational Council on Osteopathic Principles* document at: https://www.aacom.org/docs/default-source/publications/aacom-ecop-technical-standards-2009.pdf?sfvrsn=1d226197_0 for more information about technical standards.

Attendance Guidelines

The attendance guidelines help define terminology and provide guidance for faculty, staff, and students where attendance is concerned. Additionally, these guidelines are meant to encourage students to attend class, as there is a “moderate, positive correlation between the presence of psychosocial distress and the number of missed sessions” (Damant et al., 2016).¹

Osteopathic Medical Students (OMS), as future members of the profession at-large, are held to high levels of professionalism regarding items such as participation, engagement, scholarly activity, and service. The attendance guidelines reflect the professional culture of SHSU-COM.

Expectations

SHSU-COM faculty and staff expect that students attend all educational activities. Students should arrive on time and be prepared to receive instruction at the predetermined class start time.

Although not all educational activities are mandatory, many educational activities require the presence of all students to allow for the attainment of skills for active participation. Lack of participation could adversely affect the learning process of oneself and peers.

¹ Damant, R., Rourke, L., Wilson, B., Lewis, M., Schutz, D., Harley, D., & Stobart, K. (2016). Medical school attendance is significantly lower in preclinical students who are experiencing psychological distress. *MedEdPublish*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.15694/mep.2016.000002>

Each course shall have a clearly defined attendance policy set and enforced by the Course Director. As defined in SHSU Academic Policy Statement 800401 (Class Attendance) <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/800401%20Class%20Attendance.pdf>, “failure to meet the attendance requirements in a course may lower grade(s), including a final course grade.”

Students not adhering to attendance guidelines shall be referred to the SHSU-COM Student Promotions and Academic Progress (SPAP) committee for further review and consideration of program standing.

**** Falsification of attendance, documentation, or the impersonation of another student that violates the student code of conduct (e.g., professionalism) is subject to disciplinary action by the SPAP committee. ****

All absences shall be approved or denied by the Course or Clerkship Director following the Excused Absence/Tardy Request (EATR) procedure outlined below.

Absences

Excused Absence

An excused absence may be granted upon completion of the EATR procedure. Absences (as defined in Academic Policy Statement 800401) may be excused if proper documentation is provided. If approval is granted, students are responsible for completing all work in missed sessions and adhering to any other requirements determined by Course or Clerkship Directors.

Unexcused Absence

An unexcused absence occurs when the student has not complied with the specific attendance and/or punctuality requirements for educational activities established by the Course or Clerkship Director. This includes an absence when an EATR is denied by a Director.

Types of Absences

SHSU Academic Policy Statement 800401 (Class Attendance), absences are classified as scheduled or unscheduled, described as follows:

Scheduled Absences (still must be approved)

- Presentations at professional meetings/conferences
- Doctor’s appointments/procedures
- Residency interviews
- Religious holidays
- Jury duty
- Subpoenas

- Military requirements
- Other significant events (funerals, births, etc.)

Unscheduled Absences

- Student illness or emergency
- Family emergency
- Injury
- Severe Weather

Tardiness

Tardiness occurs when the student arrives after the scheduled start time for educational activities. If students suspect that they may be tardy due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., traffic), students must notify Course or Clerkship Directors in a timely manner. At their discretion, Directors may determine how and when a student may join the learning environment once instruction has begun.

Leaving Early

Leaving any educational activity early without the prior permission of the Course or Clerkship Director is considered an unexcused absence other than in cases of emergency.

Excused Absence/Tardy Request (EATR) Process

Requests for excused absences are submitted by completing the EATR Form, along with the required supporting documentation. Instructions for completing this form are located in your student Blackboard organization under General Resources.

Students that have extenuating circumstances that prevent them from attending, arriving on time, or require them to leave early must notify the Course Director prior to the scheduled start time but not less than 24 hours of the scheduled time.

All EATR decisions are communicated via the student's official SHSU email.

EATR Timeline

- EATR form submitted to the course director or clerkship director as soon as the scheduled absence is known but not less than **two (2) weeks** prior to the scheduled absence date.

Students with extenuating circumstances that prevent completion of the form at least two (2) weeks prior to scheduled absence must notify their Course or Clerkship Director within 24 hours of the scheduled educational activities.

- Course or Clerkship Directors shall have **three (3) business days** from the date of receipt to approve or deny the request. Business days as used in this handbook shall mean Monday through Friday, unless such a day has been recognized by SHSU as a holiday.

Continued Attendance Violations or Absences

The Course or Clerkship Director may assign an unexcused absence to students that are continually late or leave early.

Any unexcused absence is considered unprofessional conduct and is considered a failure to meet SHSU-COM professionalism guidelines, potentially causing a reduction in the course grade, course failure, and/or being referred to the SPAP committee.

Students requiring extended leave must follow the leave of absence policy.

Leave of Absence

A Leave of Absence (LOA) is an approved leave from SHSU-COM that postpones a student's course of academic and/or clerkship study. A LOA may not exceed one year. A student granted an LOA must complete the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) degree not later than six (6) years following the student's date of matriculation at SHSU-COM (SHSU-COM Graduation Policy Statement <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/com-policies/SHSU-COM%20Graduation%20Policy%20Statement%20and%20Procedures.pdf>).

An LOA may be granted for military commitment, jury duty, pregnancy, maternity/paternity leave, or circumstances covered under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. SHSU-COM refers pregnant and parenting students to the SHSU Office of Title IX (<https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/pregnancyparenting.html>) and SHSU PRE-31 – Pregnant & Parenting Students (<https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/documents/PRE-31-Pregnant-Parenting-Students.pdf>). Students may also request or be placed on an LOA for personal, financial, or other special circumstances.

To return from an LOA for medical reasons, students shall provide a medical clearance letter from the treating physician or other healthcare provider who is not related to the student, stating the student is released to return and is able to meet the applicable Technical Standards of SHSU-COM. In cases of disability, the clearance letter must state if the student requires any accommodations upon their return. If so, the student shall be responsible for requesting such accommodations through the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities Office. A panel of physicians will also determine if the student is able to meet the Technical Standards of the SHSU-COM.

The Dean or their designee shall define in writing the terms and conditions of the LOA and the student's return to SHSU-COM. The Dean has the final authority to approve the

LOA but may delegate this authority. The Dean or designee may consult with faculty and staff members before granting an LOA. A student's failure to comply with the conditions of their LOA is grounds for dismissal from the program.

Leave of Absence Request Process

Students may request a leave of absence (LOA) by completing and submitting the Leave of Absence Request Form and supporting documentation to Educational Affairs. Students should meet with the director of Medical Student Affairs to initiate this process.

Incomplete documents shall not be reviewed until all information has been received. The LOA request decision shall be provided via SHSU email within ten (10) business days from the date of receipt of the complete submission. Business days, as used in this handbook, shall mean Monday through Friday unless such a day has been recognized by SHSU as a holiday.

Before the LOA is approved, students are required to complete the checklist provided with the LOA form, which includes clearance from Financial Aid, the Registrar, and Student Affairs.

Types of Leave

Voluntary (Student-Initiated) Leave of Absence

A Voluntary (Student-Initiated) Leave of Absence (LOA) is a request by a student to discontinue coursework. An LOA may be granted for extenuating circumstances, which may include but are not limited to, military commitment, jury duty, or maternity/paternity leave.

Personal Leave of Absence

A student in academic good standing may, at any time, request a Personal LOA for a specified period of time not to exceed one year. This type of LOA may be requested to take time for research, clinical work at another site without academic credit, or other types of academic enrichment.

Medical Leave of Absence

A student in academic good standing may request a Medical LOA. Students granted an LOA for medical reasons may be required to have a licensed physician, approved by the Dean, certify in writing that the student is able to resume their studies before returning to classes.

Parental Leave of Absence: Maternal, Paternal, Adoptive, etc.

Students may request Parental LOA to fulfill parental responsibilities. Please refer to the SHSU Office of Title IX (<https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/pregnancyparenting.html>) and SHSU PRE-31 – Pregnant & Parenting Students (<https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/documents/PRE-31-Pregnant-Parenting-Students.pdf>)

Military Leave of Absence

Students called to active duty must notify the Office of Medical Student Affairs promptly and provide a copy of their orders for a Military LOA. Students who take leave under these circumstances may receive special consideration regarding obligations and requirements.

Administrative Leave of Absence

An Administrative Leave of Absence (LOA) is a mandatory LOA imposed by the Dean due to an identified reason. During an administrative leave, the student is required to follow the prescribed instructions and requirements associated with the leave and, if applicable, complete rehabilitation or treatment for the reason that precipitated the necessity for the leave.

Communication and Involvement with SHSU-COM During a Leave of Absence

- Students are required to monitor their school email.
- Students on a LOA are required to communicate at least every two (2) months with the Office of Medical Student Affairs for the duration of the leave. This communication shall be initiated by the student and must occur during the first week of every other month, starting with the month following the onset of the leave.
- Students cannot be members of or serve in elected or leadership positions within student government or officially recognized student organizations.
- Students cannot participate in research activities with the COM.
- Students cannot serve as a representative of the COM.
- Students cannot make use of SHSU resources or services unless explicitly specified in their LOA terms and conditions.

Academic Standing and Return from Leave of Absence

If the Dean imposes an Administrative LOA or grants a Voluntary (Student-Initiated) LOA, and the student is in academic good standing, the student may resume the program at the end of the leave as indicated in the terms and conditions. Students in academic good standing may request to audit courses, but this will be approved on a case-

by-case basis. Students must adhere to the terms and conditions provided in writing for the LOA.

If the Dean imposes an Administrative LOA or grants a Voluntary (Student-Initiated) LOA, and the student is not in good standing, is under review for a disciplinary action, or has a disciplinary action imposed on them, the student shall not resume the program without review by the SPAP. Upon completion of its review, the SPAP Committee will make a recommendation to the Dean as to whether the student may resume the program.

Auditing

Auditing a course during years 1 and 2 is typically not permitted and would only occur on a rare occasion if a student is on a LOA with all required approvals. Requests to audit a course shall be initiated by the student and follow SHSU guidelines for auditing. Completed requests do not guarantee approval and will be reviewed by the SHSU-COM Dean's Office on a case-by-case basis prior to making a recommendation to the SHSU Registrar.

Grading Policies

Final Grades

End-of-course or -clerkship grades are based upon academic performance, professional behavior, participation in class or clinical rotation, laboratory work, examinations, and other activities, as applicable to a course or clerkship rotation. In determining final grades, the proportionate weights assigned to graded components are determined by Course and Clerkship Directors. The basis upon which final grades are determined are stated in the syllabus at the start of each course and clerkship rotation.

Final Grade Appeals Process

The Course or Clerkship Director is the primary authority with respect to grades. A student wishing to appeal a final grade should first attempt to resolve the matter by meeting with the Course or Clerkship Director. Students not satisfied after attempting such resolution should follow the process outlined in this handbook.

Course Grades and Remediation

Course grades are determined according to methods outlined in course syllabi. Initial course grades are recorded by the SHSU Registrar as either "Honors" (H), "Pass" (P), or "Subject to Remediation" (SR).

SHSU Academic Policy Statement 910312 (Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination) (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/910312%20Academic%20Probation%20and%20Suspension.pdf>)

governs probation, suspension, dismissal, and termination of undergraduate and graduate students at SHSU. Students who are subject to remediation are automatically placed on probation. Course grades after remediation are replaced by the SHSU Registrar with either “Pass with Remediation” (PR) or “Fail” (F). Upon successful remediation, probation status is reviewed by the SPAP committee. Although a student may return to academic good standing and be removed from academic probation, the student’s transcript will continue to reflect the status of academic probation for the applicable term(s). Students who are not successful in remediation are reviewed by the SPAP committee to determine whether they are required to repeat the entire academic year or be dismissed. Students repeating an academic year will have all passing grades (i.e., H, P, and PR) for all courses in the academic year replaced by the SHSU Registrar with “Pass, No Credit” (PN) prior to repeating the academic year.

At any point, a course grade may be recorded as “No Grade” (NG) or “Withdrawn” (W) according to procedures and definitions set forth by the SHSU Registrar.

Class Rank

For the SHSU-COM DO program, students shall be ranked after all pre-clerkship courses have been completed, including any remediation, and final grades assigned in Banner. Pre-clerkship courses have four (4) official final grades in Banner (Honors, Pass, Pass with Remediation, and Fail) plus an unofficial performance “state” (Pass with Retest, or Remediation #1). An average course performance (ACP) can be obtained by weighting individual course performance by course credit hours and then dividing the sum of weighted products by the number of pre-clerkship credit hours completed.

Through AY 2024-25, the following course performance points will be used:

- Honors = 4 points
- Pass = 3 points
- Pass with Retest (Remediation #1) = 2 points
- Pass with Remediation (Remediation #2) = 1 point
- Fail = 0 points

ACPs calculated after all pre-clerkship courses have been completed will be used to rank each cohort by quintiles. For example, the 1st quintile contains approximately 20% of the lowest performing students, and the 5th quintile contains approximately 20% of the highest performing students. No other class ranking distinction will be made for pre-clerkship course performance.

Final class ranks will be disclosed to SHSU-COM students during Year 3, recorded by the SHSU Registrar, and may be indicated on transcripts and in Medical Student Performance Evaluations (MSPEs) for residency applications.

Examination Procedures and Policies

Examinations

Examinations shall take place at the date and time specified on the course or clerkship syllabus. Changes to the examination schedule are at the discretion of the Course or Clerkship Director and shall be communicated to students in a timely fashion. All examinations are administered in accordance with the SHSU and SHSU-COM policies.

Missed Examinations

Missing examinations or arriving late is strongly discouraged. Students missing an examination or arriving late should follow the procedure located in "Attendance Guidelines." Notification by email, voice mail, or other means other than by the EATR process will not be honored.

Procedures for a missed examination during a clerkship rotation will be outlined in the SHSU-COM Clerkship Manual and syllabus.

Make-Up Examinations

Make-up examinations are allowed only when an excused absence has been granted through the EATR process. Students who miss a course examination without an approved absence or documented illness will not be permitted to take a make-up exam and will receive a zero (0%) as the grade for the examination.

Any make-up examinations must be authorized by the Course/Clerkship Director or the Phase II Lead. The format and scheduling of the make-up examination will be the prerogative of the Course/Clerkship Director or Phase II Lead. Make-up exams may be scheduled prior to or after a regularly scheduled exam. Make-up exams may be written, oral, short-answer, essay, or other means, as determined by the Director or Phase II Lead. Students have a right to appeal a decision using the processes defined in this handbook.

The procedure for making up a missed examination during a clerkship rotation will be outlined in the SHSU-COM Clerkship Manual and syllabus.

Procedures Due to an Unexpected Medical Event

If a student is absent from an examination for unexpected medical reasons, the Course or Clerkship Director may require that the student subsequently present to the Course or Clerkship Director a written confirmation of the medical reason from a treating physician or other healthcare provider who is not related to the student. The written confirmation should state that the student was "too ill to attend on the day of the exam" and specify the date that the student is to return to class.

If the student is medically unable to contact the Course or Clerkship Director or Coordinator prior to the examination, a family member/friend/caregiver/hospital personnel may contact the Course or Clerkship Director on behalf of the student.

Excuses must be submitted through the EATR process. If the absence is unexcused, a grade of zero (0%) will be recorded for that examination.

Procedures Due to a Conflicting Event

A student may be excused from an examination for a reason other than an emergency or unexpected reason (e.g., to present at a scientific or medical meeting, have a significant family issue, etc.) only upon prior approval through the EATR process. Documentation for excused absences will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Requests based on an excused absence must be submitted not less than 10 days before the date of the regularly scheduled exam.

Requests based on religious holy days are governed by SHSU Academic Policy Statement 861001 – Student Absences on Religious Holy Days (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/861001%20Student%20Absences%20on%20Religious%20Holy%20Days.pdf>). Students have the responsibility of notifying the professor of each scheduled class day that the student will be absent due to a religious holy day. This must be done not later than the 15th class day.

For other requests, the Course Director or Clerkship Director shall, in his/her sole discretion, approve or disapprove such requests and shall notify the student of the decision via SHSU-COM e-mail.

Post-Examination Feedback and Review

Upon completion of an examination, students shall not communicate the content of any examination in any format (verbal, electronic, in writing) to any other student. Recording or sharing examination questions is considered academic dishonesty.

Students will not receive grades or other performance indicators at the time of the examination.

Summary information, such as psychometric analyses and individualized scores and strength-opportunity reports, shall be provided within a reasonable time after examinations. Post-examination reviews may be conducted at the discretion of Course or Clerkship Directors to provide aggregate performance information by discipline, topic, or objective, but shall not disclose specific examination questions.

Students who require remediation shall be afforded an opportunity to review their examination outcomes with a Learning Specialist to assess whether patterns of performance can be utilized to improve future performance.

A student's performance on clinical, performance, or practical examinations may be reviewed with a Learning Specialist or another faculty member at the discretion of the Course or Clerkship Director.

Test Administration

The SHSU-COM test administration policies and related procedures have been created to maintain a secure, standardized, and fair testing environment for all students. The policy applies to, but is not limited to, written examinations, practical examinations, Objective Structured Clinical Exams (OSCEs), Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Test (COMAT) examinations taken during clerkship rotations, and board prep simulated examinations.

Students are responsible for furnishing and maintaining any device required for an examination. Students must ensure that their device is in good working order. All device functions, such as adequate storage, network connectivity, and sufficient battery power, are the sole responsibility of the student. In cases of unexpected technology issues or malfunctions during an exam, students may be given a loaner device. No additional time will be given as compensation for technology issues or malfunctions.

Students may receive additional instructions regarding examination devices from the Course or Clerkship Director, or from Educational Affairs.

Personal Belongings

- Students are provided lockers to place their personal belongings.
- Students are only allowed to bring into the testing environment a computer, its charging device, non-electronic ear plugs, any device required for the examination, and an SHSU ID.
- No other items shall be permitted in the immediate testing environment, which includes, but is not limited to, all other electronic devices (e.g., smart-watches, smart-glasses, ear-buds, tablets, iPods, calculators, and cell phones), pencils, pens, paper, notes, notebooks, notepads, books, reference materials, briefcases, backpacks, book bags, coats, hoodies, blankets, bags, purses, caps, hats, coats, keys, and fobs.
- Course and Clerkship Directors may make special exceptions if a particular item (e.g., a calculator) is utilized during the examination.

Food and Drink

- Food is not permitted in the testing environment.
- Chewing gum is not allowed.

- A spill-proof drinking container, unwrapped cough drops or hard candy, and tissues are permitted.

Examination Time

- Students shall be in their seats and ready to start at least five (5) minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- Students who arrive after the scheduled examination time will be permitted to take the exam only upon the consent of the Course Director. Students who are absent must follow the “Attendance Guidelines” section of this handbook.
- Students must complete their examination in the allotted time as scheduled.

Attire

- Students are to wear the appropriate professional attire per the Student Handbook.
- Students are not permitted to wear white coats unless required by the Course Director.

Examination Materials

- A sheet of paper and pen or pencil may be provided, per the Course Director’s discretion.
- If scratch paper is provided, it must be returned at the end of the examination.

Talking

- Students may not talk in the testing environment during or after the examination.
- Students in need of assistance must raise their hand and quietly wait for assistance.

Use of Restrooms

- Students who need to use the restroom during the examination must be escorted by a faculty proctor.
- No additional time shall be added to the examination period to compensate for restroom breaks.
- Due to the special nature of practical examinations and OSCEs, restroom breaks are not allowed unless an accommodation has been provided through the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities.

Assigned Seating

- Course and Clerkship Directors may implement assignment of seats.
- Students will be notified ahead of time if assigned seating will occur.

Questions During Examinations

- Proctors will not answer questions regarding examination content.
- Proctors shall instruct the examinee to answer the question to the best of their ability with the information provided in the examination.
- When the testing platform provides an opportunity for students to comment on individual questions, students may use this resource to make comments.
- Challenges on specific examination questions must be submitted via the testing platform or in writing prior to the end of the scheduled examination session. Post-examination challenges are not accepted.
- Students must notify a proctor if comments or challenges are being submitted in writing prior to leaving the testing environment.

Accommodations

- Testing accommodations must be indicated on a Classroom Accommodation Form (CAF) issued by the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD).
- Making the necessary arrangements for testing accommodations is a responsibility shared by the student, the Course or Clerkship director, and SSD prior to the scheduled examination.

Failure to comply with test administration policies and procedures may result in a referral to the SPAP committee for possible disciplinary action.

Promotion, Remediation, Probation, Graduation, and Dismissal

Student Promotion and Academic Progress (SPAP) Committee

The SPAP committee shall maintain a continuing evaluation of the academic and professional progress of each student. Recommendations and options for actions include remediation, probation, dismissal, and promotion, including the recommendation for graduation. SHSU Academic Policy Statement 910312 (Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination) (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/910312%20Academic%20Probation%20and%20Suspension.pdf>) governs probation, suspension, dismissal, and termination of SHSU-COM students.

Academic Good Standing

Per SHSU Academic Policy Statement 910312 (Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination), students are considered to be in academic good standing

when they have passed all courses/blocks/rotations in the curriculum to date and demonstrate competency in professionalism as defined by the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM).

For the purposes of co-curricular activities, leadership roles, travel, and student research, it is understood that first semester osteopathic medical students will not have generated an academic standing and will not be allowed to hold an officer position in an SHSU-COM sponsored student organization.

A student who is not in good academic standing may not participate in any extracurricular or co-curricular activities associated with SHSU. This includes, but is not limited to, leadership roles (student government, student organizations, student ambassadors, etc.), and program-related student travel.

Students should be aware that failure to maintain good academic standing may affect financial aid eligibility and puts students at risk of dismissal from the program. Students actively engaged in ongoing research who are not in academic good standing must secure the permission of their research advisor and the SPAP committee to continue their research.

Remediation

A passing grade in each course is required for the purposes of academic progression and eventual awarding of the DO degree. All failures must be successfully remediated in order to qualify for promotion and graduation.

As soon as a Subject to Remediation (SR) grade for the course is official (i.e., reported to the SHSU Registrar) the student must meet with the course director to arrange a plan for course remediation. Dates for remediation shall be determined and posted for students each semester.

Successfully remediated courses shall be **reported as Passed with Remediation (PR)** to the SHSU Registrar. Successfully remediation does not remove the original failing grade from the student's record.

SPAP, Medical Student Affairs, and students shall be notified of the SR grade. If the academic calendar permits, students are required to meet with the remediation team and course director for support and resources.

For students repeating an academic year, the date of their withdrawal will be as soon as the COM Registrar receives a copy of the letter notifying the student of their unsuccessful remediation attempt and no later than the day preceding the subsequent semester, so that the student's percentage of program fee reimbursement will not be impacted. Any delay in the withdrawal date or continuation with registration for the subsequent semester due to academic grievances from the previous term may impact reimbursement. Students are encouraged to meet with SHSU Financial Aid if funds were received, and to contact

Medical Student Affairs for information regarding procedures and resources. For students repeating an academic year, the expectation is that they shall pass all courses by the end of the next repeated academic year. In most cases, failure of a course or clerkship while repeating an academic year shall result in dismissal.

Each single degree DO student shall complete the requirements for the DO degree within 150% of the standard time to achieve the degree (six (6) years following matriculation). The completion time of six (6) years includes time spent on leave of absence, pursuing research activities, etc. Students who are unable or deemed unlikely to be able to complete requirements within this time frame may be reviewed by the SPAP committee for further action.

Limitations

Students are allowed a maximum of two end-of-course retests (Remediation #1) per semester. Unused retest opportunities may not be carried over to another semester. Any retest beyond the maximum allowed shall automatically result in an SR grade for the course in place of the retest opportunity.

Students are allowed a maximum of three course remediations (Remediation #2) per academic year, with no more than two remediations per semester. Unused remediations may not be carried over to another semester or academic year. Any remediation beyond the maximum allowed shall automatically result in a grade of F for the course in place of the remediation opportunity.

Professionalism

Professionalism is an integral part of the curriculum and is a component of every course and clerkship. Failure of the professionalism competency shall be considered sufficient reason to fail an entire course/clerkship, regardless of performance on assessments. The SPAP committee shall review students' professional behavior in and out of class and retains the right to invoke appropriate disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal, for failure to adhere to standards of professionalism or ethical conduct. Please see the SHSU-COM Professionalism Policy (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/com-policies/SHSU-COM%20Professionalism%20Policy%20and%20Procedure.pdf>) and ACADEMIC STANDARDS & STUDENT DEVELOPMENT, Professionalism.

Probation

A student shall be placed on academic probation if a student fails any block/course or clerkship.

A student may also be placed on probation for professionalism or ethical concerns. The SPAP committee shall determine if and/or when a student should be removed from probation. A student will be removed from probation only after all deficiencies have been

remediated, and the SPAP committee determines that the student meets all academic, professional, and ethical expectations. A student may remain on probation for longer than an academic year if concerns persist about their professional, ethical, or academic progress.

All students placed on probation for any reason will be notified in writing. The notification will include an indication of the minimum probationary period and the conditions necessary to successfully complete the probation.

While on probation, a student is expected to attend all classes and activities, subject to applicable Attendance and Leave of Absence guidelines herein. A student must document any absence from a major assessment or required activity due to illness or other event listed as an unscheduled absence. Except for required electives in the curriculum, no electives are permitted while a student is on academic probation without the approval of the SPAP committee. Exceptions may be made for electives that do not interfere with the required curriculum or remedial work, such as a summer preceptorship. While on probation, students may not hold an elected office in student organizations or otherwise represent the COM or SHSU. The student may not participate in activities that would entail absence from required classes.

Students should be aware that the Texas Medical Board and other medical licensing boards may require disclosure of a student's probation status during medical school when applying for a license.

SHSU-COM Transcript

Academic Standing is noted on the transcript at the end of each term. This includes good standing and academic probation. Students who are placed on probation may view academic standing online via their unofficial transcript, and they will receive a letter from the Dean. Although a student may return to academic good standing and be removed from academic probation, the student's transcript will continue to reflect the status of academic probation for the applicable term(s). The Dean will notify the student once the student returns to good academic standing, if ever.

Promotion and Graduation

The SPAP committee is responsible for promoting students and recommending candidates for graduation. To be promoted from one year to the next, students must satisfactorily complete all the required coursework, meet all financial obligations to the college, and exhibit professional conduct and ethical behavior. To be promoted to the clinical years, a student must satisfactorily complete all the requirements in the pre-clerkship curriculum in Years 1 and 2 and take the Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Licensing Examination (COMLEX-USA) Level 1.

A passing grade in all required courses and clerkships must be achieved to receive the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) degree. Passage of COMLEX-USA Level 1 and COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE is required for graduation.

Exception to Probation Terms

Students have the right to appeal decisions of the SPAP committee taken against a student for academic, professional, or ethical reasons, by filing a written appeal to the Dean within five (5) business days of the date of notification. The appeal must include the student's basis for appeal. Specific procedures for a dismissal or an academic failure are outlined below. Students may also appeal other adverse decisions such as probation, repeating a year, etc. The Dean shall consider these appeals on a case-by-case basis and may appoint an ad hoc committee to hear the appeal, if warranted, and shall make a decision after considering the recommendation of the ad hoc appeal committee. The decision of the Dean is final.

Dismissal and Appeals Process

A student who demonstrates academic deficiency, personal irresponsibility, or unprofessional or unethical behavior may be dismissed. A student may be evaluated at any time for continuation or dismissal. Students who demonstrate repeated marginal performance or failures on coursework or clerkships may be considered for dismissal.

Students wishing to reenter after being dismissed must make a formal application through the Admissions Committee. The Admissions Committee shall consider such reapplication and make its recommendation to the Dean. If the Dean's decision is favorable, the SPAP committee shall recommend to the Dean the curricular placement of applicants for readmission. The respective committees may request the re-applicant to provide any relevant information they deem necessary for their decision process. SHSU Academic Policy Statement 910312 (Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination) (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/910312%20Academic%20Probation%20and%20Suspension.pdf>) governs the dismissal and dismissal appeals processes.

Academic Honor Code

Academic Integrity

SHSU-COM "expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom" SHSU Academic Policy Statement 810213 (Procedures in Cases of Academic Dishonesty). Additionally, the study of Osteopathic Medicine guides students to the provision of professional and compassionate patient care and inter-professional teamwork in addition to an understanding and application of Osteopathic Principles and Practices, and not simply the passage of examinations.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic honesty is defined in paragraph 5.3, Chapter VI, of the Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The Texas State University System, and in the SHSU Student Code of Conduct and Discipline in the Student Guidelines published by the Dean of Students' Office. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsification of research data, and the abuse of resource materials on an examination or other academic work. Academic dishonesty cases are governed by SHSU Academic Policy Statement 810213 (Procedures in Cases of Academic Dishonesty) (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/810213%20Academic%20Honesty.pdf>).

Individuals who violate TSUS and/or SHSU academic dishonesty policy, are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. A student may not be promoted or graduated until an allegation of academic dishonesty has been resolved.

All academic dishonesty cases are first considered and reviewed by a faculty member. If the faculty member believes that an academic penalty is necessary, they may complete the Academic Honesty Violation Form (APS 810213), assign a penalty, and notify the student in writing. The form also includes the procedures including the levels of appeal (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/810213%20Academic%20Honesty%20Violation%20Form.pdf>).

Academic Standing

Per SHSU Academic Policy Statement 910312 (Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination), SHSU-COM students are considered to be in academic good standing when they have passed all courses/blocks/rotations in the curriculum to date and demonstrate competency in professionalism as defined by the SHSU-COM Professionalism Policy and the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM).

Students on Academic Probation, including any period of remediation, and/or students with a professionalism, ethics, and/or academic dishonesty violation are not in academic good standing.

A student's academic probation continues until all course/block/rotation failures or professionalism concerns are successfully remediated. Probationary status is updated on the transcript following the subsequent semester; however, this status will still be reflected on the transcript for the semester(s) it was in effect. Students with a history of academic probation will be monitored and their performance reviewed by the SPAP committee on an annual basis for the remainder of their enrollment at SHSU-COM.

COMLEX-USA Examinations

All SHSU-COM students must pass COMLEX-USA Level 1 and Level 2-CE to receive a DO degree. The Dean or designee has the authority to set the eligibility of students to take COMLEX-USA examinations, and the SHSU-COM will determine the compulsory testing window for each Level. Scheduling to take COMLEX-USA examinations occurs through the NBOME portal. Students will be granted access to their NBOME portal during Year 1.

Please refer to nbome.org for the most up-to-date testing information. All expenses, including fees, travel, and lodging, related to taking COMLEX-USA examinations are the responsibility of students.

SHSU-COM COMLEX Academic Advancement Policy

In addition to the below content, please reference the SHSU-COM Grading and Exam Policy, found in SHSU-COM Academic Standards: (https://www.shsu.edu/academics/osteopathic-medicine/documents/policies-and-procedures/SHSU-COM_Element%209.2-1_Academic%20Standards.pdf). Students who successfully complete all Year 2 courses are conditionally promoted to Year 3, pending a passing score on COMLEX-USA Level 1. Students must sit for the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination prior to starting their first core clerkship rotation during the compulsory testing window. Failure of COMLEX-USA Level 1 may result in a delay of graduation and an extension of the academic schedule to complete all required rotations.

A SHSU-COM student who fails COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination on the first attempt must retake the COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination before starting the first core clerkship rotation. This will likely require the student to use their four-week vacation during their third year.

A SHSU-COM student who fails COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination on the second attempt:

- will be allowed to finish the current rotation;
- must meet with the SPAP Committee;
- may not resume clerkship rotations until achieving a passing score on COMLEX-USA Level 1; and
- will be directed to the NBOME website to assure that all current NBOME policies are understood and followed.

If a SHSU-COM student fails COMLEX-USA Level 1 examination on the third attempt, the SPAP Committee will meet to make a recommendation to the Dean.

A SHSU-COM student who fails the COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE examination on the first attempt:

- will be allowed to finish the current rotation;

- will be withdrawn from the next rotation;
- must retake the COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE examination after four weeks of academic reassignment to study for the second attempt, then resume with the subsequent rotation; and
- must use their four-week vacation rotation to fulfill the academic reassignment if it has not already been used.

A SHSU-COM student who fails the COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE on the second attempt:

- will be allowed to finish the current rotation;
- must meet with the SPAP Committee;
- will be withdrawn from the next rotation and may not resume clerkship rotations until achieving a passing score on COMLEX-USA Level 2-CE; and
- will be directed to the NBOME website to assure that all current NBOME policies are understood and followed.

Students withdrawn from rotations after a second failure on the COMLEX-USA Level 1 or Level 2-CE may have their graduation delayed and may be placed on academic probation.

The Texas Medical Board requires passage of each part of a licensure examination within three attempts (Board Rule §163.6). Students who become ineligible for a Texas Medical License may be dismissed from the SHSU-COM.

Student-Provided Technological Devices

Electronic devices include but are not limited to, mobile phones and smartphones, computers, tablets and other handheld devices, audio, and video players, and recording devices. Although the use of electronic devices can enhance the teaching and learning experience, the absence of unnecessary distractions and interruptions is essential for an effective learning environment. Course Directors are responsible for establishing and managing electronic device policies, which may change depending on the scope and purpose of a session.

Graduation Requirements

A minimum of 45 months must elapse between the date of matriculation and graduation. Students must complete the program within 150% of the standard time (six years following matriculation).

Resignation From the Program

Students wishing to resign from the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine program should, in accordance with Academic Policy Statement 990407 (Student Resignations), begin this process with the Registrar's Office representative located in the SHSU-COM building on the first floor.

Eligibility for a refund based on guidelines governed by SHSU policy for refund of tuition and fees (<https://catalog.shsu.edu/graduate-and-professional/financial-information/refund-information/#resignations-withdrawals>) and applicable law, including Texas Education Code, Section 54.006.

In general, a student will not be permitted to resign after the last class day of the first block of the semester (you may view your academic calendar at <https://www.shsu.edu/academics/osteopathic-medicine/current-students/academic-calendars>). A request to resign after the census date may be considered if the student demonstrates extenuating circumstances as described in Academic Policy Statement 990407 (Student Resignations) (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/990407%20Student%20Resignations.pdf>). Students wishing to make such a request should follow the procedure described in section 4, “Request to Resign After Deadline Based on Extenuating Circumstances”.

RESEARCH & FUNDING

SHSU-COM is dedicated to the advancement of evidence-based medicine. As such, an emphasis on research literacy and student scholarly activity has been embedded within the curriculum. Students participating in research may do so as either the lead student investigator or a co-investigator under the direction of a faculty principal investigator (PI).

Student Research Eligibility

Students wishing to conduct research in conjunction with SHSU faculty/staff or external institutions must be currently enrolled, in academic good standing, and have completed their first semester. Students not currently enrolled and on a break between semesters (e.g., summer/winter/spring break) may still participate in research endeavors if they are currently registered for the next sequence of classes and in academic good standing.

Research Ethics and Compliance

Students must comply with the requirements for ethical conduct in research in SHSU [APS 920808 \(Ethical Conduct in Academic Research and Scholarship\)](#). Students must complete appropriate research ethics training through the university-authorized CITI program and must complete any additional training (HIPAA, lab safety, biosafety) when appropriate. All research projects must have current approvals by the applicable compliance body (IRB, IBC, IACUC) or have been deemed exempt by those bodies before any research activities can take place. This applies to research at SHSU and at other institutions where SHSU-COM students may be involved.

All students engaged in research must have a faculty principal investigator (PI) for that research project. If that faculty PI is external to SHSU, students are strongly encouraged to discuss the project with the SHSU-COM Director of Research to assess compliance and potential affiliation agreements. Additionally, students should limit the number of research projects for which they serve as the lead student to no more than two concurrent projects.

Failure to receive and maintain appropriate research compliance may result in professionalism violations. Students may contact the SHSU-COM Director of Research at COMResearch@shsu.edu for assistance with research compliance.

Student Travel and Funding

If you plan to travel on behalf of SHSU-COM, you must email COMStudentTravel@shsu.edu to make administration aware of your plans. If you want to apply for travel funding, you must follow additional steps (see “To Apply for Travel Funding”).

SHSU-COM may sponsor off-campus activities that require medical student travel. To be considered for a travel award, the applicant must be an osteopathic medical student in academic good standing currently enrolled at SHSU-COM and must be traveling to represent SHSU-COM in national student leadership roles and/or to engage in specific advocacy or other efforts sponsored by faculty such as DO Day, AAO Convocation, etc. Please email com-msa@shsu.edu to inquire about travel for these purposes. For travel to present at a research conference, see “Presenting Research and Travel.”

Professional development, including leadership/specialty training, will not be considered for travel funding. If a proposed trip is for a student organization, the requestor should contact Student Affairs to inquire about possible alternative funding opportunities.

To Apply for Travel Funding Not Related to Research

After you email com-msa@shsu.edu, your eligibility for funding will be determined.

Deadlines for travel requests are as follows:

Travel During	Application Due
Fall Semester	Sept 9 th
Spring Semester	Jan 16 th
Summer Term	Apr 30 th

Review and Award Process

After eligibility is determined, the requestor will be notified regarding their status. Those requests that are awarded will receive a Student Travel Award Initiation Form. Travel awards will be limited to a maximum of one travel award per student per academic year except when travel is required by a student’s national leadership role.

The maximum amount for each travel award is \$1,200. SHSU-COM follows the Sam Houston State University Finance & Operations Policy FO-TR-08 Student Travel Policy. Students traveling on behalf of the SHSU-COM or SHSU are required to follow the student travel policies for approval to travel. Students who have been approved to travel by the SHSU-COM or SHSU to present at a conference or meeting shall follow the EATR procedure. Students will not be allowed to miss mandatory educational activities to only attend a conference or a meeting. An EATR must be submitted and approved by the Course or Clerkship Director for mandatory course sessions and exams prior to making travel arrangements.

- The SHSU-COM has funding opportunities to support student research. These include Medical Summer Scholars Program (MSSP), Student Intramural Grants, and Student Travel Awards.

The MSSP provides stipend support to students that participate in an approved faculty led research program during the summer of their first year. Only OMS1 students are eligible to apply to this program.

The Student Intramural Grant provides up to \$5,000 in research support for student-initiated projects in teams of two or more students. Students must have received signed approval and support from an SHSU faculty on their grant proposal.

The travel awards assist students with travel costs related to the presentation of research. These funds are limited and are not guaranteed. Additional funding may be available through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) and the Graduate School at SHSU. Students are encouraged to explore those options if internal funding is not available.

Presenting Research and Travel

Students submitting research projects for presentation at conferences or research competitions may apply for travel award support. Only the student who submits the research to the conference and is responsible for presenting the research is eligible for a research travel award. Students may receive only one travel award in each academic year and up to two awards in total. Requests for travel awards can be initiated by emailing COMResearch@shsu.edu and should be made at the time of abstract submission to the conference, not after a notice of acceptance from the conference has been received. The deadline for travel requests during each term are listed below.

Travel During	Application Due
Fall Semester	Sept 9 th
Spring Semester	Jan 16 th
Summer Term	Apr 30 th

In cases where a student is awarded travel support from SHSU-COM Research and also receives direct financial travel support from the conference organization, those funds are expected to be applied to the expenses of the travel. Students will need to apply the external travel award toward reimbursing the COM for their travel expenses after COM-Research determines allowable deductions (food allowance, membership specific to conference, and non-covered transportation by SHSU-COM [e.g., mileage]).

STUDENT SERVICES & RESOURCES

Physical and Mental Health Resources

All SHSU-COM students are encouraged to actively maintain their physical and mental health. Students are encouraged to continue healthy habits while in medical school, including regular exercise, adequate sleep, time with friends and/or family, and a healthy diet. SHSU-COM provides an array of programs that focus on proactive health and wellness prevention. SHSU-COM also provides treadmills and bikes for students on the Mezzanine level. It is important to avoid overuse of alcohol and abuse of prescription or illicit drugs. When acute or chronic physical or mental health services are needed, SHSU-COM provides supportive opportunities for students to seek services.

Students may seek treatment from a physician, medical practitioner of their own choice and at their own expense or may seek available services from the SHSU Student Health Center. The SHSU Student Health Center is a primary care outpatient clinic located on the Huntsville campus that provides preventative care services, a women's health clinic, laboratory testing, dental care, and pharmacy services. For more information regarding services and hours of operation please see the following link <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/student-health-center/services>. Additional physical health and mental health services are available through community resources listed online for all students at <https://www.shsu.edu/academics/osteopathic-medicine/about/mental-and-physical-health-resources>.

Note: The most current resources can be found online at the abovementioned community resources link.

Students away on clinical rotations who experience an emergency, such as needle stick or other immediate issues can be seen at the hospital emergency department where they are rotating.

Student Counseling Services

The SHSU Counseling Center provides individual, couples, or group therapy to SHSU-COM students who are currently enrolled and need help managing stress, anxiety, depression, or other issues. SHSU has confidential counseling services at the Huntsville campus via the Student Counseling Center. The SHSU Student Counseling Center has multiple online self-help resources accessible on the university website.

TimelyCare is a virtual care option. Students can download the app and get access 24/7. All services are free and accessible for all students to utilize. Services include Talk Now, scheduled counseling, digital self-care, health coaching, and access to psychiatry referrals with counseling center referrals.

Let's Talk is a virtual mental health support platform offered by the SHSU Counseling Center and available to students from 5-7 p.m. during Fall and Spring Semesters via a confidential link.

The We LISTEN Helpline is available to students Monday-Thursday from 4-9 p.m. by calling 936-294-4111.

- The SHSU Student Counseling Center is located at 1608 Ave. J on the Huntsville Campus. There is no charge for office visits. Counseling services are available during normal business hours throughout the year and in between semesters, except on university-designated holidays. For more information, students can call 936-294-1720 or stop by to make an appointment to speak with a counselor at the Huntsville location. Hours of operation include the following days and times:
 - Monday, Thursday, and Friday 8 am to 5 pm
 - Tuesday and Wednesday 8 am to 7 pm
 - Website: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/counseling/>
- The Jack Staggs Community Counseling Clinic has two locations, one on the Huntsville campus and one at The Woodlands Center location. The clinic is a training facility for masters and doctoral level students who are enrolled in a counselor education program at SHSU. Counselor education faculty supervise all counseling sessions provided by counselors-in-training. The clinic offers counseling services to students and to the community. Services offered include adolescent counseling, couples, family, group, individual, play, and sand tray therapy.

The Jack Staggs Community Counseling Clinic is located at SHSU, The Woodlands Center at 3380 College Park Drive, room 151. The center can be reached at 936-202-5012. Schedules vary per semester.

Website: <https://www.shsu.edu/academics/education/counselor-education/jack-staggs-counseling-clinic.html>

- Additional Resources and Support
 - The Jed Foundation Helpful Resources for Students <https://jedfoundation.org/ulifeline-transition/> (formerly ULifeline)
 - Tri-County Behavioral Healthcare 24-hour crisis line: 1-800-659-6994
 - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
 - LGBTQ National Hotline: 1-888-843-4564
 - Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741

For more information regarding mental health resources, be sure to check the Wellness Resources content area of your OMS Blackboard organization.

SHSU-COM and COCA prohibit the provision of health care services to students by faculty involved in their evaluations. Additionally, it is a violation of the SHSU-COM

policy for students to request that faculty members provide medications or other treatments outside of a proper physician-patient relationship. Students on self-selected elective rotations, outside the purview of SHSU-COM, must plan for their health care needs at the rotation site independently.

Academic Resources and Support

Academic Support Services

The Office of Medical Student Affairs provides academic support and learning resources to enhance medical students' educational experiences and to help them achieve personal and academic goals. The following support services are provided to all students individually or in a group setting:

- Time management
- Stress management
- Learning preference awareness
- Test-taking strategies
- Organizational skills
- Interpersonal and communication skills
- Transition to professional school
- Preparation for licensure exams
- Study plans

Students experiencing attention or learning difficulties may be referred to the appropriate Student Affairs liaison, who can advise them regarding testing, evaluation, and possible accommodations. Faculty may refer students for academic support services through the SHSU Early Alert System via Campus Connect. Students may schedule individual appointments as desired through Campus Connect. For more information about the process to receive accommodations for a qualifying disability, please visit the [Services for Students with Disabilities](#) website.

Peer Tutoring

The Office of Medical Student Affairs oversees the peer-tutoring program at SHSU-COM, which is available to all enrolled students at no cost. The program is designed to enhance student learning and promote academic excellence. Students may request tutoring services or be referred by their course directors, a faculty member, an advisor, or by members of the Office of the Dean or Educational Affairs. All peer tutors receive training. Tutoring availability is provided through Campus Connect.

Learning Communities

SHSU-COM has four learning communities that provide osteopathic medical students with a supportive environment for advising and mentoring. Each entering student is

placed into one of the four learning communities created to foster relationships between students and faculty and to provide community service and team-building opportunities. Programming is student-driven and might focus on such topics as social networking, lifelong learning, peer mentoring, medical professionalism, ethics, educational life balance, and wellness. In addition, the Office of Medical Student Affairs assigns smaller groups of students within learning communities to faculty advisors who support their academic and professional growth.

Career Counseling

SHSU-COM provides students with career preparation and guidance to choose the specialty and practice that best suits their interests, talents, and abilities. In addition to the multi-layered support system provided through the Learning Communities, students are provided career assessments, residency preparation, and assistance with curriculum vitae, personal statements, mock interviews, and summer educational and research opportunities. For research, students may seek out a faculty mentor in their area of interest.

Financial Aid and Debt Management

Financial Aid

SHSU's Office of Financial Aid provides financial aid options that help students contribute toward their educational expenses through the completion of the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#). Students who are interested in Financial Aid will find more information about available types of financial aid, who is eligible to apply, how and when to apply, and other information at <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/financial-aid/>.

Debt Management

The SHSU Student Money Management Center (SMMC) is a financial outreach and educational program that focuses on debt management. SHSU-COM students are provided financial wellness programs that address budgeting, repayment, and financial planning. Students are also provided with a personal financial coach to discuss long-term financial planning or any other related questions. For more information, please visit <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/smmc/>.

Newton Gresham Library

The Newton Gresham Library serves the research needs of the SHSU Community and is located in Huntsville. The library holds over 1.3 million books, bound periodicals, government documents, and a variety of formats, including multimedia, digital collections, microforms, microfiche, phonograph records, videotape, and newspapers. Other groups of materials housed in the Newton Gresham Library include paperbacks for recreational reading, current periodical issues, new books, and a children's literature

collection. A multimedia lab, music listening room, study carrels, a small lounge area furnished with vending machines, and a copy center, including a public fax machine, are provided for the convenience of students and faculty. Library holdings information may be electronically accessed through an online catalog from hundreds of library and campus computer workstations, as well as remotely via the Internet.

A team of professional librarians, support staff, and student assistants provide reference, interlibrary loan, circulation, acquisitions, and other library services to the faculty, staff, and students of SHSU, as well as to visiting scholars and off-campus users. Students at SHSU-COM have access to the library virtually or physically at both Conroe and Huntsville. For more information regarding hours of operation go to <https://library.shsu.edu/> or contact the onsite SHSU-COM librarian.

Student Organizations

Medical student organizations provide students with opportunities to participate and become knowledgeable about professional associations. For a complete list of SHSU-COM student organizations, visit OrgLINK. The Osteopathic Student Government Association (OSGA) is comprised of elected officers who serve as student leadership representing the student body. The purpose of OSGA is to serve as the official voice of the student body for the SHSU-COM. It discusses topics or concerns of medical students and provides solutions and a plan of action for improvement and benefit for all.

Reasonable Accommodations and Disability Services

Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and other applicable laws, the SHSU-COM provides reasonable accommodations for otherwise qualified students with verified physical, psychological, and/or learning disabilities. An accommodation may not be provided if it would result in the fundamental alteration of the SHSU-COM's programs, services, or activities, or if it would impose undue financial or administrative burdens on the SHSU-COM.

The intent of this policy is to provide each student with the opportunity to excel academically while creating an environment conducive to learning. In doing so, however, SHSU-COM must maintain the integrity of its curriculum and preserve those elements deemed essential to the acquisition of knowledge in all areas of osteopathic medicine, including the demonstration of basic skills required for the practice of osteopathic medicine. For example, technology-related accommodations may be made in certain areas for students with a qualifying disability, but a candidate must be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner.

All applicants receiving supplementary application material for admission will be asked to certify they have reviewed the SHSU-COM Technical Standards and the Participation

in Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine Laboratories requirements. A panel of physicians will be utilized to assess student's ability to meet Technical Standards if/when needed.

Any student accepted to SHSU-COM who believes themselves to have a qualifying mental and/or physical disability requiring an accommodation will provide necessary information and supporting documentation to the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities representative. It is the responsibility of the student to have an evaluation and tests, if any, administered and interpreted. Any charges for an evaluation or forwarding of documentation are the student's responsibility.

Process for Requesting Accommodations

Requests for accommodations are made by the student according to the procedures outlined here: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/disability/procedures-to-request-services.html>. Applications may be submitted at any time during the academic year. An application for accommodations is a request for only the academic year in which it was submitted. If an accommodation is granted during the first academic year, SHSU-COM may require a renewal application to be submitted the following year should the student desire continuation of the granted accommodations. Requests for accommodations must be approved in writing by a SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities representative. All requests for accommodations due to a physical, psychological, or learning disability must contain appropriate documentation and be directed to the SHSU Services for Students with Disabilities representative.

Student Travel, Contingency Plan, and Housing

Students will be responsible for their own transportation to and from their clerkship sites. Students are not considered employees of SHSU-COM and are not insured for any accidents or mishaps that might occur during any traveling that is done as part of the clerkship program.

Students may be required to complete core rotations with at least one "away" clinical partner. It is the intention of the COM to have every student in their assigned clerkship region for the third and fourth years. However, if the site you are assigned does not have a specific core clerkship available within a certain block, the COM will work with you on identifying an alternate site. For students assigned to an alternate site for a core, surgery selective, medicine selective, or women's health selective rotation that is beyond 75 miles from their assigned region, housing will be provided by Clinical Education. Students choosing electives outside of the SHSU-COM affiliated regions will be responsible for securing their own housing. If a student has a rotation that becomes unavailable for any reason before or during their block, the Office of Clinical Education and Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs, if needed, shall work to find an appropriate substitute rotation for that student. Substitute rotations may be in their region or a different region. The Office of Clinical Education actively pursues more rotations than necessary to accommodate the student cohort, to ensure excess opportunities within each region.

Some of the clerkship sites offer limited housing. This includes apartments, houses, and/or rooms in the hospital. These opportunities are typically available on a first-come first-served basis and will be facilitated through the Office of Clinical Education. Students who choose to participate in an elective rotation outside of the SHSU-COM affiliated regions will be responsible for their own housing. If a student has concerns related to the provided housing, they should immediately contact their Regional Clinical Coordinator.

Behavioral Intervention

The SHSU Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) was created to detect early indicators of potential disruptive conduct, self-harm, and violence to others. The team uses an established protocol to support students, employees, and the SHSU community. When BIT receives a report of problematic or concerning behavior, the team determines the best way to support, intervene, and respond. The team then connects students to the appropriate resources and if necessary, assists with reintegration to the campus community. For more information regarding the Behavioral Intervention Team, including how to report concerns, visit <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/behavioral-intervention.html>.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS & STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

Professionalism

Professionalism is central to the ethos of both the practice of medicine and conduct of research and an expression of the SHSU-COM's commitment to patients and society. Professionalism is governed by the SHSU-COM Professionalism Policy (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/com-policies/SHSU-COM%20Professionalism%20Policy%20and%20Procedure.pdf>). The environment of the SHSU-COM is conducive to the ongoing development of professional behaviors in osteopathic medical students, faculty, and staff at all locations and is one in which all individuals are treated with respect. This includes exposure to aspects of patient safety, cultural competency, and interprofessional collaborative practice. SHSU-COM is committed to maintaining an environment that is optimal for learning, teaching, conducting research, and providing clinical care. Professional behavior is expected of all students as they interact internally and externally as representatives of the SHSU-COM. SHSU-COM's professionalism expectations are in alignment with the American Osteopathic Association's Code of Ethics (<https://osteopathic.org/about/leadership/aoa-governance-documents/code-of-ethics/>).

This expectation of professionalism extends to all domains in which status as representatives of SHSU-COM is relevant. Students should ensure their social media and other online presence reflects respect for their patients, staff, faculty, peers, and the practice of medicine. Conduct that undermines the public's confidence in the profession of osteopathic medicine fails to meet this expectation. Failure to adhere to professional standards may result in dismissal from the program.

Students are expected to behave in a responsible and professional manner while functioning in course/class or clerkship rotations. Failure to adhere to applicable standards of practice shall be considered cause for dismissal from course/clerkship rotations or the program. For applicable standards of practice, see the AOA Rules and Guidelines on Physicians' Professional Conduct (<https://osteopathic.org/about/leadership/aoa-governance-documents/aoa-rules-and-guidelines-on-physicians-professional-conduct/>).

Peer Experiential Learning

Skills training sessions in the Clinical Medicine (CM) and Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM) courses require that students practice examinations and selected skills on peers, or other students who are role-playing as patients. Skills include but are not limited to, communication, physical examinations, and osteopathic techniques.

Guidelines and requirements regarding peer experiential learning are in each CM and OMM course syllabus.

Provision of Medical Care

SHSU-COM full-time clinical faculty members or any physician evaluating student performance may not provide medical care to SHSU-COM students or their children. Students are to refrain from requesting medical advice or from seeking medical care from full-time clinical faculty members. If there is an emergency, then the physician who provided care will be required to opt out of the evaluation process. Physicians and health-care providers employed by SHSU-COM with primary duties providing care at the SHSU Physicians Clinic may provide care to SHSU-COM students if they do not evaluate student performance.

Students may not state or imply that they are providing medical care or entering into a physician-patient relationship when practicing clinical skills, inside or outside of a classroom setting.

Immunization Requirements

Effective January 1, 2014, Texas state law (Senate Bill 62) requires that on the first day of class at an institution of higher education in Texas, SHSU students must provide proof of immunization OR an accepted waiver for bacterial meningitis. (If you are 22 or older this requirement does not apply to you.) For more information, please go to <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/student-health-center/meningitis>.

Hepatitis B: Students must receive an approved 3-shot or 2-shot vaccine series or have received the first two doses of an approved 3-shot series before enrollment. Alternatively, students may have a titer drawn to demonstrate Hepatitis B protection before enrollment. If the titer is low, the student must repeat an approved 2- or 3-shot series. If the titer is not adequate after repeating an approved 2- or 3-shot series, no further Hepatitis B immunization or testing needs to be performed. Students might be required to sign an affidavit regarding their titer status and potential risks prior to participating in clinical rotations.

Influenza: Students must receive the flu vaccine each fall by the end of October on an annual basis.

Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR): All students must provide proof of immunization for measles, mumps and rubella or show serologic proof of immunity.

Varicella (Chicken Pox): Students must provide proof of having received 2 doses of varicella vaccine or positive serology.

Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis (Tdap): Students must provide proof of one dose of adult Tdap within the last ten years. If administered greater than 10 years prior to matriculation, one dose Tdap vaccine is required.

Tuberculosis Testing (TB): Students must have TB testing during pre-clerkship. Please refer to CastleBranch for details.

Other requirements may be added for clerkship rotations. Students should comply with all vaccinations/testing as required by the site providing the preceptorship.

Failure to complete immunizations and other requirements in a timely manner may result in disciplinary action and/or interruption of clinical training. Students are required to keep their immunizations and testing up to date and to upload the documentation into CastleBranch. Exemptions for medical and/or religious reasons will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Background Checks and Drug Testing

Hospital and health care facilities have policies requiring drug testing and criminal background checks for employees, students, and volunteers. Some facilities provide that students who test positive for drugs, or who have certain types of information in their criminal background checks, are ineligible to train in that facility. Therefore, criminal background checks will be required of all students prior to first year enrollment and prior to clinical rotations. Additional background checks might be required by rotation sites as dictated by their human resource policies. Drug testing will be required of all students prior to clinical rotations.

Background Checks

Background checks will be facilitated through CastleBranch on behalf of SHSU-COM prior to orientation and the start of clinical rotations. Any violations found on background checks prior to the start of clinical rotations will be referred to the SHSU-COM Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs.

Drug Testing

Drug testing will be facilitated through CastleBranch on behalf of SHSU-COM prior to the start of clinical rotations. Results of any routine drug test will be confidentially reported to the Dean. Notice of normal drug testing and background checks will be provided to the clinical facilities. Please refer to the clerkship manual for more details regarding drug screenings during clerkships.

Random drug testing may be performed at any time. Between matriculation and clerkships, students who test positive on a drug test will be referred to a physician not affiliated with the SHSU-COM for evaluation. The physician will be designated by the SHSU-COM and the student will pay for the evaluation. Students may not continue in

classes or rotations at SHSU-COM until the physician evaluation has been completed and the student has been cleared by the evaluating physician to resume classes, and a negative drug screen has been returned. Results of this evaluation will be shared with the Dean. If a student refuses evaluation or consent to share the results of this evaluation, they will be subject to disciplinary procedures, including dismissal.

If treatment is recommended, the student will be allowed to seek treatment and remain enrolled as a student but must be cleared by an evaluating physician and have a negative drug screen prior to resuming classes. This may delay graduation or necessitate repeating a year or course. Continued monitoring after treatment or evaluation will be under the purview of the Texas Medical Association Physician Health and Rehabilitation Committee or private physician as outlined below and will not be reported to the Dean unless the impaired student refuses or is unresponsive to the appropriate treatment.

The use of illegal drugs or failure of a drug screen is considered grounds for dismissal. Any questions or concerns about routine drug testing may be shared confidentially with the Dean.

Health Insurance

All students enrolled at SHSU-COM are required to show proof of health insurance annually or at the time of coverage expiration. All students must maintain health insurance coverage throughout their enrollment at SHSU-COM. Students may obtain health insurance privately or through one of the SHSU student health insurance plans offered by Academic HealthPlans™, found at <https://shsu.myahpcare.com>. Dependent coverage is also available through the student health insurance plan. Dependent coverage payment must be paid directly to Academic HealthPlans and may not be billed to the student's account.

Students are required to submit proof of health insurance through Academic Healthplans for verification. Academic Healthplans will verify students have insurance coverage meeting the minimum standards required by the SHSU-COM. Insurance coverage should also include coverage for an occupational injury, such as blood exposure, that might put the individual at risk for a bloodborne infection (i.e., hepatitis B, hepatitis C, HIV). It is important for students to realize that medical expenses for care provided by hospitals affiliated with the SHSU-COM, including laboratory procedures and emergency care, are the responsibility of the student and not the clinical site, SHSU-COM, or SHSU.

Needle Stick/Exposure

In the case of needle stick/exposure of SHSU-COM students to blood and/or bodily fluids:

1. Immediately wash the area with soap and water and then apply direct pressure to stop bleeding if needed.

2. If blood or a bodily fluid has come in contact with the skin, eyes, nose, or mouth, thoroughly flush the exposed area with saline or water for a minimum of 5 minutes. If available, use the closest wash station. Remove contact lenses from eye if necessary.
3. Bodily fluids that come into contact with intact skin are NOT considered exposures.
4. Identify the source patient's medical record number (MRN), physician, physician phone number, and pertinent health information.
5. Immediately report the incident to your preceptor or charge nurse at your current location. The charge nurse or other clinical staff member will supervise the testing of the source patient and complete any necessary steps required by the clinical site's exposure policy.
6. Immediately seek medical treatment, if necessary, at the nearest emergency facility. **Payment of any treatment will be the student's responsibility and charged to the student's insurance. Students are not employees and should not be treated as such.**
7. Students are to complete a Student Incident/Injury Report form and send a copy to SHSU-COM Clinical Affairs.
8. Students are to follow up with the healthcare providers at the SHSU Student Health Center following an exposure at 936-294-1805 or a provider of their choice. The providers at the SHSU Student Health Center will review any test or lab results they have been provided with the student. If necessary, the healthcare provider will refer the student to outside providers for further treatment.

The Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs shall serve as a point of contact for incidents or injuries involving students on clerkship rotations. Please see the clerkship manual for more details.

Malpractice Insurance Coverage Policy

Subject to applicable policy terms, conditions, and exclusions, SHSU-COM's professional malpractice insurance includes students as insureds while on all training assignments approved by the SHSU-COM. Students may participate in unique clinical opportunities outside of the regular curriculum only with prior written approval of the Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs in consultation with the Dean. Students who arrange clinical rotations at their own discretion are not covered under this policy. All rotation sites must be reported to the professional liability carrier, and it is the responsibility of the student selecting rotations to provide that information to the Office of Clinical Education.

Dress Code

The SHSU-COM student dress code is designed to promote professionalism in the learning and work environment. Students who do not adhere to the dress code may be asked to leave a session to change. Repeat dress code violations will be reported by the appropriate Course Director and reviewed by the SPAP committee.

Students are expected to wear their ID badge at all times and dress in business casual attire unless a Course Director specifies otherwise in the syllabus. Students are expected to wear their white coat at all times unless directed otherwise (e.g., during examinations). Students are expected to be clean, well groomed, and dressed in a manner appropriate to their responsibilities. Please note the dress code on SHSU-COM campus will be observed Monday through Friday from 8am-5pm.

General Guidelines

SHSU-COM will provide:

- Two (2) pairs of official SHSU-COM scrubs
- Two (2) official SHSU-COM student white coats
- One (1) ID badge/name tag

If replacements for scrubs or white coats are needed, students should contact Medical Student Affairs for purchasing information. A replacement ID Badge can be acquired through the Bearkat OneCard Office.

Recommended acceptable attire includes collared shirts, ties (optional), slacks, skirts, blouses, sweaters, and dresses. Dress shoes, low heels, or flats should be worn. Do not wear open-toed shoes, flip-flops, tennis shoes, or porous shoes. Clothing should allow for an appropriate range of movement and be appropriate for a business casual environment.

SHSU-COM students may not wear hats, jeans, shorts, flip-flops, and athletic wear including t-shirts. In all cases, hair and nails should be clean and neatly groomed, good oral and skin hygiene adhered to, and strong fragrances/perfumes avoided. Official SHSU-COM scrubs may be worn with an official SHSU-COM white coat and ID badge to lectures on days when students have labs that require scrubs.

Clinical Sites

During clinical clerkships, students will wear clean, white jackets identifying them as students with SHSU-COM and name tags and name badges provided by the clerkship facility. The student must dress in a manner that is fitting for a physician in the clinical setting (business casual). When students visit a clinical site, they should adhere to the dress code of that site. Dress code infractions at clinical sites will be reported to the appropriate Clerkship Director and repeat violations will be reviewed by the SPAP committee.

If students are on a service that requires scrubs, students will be required to wear scrubs provided by the clerkship facility or personal scrubs that meet the requirements of the facility. Do not take scrubs from the facility unless authorized to do so.

Course and Faculty Evaluations

Student evaluations of all courses, clerkships, and instructors who teach in the osteopathic medical school curriculum are an important means to monitor and obtain useful information for improving the medical education program. All responses collected remain confidential.

Completion of course and clerkship evaluations is a professional expectation for all students. Student comments should be constructive and professional in nature to ensure they will be taken seriously and lead to improvement. The use of confrontational language is not considered constructive or professional and only tends to diminish the credibility of the evaluation. With this understanding, all ratings and comments are welcome. Constructive comments about individual faculty are also welcome. Students are also encouraged to offer supporting comments on a course or clerkship that was a positive learning experience for them and made the curriculum stronger.

Students are required to complete online evaluations of each course/clerkship/instructor as assigned by the provided deadline.

Participation

The collaborative adult learning model requires students to participate and actively engage in the learning process. Participation is not the same as attendance. Participation requires students to be actively involved in the learning process. The contribution made by the student should be related to the course content, be relevant to the class discussion, and advance shared learning. Confidentiality in the learning experiences as part of the formal curriculum is expected and should be treated as such. Shared information should never be used in a way that would jeopardize a person or organization.

Reproduction of Materials

All lecture videos and other course materials are available only to SHSU-COM students affiliated with a course or clerkship. At no time may students repost any course materials or share them with people unaffiliated with the course without express written permission from the Course or Clerkship Director.

Compliance and Training

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Please see Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/810806%20Student%20Educational%20Records.pdf>).

Secure Student Record Keeping

SHSU protects the security, confidentiality, and integrity of student records and maintains security measures to protect and back up data. SHSU complies with the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 202, Subchapter B, Rule 202.20 and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) to ensure the security, confidentiality, and integrity of student records. The University's Academic Policy 810806 (Student Educational Records) (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/810806%20Student%20Educational%20Records.pdf>), is established to assure FERPA compliance and designates types, locations, and custodians of various student records. This policy also provides guidelines for the printing of hard copy student academic records. The University has established an Information Security Program that provides direction for managing and protecting the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of SHSU information technology resources.

Title IX

Please see UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES.

All SHSU-COM students are required to participate in a yearly Title IX training to maintain academic good standing with the SHSU-COM. Students are expected to abide by the rules and regulations outlined in this training. Any student wishing to report a Title IX incident should follow the procedures outlined on the SHSU Office of Title IX & Discrimination Resolution website <https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/>.

Specialized Training

SHSU-COM students receive Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and Bloodborne Pathogen training during their SHSU-COM orientation. Students are required to maintain their training and update any required documents in CastleBranch. Training certificates will be kept on file and available for verification via the Division of Educational Affairs and the document repository in CastleBranch. Some sites might have policies that require students to update certificates prior to rotations.

Students wishing to engage in academic research outside of a course are required to complete all trainings required for ethics and/or biosafety. These trainings are offered through the Collaborative Institutional training Initiative (CITI). Instructions for completing those trainings can be found through the Compliance division of the SHSU Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP). Additional training regarding laboratory specific safety and procedures will be required when appropriate. Questions regarding training and compliance should be directed toward the faculty PI and/or the SHSU-COM Director of Research at COMresearch@shsu.edu. See also "Research & Funding.

SHSU ACADEMIC POLICIES

For a comprehensive list of graduate student Degree Requirements and Academic Guidelines, go to the following link to the online version of the university's Graduate Catalog:

<http://catalog.shsu.edu/graduate-and-professional/academic-policies-procedures/degree-requirements-academic-guidelines/#degree-requirements>

Academic Good Standing

SHSU Academic Policy Statement 910312 (Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination) (https://www.shsu.edu/academics/science-and-engineering-technology/documents/910312%20Academic%20Probation%20and%20Suspension_2022.pdf), generally defines academic good standing for SHSU-COM students.

In order to achieve and remain in academic good standing at SHSU, a graduate student must maintain an overall grade point average of at least 3.0 on all graduate coursework attempted.

A 3.0 overall grade point average is the absolute minimum required for graduation. A graduate student who falls below a 3.0 overall grade point average at the close of any semester during which one or more semester credit hours are attempted will be placed on probation. If an enrolled student on probation fails to achieve a minimum 3.0 overall grade point average at the close of the next semester following the starting of the probation, the student will be terminated.

A student who earns a grade of "C" in any course (repeated or distinct course) within the academic program may have his/her graduate status reviewed by a committee comprised of the department or college's graduate faculty. The committee will recommend an appropriate remediation for the student. The grade of "NC" is treated as a grade of "C" for the purpose of determining Academic Standing but is considered an insufficient grade to meet degree course requirements. A graduate student who earns a grade of "F" in any graduate course will be terminated from graduate studies. Those students who earn an "F" during the semester of their anticipated graduation will be terminated from graduate studies and will not be eligible to graduate in that term. The appropriate academic dean may place on probation, retain on probation, or terminate any student deficient in grade points without regard to the regulations previously stated.

Any appeal for a review of the termination of graduate status should be directed in writing through the graduate advisor of the program, then to the chair of the department, then to the academic dean of the college, and finally to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Refer to Academic Policy 910312 for further information.

If a student wishes to pursue a different program after being terminated from the original program, the student must complete the admissions process and be accepted into the new program. A student must be in Academic Good Standing in order to change to a new program **or** receive a release from the academic program, academic dean of the college, and Dean of The Graduate School. Once accepted to the new program, the previous program must release the termination block in the Registrar's Office before the student can register in the new program.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is defined in paragraph 5.3, Chapter VI, of the Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The Texas State University System, and in the SHSU Student Code of Conduct and Discipline in the Student Guidelines published by the Dean of Students' Office. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsification of research data, and the abuse of resource materials on an examination or other academic work. Academic dishonesty cases are governed by SHSU Academic Policy Statement 810213 (Procedures in Cases of Academic Dishonesty) (https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/810213%20Procedures%20in%20Cases%20of%20Academic%20Dishonesty_2022.pdf).

Academic Probation/Suspension/Termination

SHSU Academic Policy Statement 910312 (Academic Probation, Suspension, Dismissal, and Termination) (https://www.shsu.edu/academics/science-and-engineering-technology/documents/910312%20Academic%20Probation%20and%20Suspension_2022.pdf) governs probation, suspension, dismissal, and termination of undergraduate and graduate students at SHSU.

Graduate Degree Enrollment and Completion Requirements

See Academic Policy 930129 (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/policies/930129%20Graduate%20Degree%20Enrollment%20and%20Completion%20Requirements.pdf>).

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

Course Load

Full-time graduate enrollment during the fall or spring semesters is 9 credit hours and drops to 6 credit hours in the summer. The maximum permissible load is 12 hours of coursework. The maximum permissible load is 6 hours during a single summer session of five weeks. Maximum loads should be chosen judiciously and are not recommended; consult with the MA Coordinator.

Transfer Credit

The University may accept up to 9 hours of coursework at other accredited universities toward the Masters degree and up to 15 hours towards the Masters degree. It's relatively easy for us to accept transfer credit that replaces electives in our degree plans. However, if you wish to use transfer credit to replace any of our required courses, you'll need to consult with the MA Coordinator and provide documentation of the content of your course (e.g., the course syllabus) along with your written request. This information is typically given to the SHSU faculty member who teaches our similar course for review; only if our faculty agree that your transfer courses sufficiently duplicate the material we require will transfer credit be granted. Please note, too, that our Dean must also agree that transfer credit is suitable before it will be allowed.

Leave of Absence

Graduate students who have not completed their formal course requirements are expected to enroll continuously in the Program, taking courses in each consecutive Fall and Spring semester after initial registration. Candidates who do not expect to be enrolled should request a leave of absence in a letter to the Program faculty stating the reason for the continued leave. A leave of absence is granted at the discretion of the Dean. During a leave of absence, a candidate cannot make use of college or university resources, nor can a candidate take comprehensive exams or defend a proposal or thesis.

You need to do nothing at all if you wish to take a summer off. Summer classes are not necessary to be considered to be making normal progress toward your Master's degree. Note, however, that you have six years from the date of your first enrollment to claim your degree. After six years have elapsed, your old coursework may no longer be applied toward our degree requirements unless you have special dispensation from the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Resignation

As per SHSU guidelines for resignation (official withdrawal) from a course from the University, a student must notify the Registrar's Office and process a Resignation Request. The Resignation Request must be in writing and becomes effective on the date received by the Registrar's Office. The effective date of the Resignation Request, as received by the Registrar's Office, is the date used for determining any refund as authorized in the State Refund Policy (see below for the State Statutory Refund Schedule). The student is responsible for clearing all debts owed to the University. A student who wishes to drop all courses must officially resign. A student who discontinues attending class and fails to officially resign from the University will receive the grade of "F" in each enrolled course. A student who resigns after the 12th class day of a regular semester or after the 4th class day of a summer session will receive a mark of "W" for each enrolled course. A student who resigns from the University while enrolled in a course whose duration is less than a normal term will receive a mark of "W" if the resignation occurs after one-half of that course time has been completed.

State Statutory Refund Schedule of Tuition and Fees

Fall and Spring Semesters Refund Schedule

Before the 1st class day	100%
1st class day through 5th class day	80%
6th class day through 10th class day	70%
11th class day through 15th class day	50%
16th class day through 20th class day	25%
Thereafter	No refund

Summer Sessions Refund Schedule

Before the 1st class day	100%
1st class day through 3rd class day	80%
4th class day through 6th class day	50%
Thereafter	No refund

Appeal of a Grade

Academic Grievances are governed by SHSU Academic Policy Statement 900823 (Academic Grievance Procedures for Students) found here:

(<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/900823%20Academic%20Grievance%20Procedures%20for%20Students.pdf>).

Classroom Rules of Conduct

According to Section 5 of the Student Handbook, students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who are disruptive to the class may be dismissed from the classroom for their inappropriate behavior and will not be allowed to hand in any assignments due for the remainder of that class. Additionally, students may be withdrawn from the course for repeated disruptive behavior. For further information, see <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/dean-of-students/student-code-of-conduct.html>.

Religious Holy Days

Absences on religious holy days are governed by SHSU Academic Policy Statement 861001 – Student Absences on Religious Holy Days

(<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/861001%20Student%20Absences%20on%20Religious%20Holy%20Days.pdf>). Students have the responsibility of notifying the professor of each scheduled class day that the student will be absent due to a religious holy day. *This must be done not later than the 15th class day.* Students who are absent from class for observance of a religious holy day will be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within one week of returning to class. However, any in-class assignments cannot be made up, but will not count against their other assignment average since the one lowest assignment grade will be dropped.

Notice to Persons with Disabilities

It is the policy of SHSU that no individuals otherwise qualified shall, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic program activity. Students with a disability that may affect their academic performance are expected to arrange for a conference with the instructor as soon as possible. This is done so that appropriate strategies can be considered to ensure participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired since there will be no retroactive accommodation. Furthermore,

accommodations will be made **only** to those people who have documented the disability with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Office in the Lee Drain Building. The number there is 936-294-3512.

TITLE IX: Sexual Misconduct

SHSU is committed to creating and maintaining educational communities in which each individual is respected, appreciated, and valued. SHSU's focus on tolerance, openness, and respect is key in providing every member of the SHSU community with basic human dignity free from all forms of Sexual Misconduct, including Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking. Any such conduct is defined and governed by the Texas State University System Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures, which includes procedures for reporting, investigation, applicable supportive measures, and resolution processes. Any report of behavior that threatens our institutional values and breaches this policy shall be promptly investigated and remediated in accordance with principles of law, fairness, and equity to all parties to which it applies.

For concerns of discrimination based on sex, please also see SHSU PRE-29 - Non-Discrimination Policy (<https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/documents/PRE-29%20Non-Discrimination%20Policy.pdf>).

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (FERPA), is a federal law that provides that colleges and universities will maintain the confidentiality of student education records directly related to the student and maintained by SHSU or a party acting on its behalf. SHSU FERPA compliance is governed by Academic Policy Statement 810806 (Student Educational Records <https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/students/810806%20Student%20Educational%20Records.pdf>), which includes a statement of students' rights, permitted use of student's educational records, student and procedures to inspect and/or correct educational records, and other guidelines and important information. Violations of this policy may result in appropriate disciplinary action.

The FERPA campus official at SHSU is the Registrar. For additional information, please see resources available on the Office of the Registrar's website (https://www.shsu.edu/dept/registrar/students/student_privacy_information.html) or you may direct any questions as follows:

Registrar's Office
BOX 2029
Huntsville TX 77341
(936) 294-1040
Or
Email at: registrar@shsu.edu

Physical Address:
1903 University Avenue
Estill Building, Room 331
Huntsville, TX 77340

To file a complaint regarding alleged violations of rights accorded by students by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or the regulations promulgated under please visit <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint>.

For more information visit the U.S. Department of Education (<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>).

Thomas J. Mohr D.O.

7/12/2024

Thomas Mohr, DO

Date

Dean

Ken Hendrickson

5/1 July 2024

Ken Hendrickson, PhD

Date

Associate Provost for Community Engagement,

Dean of The Graduate and Professional School

Michael T. Stephenson, Ph.D

8/19/2024

Michael T. Stephenson, PhD

Date

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs