



Sam Houston State University
**College of Osteopathic
Medicine**

Preceptor Handbook

Academic Year 2025 – 2026

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MESSAGE FROM SHSU ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The *Sam Houston State University College of Osteopathic Medicine Preceptor Handbook* is designed to support the relationship among preceptors, SHSU-COM students, and the Office of Clinical Education. It contains important information about policies, procedures, requirements, and services. This handbook outlines the Academic Year (AY) 2024-2025 guidelines for preceptors 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](#), in [Academic Affairs' Policies and Procedures](#), and on the [Dean of Students' Office](#) website.

WELCOME

Message from the Dean



I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all preceptors for your service in training the next generation of physicians. Sam Houston State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (SHSU-COM) uses a model of clinical education where our student doctors are trained in rural and community-based clinics and hospitals where we hope they will eventually practice. Your hard work and dedication in working with SHSU-COM student doctors is of paramount importance. The experiences the students will obtain with your guidance are of critical importance to their future as physicians.

You are the key to positive educational experiences in the clinical setting. Through your leadership and mentoring, student doctors will progressively develop the skills and clinical judgement necessary to become a practicing physician. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and sets an example for students to actively give back to the profession.

I hope you enjoy the opportunity to serve as a preceptor and that your investment of time and talent will be rewarding, and perhaps balanced by the ability of our student doctors to assist in the delivery of quality patient care under your supervision and direction.

If at any time you have questions, concerns, observations, or suggestions to help us better prepare our student doctors for clerkship and/or to better help us support you as a valued clinical preceptor, please do not hesitate to contact me, your regional clinical coordinator, or the SHSU-COM Office of Clinical Education.

I appreciate your commitment to medical education and SHSU-COM student doctors.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas J. Mohr D.O.".

Thomas J. Mohr, MS, DO,
FACOI, FAOGME
Dean, Professor of Internal
Medicine

Overview

SHSU-COM Mission

The mission of Sam Houston State University 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.

SHSU-COM Vision

The vision of the SHSU-COM is to provide medical education and service to the eastern region of Texas and be recognized as a leader in improving primary care access and workforce needs in the state. The SHSU-COM will

- provide an excellent academic experience through a vertically integrated basic science/clinical curriculum provided by highly skilled and experienced basic science faculty and clinicians.
- reinforce the quality of academic experience through biomedical and clinical research.
- create opportunities with clinical partners to develop strong clinical training programs for students and facilitate the creation and expansion of graduate medical education.
- produce qualified candidates for entry into Graduate Medical Education (GME) who will become part of the medical workforce in east Texas.

PRECEPTOR OVERVIEW

SHSU-COM is dedicated to engaging highly qualified clinicians, teachers, and researchers to serve as preceptors. Preceptors demonstrating an interest in training SHSU-COM students are reviewed for eligibility and granted a courtesy appointment as a Clinical Assistant Professor.

Preceptor Definition

Clinical Teaching Faculty (Preceptor) are fully qualified and credentialed professionals who have a faculty appointment through SHSU and provide clinical instruction and supervision to SHSU-COM students within an affiliated hospital or another medical facility during the third- and fourth-year clerkships.

As a preceptor, your role is one of not only a teacher, but also an observer, mentor, and evaluator.

Preceptor Responsibilities

1. Maintain professional license, malpractice insurance, and board certification or clinical faculty specialty-specific CME requirements as applicable.
2. Supervise students during all aspects of clinical training.
 - **Complete** the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) training in the SHSU-COM CME Portal and review the [SHSU FERPA Policy](#).
 - **Review** the [Title IX Guidelines](#) provided on the SHSU Office of Title IX & Discrimination Resolution website and **complete** Title IX training in the SHSU-COM CME Portal (see also “University Requirements and Policies”).
 - Utilize the SHSU course or specialty syllabus as a guide for clerkship teaching.
3. Evaluation
 - Discuss preceptor expectations on the first day of each clerkship rotation.
 - Provide informal mid-clerkship evaluation.
 - Submit an evaluation of the student’s performance within one week of the clerkship end date.
4. Provide a letter of recommendation as requested by the student when appropriate.

Faculty Appointment Process

SHSU is committed to recognizing and rewarding preceptors with an appropriate and meaningful community faculty rank. In accordance with the university’s mission, guidelines have been specifically developed to provide preceptors a method to obtain an appointment. It is our obligation not only to document the qualifications and skills of

our preceptors, but also to provide the educational support and development essential to the delivery of a quality curriculum.

Preceptors who demonstrate an interest in training SHSU-COM students are reviewed for eligibility and granted an appointment. This process includes the submission of a Clinical Faculty Request Form and the provision of supporting documentation based on the criteria for the rank requested.

Once a completed application and required documentation are received, the Faculty Evaluation and Selection Committee (FESC) review the applicant's information. Preceptors will receive the following benefits after they have activated their SHSU accounts (please note that reactivation might also be necessary to access resources):

- Access to the SHSU library
- Subscription to UpToDate®
- Access to *The Teaching Physician* from the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM)
- CME Portal Access
- Formal letter and certificate confirming the academic rank awarded and dates of the appointment
- CME credits for teaching medical students and CME credits for attending CME accredited faculty development sessions

Preceptors may be regularly evaluated and are recredentialed every three years. If you would like more information about preceptor benefits or policies, please contact the Office of Clinical Education by phone at 936-202-5235 or by email at comcredentials@shsu.edu.

Supervision of Students

It is of utmost importance that preceptors acknowledge that the student must be supervised as SHSU students are *unlicensed*. Patient safety and quality of care are the primary priorities. Supervising physicians are to be engaged and retain responsibility for all aspects of patient care. The supervising physician or health care provider should have privileges to perform the duties or tasks that are to be performed by the student. A preceptor's introduction should include:

- to whom the student directly reports.
- detailed expectations of the student per the preceptor (e.g., time commitment and service duties).
- a discussion of policies and expectations.

SHSU-COM Regional Clinical Clerkship Coordinators

SHSU-COM Regional Clinical Coordinators (RCC) are the initial point of contact for most matters pertaining to clinical education. The RCCs' primary responsibilities

are to be available to assist students and preceptors in navigating clerkship coordination. They are expected to be available by email or telephone during regular university business hours (8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday). To reach a member of the SHSU Office of Clinical Education or Dean's Office, please contact your RCC, Regional Chief Preceptor (if applicable), the lead regional coordinator, or the Director for Clinical Education (see "SHSU-COM Faculty & Staff").

Student Inquiries

Students should contact their RCC for most issues, including the following:

- general inquiries regarding their rotation or preceptor
- issues with their current rotation or preceptor
- issues getting in touch with their preceptor for an upcoming rotation
- inquiries regarding the hospitals or sites in the region
- issues regarding the hospitals or sites in the region
- issues with hospital badge access
- if submitting an Excused Absence/Tardy Request (EATR) during their rotation

Students should contact Clinical Education for the following:

- inquiries that involve SHSU-COM provided housing (contact comcredentials@shsu.edu)
- affiliation agreements (contact clined@shsu.edu)
- VSLO notifications (contact the lead clinical coordinator)
- if their RCC is out of office (contact the lead clinical coordinator or director of Clinical Education)

Students should contact their educational program coordinator for the following:

- inquiries about their schedule
- schedule change requests
- inquiries related to submission of clerkship duty hours, clinical patient encounter logs, and procedure logs
- degree plan requirements and progress

Regional Chief Preceptors

Some regions have Chief Preceptors, who are clinical faculty preceptors who are local physician leaders contracted with SHSU-COM to be available to provide in person local academic and medical staff knowledge and assistance to students, other preceptors, SHSU-COM Clinical Education staff, and SHSU-COM Clinical Deans to help the RCC with coordination and other issues. They are not full time SHSU-COM employees, and typically should be used as a facilitator or resource rather than a primary point of contact.

SHSU-COM Clinical Deans

Assistant or Associate Deans for Clinical Affairs or Integration have primary responsibility for SHSU-COM academic standards and policies as they apply to third- and fourth-year students, clinical faculty, and preceptors. They are a resource available to all involved in the clinical years, and available for coordination or resolution of any issues that arise. They are generally available by email or telephone during regular university business hours (8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday) and may be contacted by phone at any time in the event of urgent issues or emergencies.

Core Clerkship Syllabus

To ensure consistency among clerkships, standardized course syllabi have been developed by SHSU for core clerkships. The SHSU-COM standardized syllabi are designed for the purpose of ensuring that students understand expectations and work to achieve competency in the diagnosis and management of common illnesses. In so doing, students will gain an appreciation for appropriate utilization of a variety of treatment modalities. The Clinical Education RCC in conjunction with the Phase II Lead and/or Core Clerkship Directors will provide current syllabi for the core clerkships.

Clerkship Clinical Competency Assessment (Preceptor Evaluation of the Student)

Preceptors complete the Preceptor Final Evaluation of the Student Doctor at the end of the clerkship. Preceptors may also choose to complete the Preceptor Midterm Evaluation of the Student Doctor. The purpose of the evaluation of the student is to provide feedback to guide both clinical and professional development. If you have any difficulty accessing the evaluation portal, contact com-evaluations@shsu.edu.

The preceptor should document the performance of expected competencies as compared to other students at the same educational level. Evaluations of students submitted by residents who work with the student must be cosigned by an attending physician, the residency program director, or the Designated Institutional Official (DIO). We ask preceptors to complete the final evaluation within one week of the clerkship end date and maintain confidentiality in compliance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*.

Preceptors are expected to complete evaluations online. The university recommends that students request an initial discussion of preceptor expectations as well as an informal mid-clerkship evaluation to allow the student to determine whether there is consistency between the preceptor's and student's performance perceptions. In addition, should a student experience difficulty in a clerkship, a mid-clerkship evaluation allows the student to proactively address any problems.

Preceptor approaches vary widely in providing students with feedback on performance. Preceptors might or might not review their evaluation with the student; it is appropriate

for the student to request such a review prior to completion of the clerkship. If the preceptor is not available to review the evaluation with the student and the student has questions or concerns, the student should contact their RCC, Regional Chief Preceptor, or SHSU Clinical Clerkship Director to discuss the most constructive way to obtain the desired feedback.

Letter of Recommendation

Preceptors play a crucial role by providing Letters of Recommendation (LoR) in support of a student's application for residency. The Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) [Letter of Recommendation Portal](#) (LoRP) enables you or your designee to upload LoRs to ERAS for distribution to training programs, at the request of applicants.

In the MyERAS portal, applicants generate a Letter Request Form (LRF) for each LoR they are requesting and provide you with the form. Authors and/or their designees use the unique Letter ID on each form to upload LoRs for applicants. A designee may not be a member of the hospital in an advising role or medical school staff supporting in the application process.

Important Tips:

1. Request a copy of the student's Curriculum Vitae (CV) for reference.
2. Compose the letter on professional or office letterhead.
3. Review the letter for accuracy and grammatical errors.
4. Include the unique Letter ID (*from the student*), your name, credentials, title, and signature on the letter.
5. Upload or have your designee upload the letter to the [LoRP](#).

Mentorship

As a preceptor, you are also a mentor. Students are ultimately responsible for the effort required to direct their own learning and become outstanding osteopathic physicians. As primary contributors to their success, preceptors motivate, engender enthusiasm, encourage, and help foster continuous learning through the provision of an effective and creative learning environment. Sharing your past experiences and clinical knowledge helps students achieve their goals. Your mentorship will leave them with the positive impression of what a physician should be and an example that you would be proud to have them follow. Additionally, mentors can identify struggling students and help facilitate remediation and academic/behavioral counseling before the student completes their clerkship. In these cases, the RCC should be notified to initiate the "Clerkship Inquiries" alert, which will be routed to the Director of Medical Student Affairs, the Phase II Lead, Director of Clinical Education, the Assistant Dean of Clinical Affairs, and the Senior Associate Dean of Clinical Integration.

Preceptor Continuing Medical Education (CME)

SHSU recognizes preceptors commit considerable time and energy to the education of our students. Preceptor CME credits are provided by request. If you would like more information about Preceptor CME or need verification, please contact your RCC and/or make direct inquiries to Professional Development and CME at com-pdcme@shsu.edu.

Ethics and Acceptable Conduct

SHSU is committed to a culture of uncompromising integrity and thus places a high priority on ethical behavior. Preceptors shall act in a manner that inspires public trust in their integrity, impartiality, and devotion to the best interests of the university. SHSU expects all preceptors, as a condition of engagement, to conduct themselves in accordance with all federal, state, and local laws; SHSU policies/procedures applicable to their operations; and applicable provisions of the Texas State University System Rules and Regulations.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will be the guide with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, it is the responsibility of the preceptor to ask for clarification from the RCC, Director of Clinical Education, or a Clinical Dean.

Administration, faculty, staff, and students within the SHSU-COM adhere to the [American Osteopathic Association – Code of Ethics](#) in addition to the ethics and acceptable conduct described in the SHSU Employee Handbook and the Texas State University System Rules and Regulations.

Nondiscrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policies

SHSU is committed to an educational and work environment that provides equal opportunity and access to all qualified persons. SHSU, 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, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression in employment, educational programs, activities, and admissions.

If you have a concern regarding sexual misconduct or discrimination, please refer to the reporting options and requirements as provided in the [SHSU Nondiscrimination Policy \(https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/documents/PRE-29%20Non-Discrimination%20Policy.pdf\)](https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/documents/PRE-29%20Non-Discrimination%20Policy.pdf) and/or the [TSUS Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures \(https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/SexualMisconduct.pdf\)](https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/SexualMisconduct.pdf) available here: <https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/>.

Please note the mandatory reporting requirements in 4.4 of the TSUS Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures.

FACULTY & STAFF

SHSU-COM 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 Development

SHSU-COM encourages preceptors to actively engage in ongoing faculty development to enhance and sustain their academic proficiency, leadership abilities, and professional advancement. At SHSU-COM, clinicians, educators, and researchers are increasingly expected to meet elevated educational assessment standards.

Goals for Clinical Teaching

- Create a challenging and supportive learning environment.
- Promote active learning by students (as opposed to shadowing). Evaluate students' interactions and skills, and encourage them to ask questions.
- Prioritize preceptor role modeling (e.g., modeling professionalism).
- Set reasonable teaching goals.

The clerkship facility should

- provide the student orientation at the beginning of the clerkship.
- involve the student in the daily educational activities of the facility.
- provide a supportive learning environment and support inquiry.

The clerkship preceptor should

- be available to the student.
- set a regular meeting time for clinical discussions with the student.
- establish goals with the student to achieve learning objectives.
- plan learning experiences for the student.
- provide regular feedback throughout the clerkship.
- consult with SHSU faculty or clinical education staff whenever necessary.

Educational Plan

The implementation of an educational plan includes...

- reviewing the student's experience.
- discussing patients.
- exploring feelings regarding the experience.
- identifying and assuring the meeting of learning objectives.

Preceptor Expertise

- Create a learning environment in your practice in which students are challenged and provided the psychological support necessary for making decisions and learning.
- Assign students a well-defined role and engage them actively in the work of the practice to include early patient contact and increasing levels of responsibility.
- Help students perceive multiple elements of complex tasks to understand and perform them.
- Prescribe daily reasonable activities to help the student realize the overall goals of the clerkship.

Preceptor Role Modeling

Students...

- are extremely bright.
- learn by picking up your subtle cues and by participating in a peer network.
- emulate your knowledge, attitudes, and skills.
- will see your behavior as normative.

Depending on what you model, students might learn ...

1. the formal medical curriculum (desirable), which includes:
 - a. up-to-date intellectual and technical skills;
 - b. concern for patients;
 - c. excellent communication skills; and
 - d. enthusiasm about practicing medicine.
2. the hidden curriculum (less desirable), which includes:
 - a. negative attitudes toward patients, staff and/or colleagues;
 - b. shortcuts and survival strategies; and
 - c. cynicism.
3. unacceptable modeling that demonstrates
 - a. unprofessional behaviors
 - b. discriminatory language or attitudes

Teaching Goals and Expectations

1. Establish overall learning goals and expectations for the clerkship during the initial orientation discussion.
2. Touch base briefly with the student at the beginning and/or end of each day.
3. Discuss overall progress with the student mid-way through and at the end of each clerkship (see "Evaluations").

One-Minute Preceptor Teaching Skills

1. Get a commitment by asking the student questions like
 - “What do you think is going on with the patient?”
 - “What other information is needed?”
 - “Why do you think the patient has not followed the plan of care?”

Such an approach is collegial; it engages the student in solving the patient's problem and tends not to cut off communication, which often happens if a preceptor adopts an expert role.

2. Probe for supporting evidence by asking questions like
 - “Why do you think this is occurring?”
 - “What were the major findings that led to your conclusion?”
 - “What else did you consider?”

This approach allows you to find out what the student knows and where there may be gaps. In using this approach, it is important to avoid grilling the student or conducting an oral examination.

3. Focus on teaching general rules by making comments such as, “patients with cystitis usually experience pain and urgency with urination, and increased frequency, and may see blood in their urine.” Avoid citing rare conditions or outliers unless and until the student has clearly grasped the basic concepts.
4. Tell the student what he/she did right.
 - Make your comments specific and focused.
 - Consider skills demonstrated in completing the history and exam, documenting, collecting additional information (e.g., lab tests), and clinical reasoning.
 - Say, for example, “you didn’t jump into solving her presenting problem but kept open until the patient revealed her real agenda for coming in today.”
5. Correct mistakes.
 - Make your comments specific and focused.
 - As soon as possible after a student makes a mistake, find an appropriate time to discuss what was wrong and how to correct the error in the future.
 - Say, for example, “you may be right that the child’s symptoms are due to a viral upper respiratory infection, but you can’t be sure it isn’t otitis media until you’ve examined the ears.”
 - Consider recommending additional resources or readings to the student.

Creating a Challenging but Supportive Learning Environment

Encourage active learning:

It’s Time to Put Medical Students Back to Work

- “Active learning has the student spending more time seeking information, while

- passive learning requires more time of the preceptor.”
- “Medical students enjoy helping out and giving real patient care. The preceptor should expect the student to read independently about the patients seen and not have to provide the student all the education around each encounter.”
 - “... the put-you-to-work approach has been well accepted by medical students; they like being useful as long as they are not overloaded with patient responsibilities or menial tasks.”

Tips for making learning active include...

- clarifying the ground rules, ensuring that each student has some specific responsibilities, such as charting.
- having students sign notes with their name followed by OMSIII or OMSIV (Osteopathic Medical Student III or IV).
- inviting reluctant students to actively participate while in the exam room (e.g., “come look at this,” “come feel this”).
- asking students to read about specific patients and topics and find time the next day to discuss what they have read.
- asking students to justify their questions (e.g., “That’s a good question; why is it important to know that for this case?”).
- using a variety of open-ended questions.

Clarify the following to students:

- Patient safety is the number one priority.
- You expect them to fulfill assigned responsibilities.
- You have high standards for their work.
- They will often feel uncertain and make mistakes.
- Learning involves taking risks.
- They will have your support as they learn.
- They can feel safe sharing issues concerning personal and professional development.

Tips for creating a supportive learning environment include...

- learning students’ names and using them frequently (“student doctor x”).
- asking your students what they think, rather than always sharing your impressions first.
- getting to know your students; asking about their interests outside of medicine.
- sharing information about yourself with your students to whatever extent you feel is appropriate.
- making eye contact and using an open posture whenever students come to you with a question or concern.
- making verbal appointments to discuss students’ questions and following through with the discussion in cases where you couldn’t address the questions when they were presented. Students should be expected to research some of their more complicated questions.
- recognizing trust and mutual respect are built over time.
- being aware that most students have had painful experiences with teachers and might find it difficult to admit they don’t know something. Hiding deficiencies in medicine

has become a key to survival. Clarify that they must admit to knowledge gaps when it comes to patients.

Training Students in a Busy Practice

Preceptors are by definition those in clinical practices who have agreed to teach students. For many, this is an exciting opportunity to give back to the profession and enjoy interacting with the students. For others, it can be a little worrisome trying to think of training a student while being in a busy practice.

The answer to how to teach students without having it impede your clinic efficiency is probably different for each practitioner and clinical setting.

Recommendations for training students in a busy practice are provided below:

1. When comfortable with the student's skills, find one or two patients per half day that are well known to you and, with the patient's permission, have the student spend time with them. Have them populate the chief complaint, history, review of systems, and examination in the Electronic Health Record (EHR), including a review of the problem(s) and medication(s). The students can then spend a few minutes presenting the patient to you and then together you can see the patient. This will allow you to spend less time charting except for making minor adjustments for diagnosis and billing. In this way, the student also functions similarly to a scribe and performs a time saving function and receives the educational value.
2. There may be times you don't want to get out of your patient care rhythm and want the student(s) to learn from these cases. It is okay to use some other time, such as after the clinic day, to discuss them.
3. It is also important to discuss patients the student saw and whether they wrote in their chart. If they did not write in the chart, ask them to make their own separate notes in order for you to review their thought process.
4. Help the student understand the thought process that goes into each patient encounter and decision you make:
 - How do you weigh all the information you have in order to make a diagnosis or a treatment plan?
 - How do you determine who is really sick and who is not?
 - How do you define your relationship with your patients?

Students will learn about patient boundaries, professionalism, empathy, and listening by observing your behavior with the patients, so it could be a good idea to openly discuss some of these issues. And remember, they are watching you!

Providing Effective Feedback

Providing feedback is different from completing an evaluation. If done well, feedback is non-judgmental and is meant to provide a reference to the student that they may better understand their level of performance in order to make improvements. There are three levels of feedback:

1. Observations of the student, or what you saw the student doing.
2. Your reaction to what you observed.
3. Your thoughts regarding the appropriateness or helpfulness of the observed behavior.

Effective feedback, both positive and negative, incorporates the following:

1. provides descriptive rather than evaluative information.
2. focuses on specific rather than general behavior.
3. addresses the expectations of the student and the preceptor.
4. directly relates to behavior the student controls.
5. occurs as soon after the behavior as possible.
6. balances good and bad qualities of behavior.
7. limits amount of information to what the student can use.
8. checks for understanding.

Additional Precepting Considerations

- The preceptor is asked only to guide or facilitate student education. You can provide a lecture if you desire, or you can simply direct them to read on a specific topic.
- For core clerkships, SHSU will provide learning objectives, syllabi, modules, formal didactics, and reading assignments.
- Students learn by observation, reading, study, participation, and discussion.
- Student education is not dependent on volume, but on depth of learning, as well as development of understanding and application of clinical knowledge.
- Patient satisfaction increases with student presence due to added time with and attention to patients.

SHSU-COM CLERKSHIP CURRICULA

Clinical Curriculum Overview and Graduation Requirements

Year 3 and 4 Curricular Requirements

Year 3 consists of 48 weeks of core, elective, and selective rotations and year 4 consists of 40 weeks of clinical elective and selective rotations for a total of 88 weeks of required clinical coursework. In addition, completion of Osteopathic Principles and Practices (OPP) longitudinal courses and various didactic components are considered requirements for graduation. It is important for preceptors to be aware that these requirements allow for very few missed days during the clinical years.

General Objectives of the Curriculum

During years 3 and 4, under the direct supervision of SHSU-COM and affiliated faculty, students should attain a level of competency that will qualify them to continue their osteopathic medical education as an intern in a residency program. Satisfactory levels of accomplishment must be demonstrated in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective aspects of patient management as reflected in the seven AOA (American Osteopathic Association) Core Competencies. Upon satisfactory completion of years 3 and 4, students should be able to demonstrate progress toward mastery in the following areas:

Programmatic Level Educational Objectives

SHSU-COM Program Level Educational Elements are based on the AACOM Osteopathic Core Competencies and the SHSU Strategic Plan.

Osteopathic Principles and Practices

Upon graduation from SHSU-COM, students will be able to:

- A. Apply the four osteopathic tenets to patient care;
- B. Perform an osteopathic structural exam as part of a physical examination;
- C. Integrate osteopathic manipulative treatment into a patient care plan using the five models of osteopathic medicine;
- D. Utilize osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) as part of a treatment plan, either by performing or referral;
- E. Critically appraise medical literature related to osteopathic manipulative medicine; and
- F. Value the use of osteopathic manipulative medicine as essential to the care of rural and underserved populations.

Medical Knowledge

Upon graduation from SHSU-COM, students will be able to:

- A. Identify foundational biomedical science concepts as they relate to medical conditions in the following systems: musculoskeletal, neurological, motor, cardiovascular, pulmonary, renal, gastrointestinal, endocrine, reproductive, genitourinary, integumentary, hematopoietic, immune, and behavioral (psychiatry);
- B. Demonstrate foundational understanding of cell biology and medical genetics, biochemistry, physiology, pharmacology, immunology, microbiology, biostatistics and epidemiology;
- C. Utilize epidemiological science to identify processes and practices to prevent diseases and improve community health outcomes;
- D. Apply the scientific method when appraising biomedical literature;
- E. Integrate biomedical science with the psychosocial factors that relate to patient conditions; and
- F. Utilize ethical and legal practices when conducting research.

Patient Care

Upon graduation from SHSU-COM, students will be able to:

- A. Gather a patient history;
- B. Perform a physical examination which includes an osteopathic structural exam;
- C. Create a differential diagnosis for common patient presentations;
- D. Perform, with appropriate supervision, basic clinical procedures, including OMT;
- E. Recognize the distinctions of rural populations as they apply to patient; presentations and available prevention, treatment, and management options;
- F. Create a patient-centered, management plan that includes other health care and related services as appropriate;
- G. Recommend appropriate diagnostic laboratory and imaging studies;
- H. Integrate health promotion and disease prevention strategies into patient care activities; and
- I. Document a clinical encounter.

Interpersonal and Communication Skills

Upon graduation from SHSU-COM, students will be able to:

- A. Utilize both physician and patient-centered medical interviewing skills as Appropriate;
- B. Use appropriate documentation and oral communication when discussing patient care;
- C. Use effective communication in all activities, including classroom sessions, peer interactions, and health care activities;
- D. Develop communication skills which are applicable for conflict management, negotiation, and leadership; and

E. Participate in health-care teams.

Professionalism

Upon graduation from SHSU-COM, students will be able to

- A. Demonstrate behaviors of respect, compassion, probity, honesty, and Trustworthiness;
- B. Commit to using ethical principles during all activities, including classroom activities, patient care activities (including informed consent, and confidentiality), interactions with the community, and scholarly activities;
- C. Express awareness of and proper attention to issues of culture, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, and mental and physical disabilities;
- D. Utilize self-care, including principles of physical and psychosocial wellness;
- E. Demonstrate life-long learning skills;
- F. Demonstrate accountability to patients, society, and the profession, including the duty to act in response to the knowledge of professional behavior of others; and
- G. Utilize Learning Communities to develop peer, advisor, and mentor relationships which promotes compassion for and understanding of oneself and others.

Practice-Based Learning and Improvement

Upon graduation from SHSU-COM, students will be able to:

- A. Apply the scientific method to evaluate biomedical literature for application to patient care;
- B. Evaluate the relevance and validity of clinical research;
- C. Identify methods that can improve population health, especially rural and/or underserved medical populations; and
- D. Describe the research continuum that translates scientific discoveries into clinical applications.

Systems-Based Practice

Upon graduation from SHSU-COM, students will be able to:

- A. Compare various health care delivery systems including the effect on patient care from the perspectives of health care team members and patients;
- B. Identify the impact that various health care delivery systems and services have on patient populations, including rural and medical underserved populations;
- C. Collaborate effectively in health care teams, identifying best practices to deliver appropriate patient care; and
- D. Identify social determinants of health and how health care systems and practices address them.

Clinical Curriculum

Assigned Services

Clinical rotations are prearranged by the Office of Clinical Education. All assigned rotations must be completed at the assigned site and with the assigned preceptor. Any alterations to this schedule must be approved through the Office of Clinical Education. Changes to this schedule are not permitted unless it is necessary. SHSU-COM reserves the right to make preceptor and/or site changes when necessary.

Third-Year Core and Elective Rotations

The core rotations for clinical clerkships at SHSU-COM will be completed in the third year with our clinical partners unless there are extenuating circumstances. These core rotations include the following four-week blocks:

- General Surgery (1 block – 4 weeks)
- Rural and Underserved Health (1 block – 4 weeks)
- Family Medicine (1 block – 4 weeks)
- Adult Inpatient Medicine (2 blocks – 8 weeks)
- Pediatrics (1 block – 4 weeks)
- Obstetrics and Gynecology (1 block – 4 weeks)
- Emergency Medicine (1 block – 4 weeks)
- Psychiatry (1 block – 4 weeks)
- Elective rotation (1 block)
- Medicine Selective rotation (1 block – 4 weeks)
- Surgery Selective rotation (1 block – 4 weeks)

Fourth-Year Selective/Elective Rotations

- Selective rotation in Surgery (1 block – 4 weeks)
- Selective rotations in Internal Medicine (1 block – 4 weeks)
- Women's Health Selective and Electives (8 blocks – 4 weeks)
 - see Rotation Types and Requirements table below

The SHSU-COM's clinical education occurs through a distributive model of regional sites. These sites are available for reference on the SHSU-COM website.

Rotation Types and Requirements			
	Specification	Requirement Yr. 3	Requirement Yr. 4
Core	Adult/Inpatient Medicine	2 rotations – 8 weeks	
	Emergency Medicine	1 rotation – 4 weeks	
	Family Medicine	1 rotation – 4 weeks	
	General Surgery	1 rotation – 4 weeks	
	Pediatrics	1 rotation – 4 weeks	
	Psychiatry	1 rotation – 4 weeks	
	Rural/Underserved	1 rotation – 4 weeks	
	Obstetrics and Gynecology	1 rotation – 4 weeks	
Medical Selective	Internal Medicine or any IM (Internal Medicine) subspecialty (Options will depend on site availability)	1 rotation – 4 weeks	1 rotation – 4 weeks
Surgical Selective	General Surgery or any surgical subspecialty Obstetrics and Gynecology Ophthalmology Orthopedic surgery Otolaryngology (Options will depend on site availability)	1 rotation – 4 weeks	1 rotation – 4 weeks
Elective	Any specialty	1 rotation – 4 weeks	8 rotations No more than 3 elective rotations allowed within the same specialty
Other Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One core rotation must be completed at a site with a residency program. One of the rotations must be with a DO preceptor. 			

Clerkship Schedule—AY 2025-2026

Year 3—Rotation Dates and Scheduling Deadlines

All deadlines listed refer to the third-year elective schedule and any other changes to the third-year rotation schedule.

Rotation	Start Date	End Date	Absence Request Deadline	Schedule Deadline – New Preceptor*
NA - Clerkship Prep	6/23/2025	7/18/2025	Not applicable	Not applicable
1	7/28/2025	8/22/2025	4/25/2025	4/7/2025
2	8/25/2025	9/19/2025	5/23/2025	5/5/2025
3	9/22/2025	10/17/2025	6/27/2025	6/2/2025
4	10/20/2025	11/14/2025	7/25/2025	6/30/2025

Rotation	Start Date	End Date	Absence Request Deadline	Schedule Deadline – New Preceptor*
5	11/17/2025	12/12/2025	8/22/2025	7/28/2025
6	12/15/2025	1/9/2026	9/19/2025	8/25/2025
7	1/12/2026	2/6/2026	10/17/2025	9/22/2025
8	2/9/2026	3/6/2026	11/14/2025	10/20/2025
9	3/9/2026	4/3/2026	12/12/2025	11/17/2025
10	4/6/2026	5/1/2026	1/9/2026	12/15/2025
11	5/4/2026	5/29/2026	2/6/2026	1/12/2026
12	6/1/2026	6/26/2026	3/6/2026	2/9/2026

* All required paperwork must be submitted by the student doctor to the Director of Clinical Education by noon Central Time on the date listed.

Year 3—Didactic Schedule

Students who are scheduled for the day shift on a Friday are expected to be in clinic until at least noon unless they are scheduled to take an exam. Students who are scheduled for a morning or afternoon Comprehensive Osteopathic Medical Achievement Tests (COMAT) on a Friday should be excused from Friday morning work duties. If students are scheduled for night shift/night call on the Thursday evening before a Friday COMAT exam, they should be excused from the night shift/call at 10 p.m.

Year 3—OPP Training Schedule

All OMM on-site training sessions will be held in Conroe on the dates below. Students should be excused on one (1) Friday for the callback visit. Please note that this “callback” visit can happen anytime during the two semesters before the end of the spring semester in OMM 6.

Date	Time
Friday, August 15, 2025	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Friday, September 19, 2025	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Friday, October 17, 2025	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Friday, November 21, 2025	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Friday, January 16, 2026	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Friday, February 20, 2026	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Friday, April 17, 2026	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Friday, May 15, 2026	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Friday, June 19, 2026	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Year 4—Rotation Dates and Scheduling Deadlines

Rotation	Start Date	End Date	Absence Request Deadline	Schedule Deadline – New Preceptor*
13	6/30/2025	7/25/2025	3/25/2025	3/10/2025
14	7/28/2025	8/22/2025	4/25/2025	4/7/2025
15	8/25/2025	9/19/2025	5/23/2025	5/5/2025
16	9/22/2025	10/17/2025	6/27/2025	6/2/2025
17	10/20/2025	11/14/2025	7/25/2025	6/30/2025
18	11/17/2025	12/12/2025	8/22/2025	7/28/2025
19	12/15/2025	1/9/2026	9/19/2025	8/25/2025
20	1/12/2026	2/6/2026	10/17/2025	9/22/2025
21	2/9/2026	3/6/2026	11/14/2025	10/20/2025
22	3/9/2026	4/3/2026	12/12/2025	11/17/2025
23	4/6/2026	5/1/2026	1/9/2026	12/15/2025

* All required paperwork must be submitted to the Director of Clinical Education by noon Central Time on the date listed.

Regions for Clinical Rotations

Region	Site(s)/Locations(s)
Central Texas	Corsicana and Waco
Coastal Bend	Bay City, Corpus Christi, Fort Bend, Hallettsville, and Victoria
Conroe	Areas around SHSU-COM
Houston	Downtown and Kingwood
Red River	Dallas, Greenville, Paris, Denison, and Texarkana (Electives/Selectives)
Piney Woods	Nacogdoches and Lufkin
Southeast Texas	Beaumont

*Please note that regions and sites continue to evolve

Clerkships

Clinical clerkships may be referred to as rotations, clinical experiences, or externships, with a teaching physician referred to as a preceptor. A clerkship is four weeks of clinical responsibilities that constitute the heart of clinical courses, which may also include other academic assignments, didactics, and examinations. Clerkships may involve inpatient, outpatient, or a combination of these settings. At the conclusion of these experiences, an evaluation of the student's clinical performance by the preceptor is required. The student is also required to provide an evaluation of the preceptor and clerkship site.

Preparation and Orientation

The development of a system to orient and clarify expectations with a student can help each clerkship get off to a good start. Taking the time to orient the student on the first day saves the preceptor time and energy and prevents student mistakes and unintended misbehaviors. A systematic orientation by you and your staff helps a preceptor tailor the clerkship to different students' particular needs and provides a framework for giving students feedback and completing evaluations.

- Explain to your staff you will have a medical student working with you who will be a member of the team and absorbed into the workflow. Done correctly, with collaboration and under supervision, the student should *add* to the efficiency of the office.
- Take time to make the student familiar with the practice/hospital layout. Show them where they should park and leave personal items, as well as the location of the break room(s), restrooms, their work area, etc.
- Introduce the student to the staff and explain their role in the office. Also, let the student know who they should speak to about specific questions.
- Orient the student to where they can find various important items.
- Advise the student about office policies that employees are expected to follow. Provide the student with a copy of office policies and procedures, if appropriate.
- Discuss your expectations with the student:
 - What time should they arrive?
 - When is their day complete?
 - What are their assigned tasks?
 - Do they have reading assignments?
 - What can they do?
 - What can they not do?
- Be sure the student is comfortable in the environment in which they will work. Your patient may sense insecurity in the student, and this will diminish the patient experience. Remember that they have spent two years preparing for this.
- If reading assignments or other preparations are required prior to the first day of clerkship, communicate this to the student or SHSU Office of Clinical Education in advance.
- Tell all patients that you have a medical student working with you and get their permission to have the student see them.

Orientation Guidelines for Hospital Experience

All SHSU students need to be informed if the following are available to them at your facility and the protocols for their use or access during their clerkship:

- Ancillary Services (radiology, lab, etc.)
- Cafeteria
- Call/Sleep Rooms
- Emergency Room
- Housing
- Internet/Wi-Fi Access
- Library
- Lounges
- Meals
- Medical Records
- Nurses Stations
- Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM) Tables
- Parking
- Patient Rooms
- Security
- Study Space
- Other (if applicable)

Educational Responsibilities

SHSU Student Responsibilities

- Work with the SHSU Office of Clinical Education, faculty, and staff to assure all clerkship requirements are confirmed in a timely manner, prior to the beginning of every clerkship.
- Be compliant with all required immunizations, training (including BLS/ACLS, HIPAA, Blood Borne Pathogens, etc.), and Mask Fit Testing.
- Proactively participate in every learning experience by being engaged and participating in assigned patient care.
- Be familiar with the clerkship syllabus for your specialty, complete all learning objectives, participate in required OPP learning activities, and fulfill all required assessments, including discipline-specific COMAT or SHSU generated end of clerkship examinations as assigned.
- Always demonstrate professionalism through behavior and appropriate attire.
 - Students should always identify themselves as medical students and obtain appropriate permission for all patient interactions.
 - Students should adhere to the dress code of the clinical site, wearing their student white coats, SHSU identification, any site-required identification, and business casual clothing or scrubs as appropriate.
- Collaborate with faculty and staff to maximize opportunities in the learning

- environment.
- Provide appropriate feedback by completing evaluation forms made available by SHSU.
- Assure that individual medical insurance coverage is current in the event of an acute illness or injury while completing clerkships.
- Schedule and successfully complete COMLEX-USA Level 2 CE examination prior to graduation.

SHSU Responsibilities

- Arrange and monitor clinical clerkship education for students in cooperation with the practice site.
- Credential and recredential preceptors.
- Arrange administration of COMAT examinations.
- Create curriculum and syllabus for each clinical clerkship.
- Provide resources for students and preceptors to enhance clinical education.
- Maintain a list of available preceptors in various specialties.
- Obtain and maintain professional liability insurance in the amount of \$1million/3million.
- Provide every preceptor an information packet including student information and syllabi for the clerkship experience.
- Provide sites with required information regarding
 - required immunizations
 - background check
 - drug screen

Evaluations

Assessment of Core Site, Clerkship, and Preceptor

Subject examinations, end-of-clerkship reports, and preceptor evaluations are reviewed by our Clinical Education team and key faculty members and guide individual student assessment and curricular design. In addition, these data are utilized to compare core site outcomes of students to drive core site and preceptor development.

Evaluations

Preceptors complete two (2) Faculty Evaluation of Student forms entitled Preceptor Midterm Evaluation of Student Doctor and the Preceptor Final Evaluation of Student Doctor.

Please see below the complete list of evaluations for third- and fourth-year rotations.

Core Evaluations

Faculty Evaluation of Student

- Preceptor Midterm Evaluation of Student Doctor

- Preceptor Final Evaluation of Student Doctor
- Student Evaluation of Faculty
- Student End-of-Clerkship Evaluation of Preceptor
 - Student End-of-Clerkship Evaluation of Clerkship Director
- Student Evaluation of Course
- Student End-of-Clerkship Evaluation of Clinical Site
 - Student End-of-Clerkship Evaluation of Clerkship

Selective and Clinical Elective Evaluations

- Faculty Evaluation of Student
- Preceptor Final Evaluation of Student Doctor
- Student Evaluation of Faculty
- Student End-of-Clerkship Evaluation of Preceptor
- Student Evaluation of Course
- Student End-of-Clerkship Evaluation of Clinical Site

Non-Clinical Elective Evaluations

- Student Evaluation of Faculty
- Student End-of-Clerkship Evaluation of Clerkship Director
- Student Evaluation of Course
- Student End-of-Clerkship Evaluation of Clerkship

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/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/910312%20Academic%20Probation%20and%20Suspension.pdf>), along with COM-specific policies, generally defines academic good standing for SHSU-COM students.

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 (Academic Honesty) (<https://www.shsu.edu/dept/academic-affairs/documents/aps/810213%20Academic%20Honesty.pdf>).

These cases will also be referred to the SHSU-COM SPAP Committee to evaluate for violations of the professionalism standards for graduation.

Academic Grievance Procedures

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

Academic Probation/Suspension/Termination

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.

Graduate Degree Enrollment and Completion Requirements

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

UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

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>).

Religious Holy Days

Student 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 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 (<https://www.shsu.edu/titleix/SexualMisconduct.pdf>), 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.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (FERPA), is a federal law which provides that colleges and universities will maintain the confidentiality of student education records. This law also affords students certain rights with respect to their 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://studentprivacy.ed.gov/ferpa>).

APPROVED BY:

Thomas J. Mohr D.O.

Thomas Mohr, DO

Dean

June 13, 2025

Date

Ken Hendrickson

Ken Hendrickson, PhD

Associate Provost for Community Engagement,

Dean of The Graduate and Professional School

Date

Chad Hargrave, PhD

Chad W. Hargrave, PhD

Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Vice President for Research and Strategic Partnerships and

Chief Research Officer

7/16/2025

Date