



Sam Houston
State University

Office of the Provost

Dear Academic Affairs faculty and staff,

I hope your summer provided an opportunity for some downtime while also allowing for some fun and recreation. I am always energized when our students return to campus, and I hope you are too. I look forward to a great semester ahead. Welcome to fall 2024!

Last week, I shared a list of our university award winners. If you missed it, see [this link](#).

Here are a few updates from the Division of Academic Affairs.

PACE Changes Name to Teaching & Learning Center

PACE is now The Teaching & Learning Center (TLC). The name reflects TLC's new mission and vision for serving SHSU faculty. Special thanks to Dr. Erica Pasquini and Ms. Tiffany Terry for leading the internal strategic planning team that made [these recommendations](#).

I am also pleased to share that Dr. Benjamin Mitchell-Yellin, associate professor of philosophy, has been named the new director of the TLC. I'd like to thank the search committee, and I look forward to Ben's leadership as he works to implement the new strategic plan and priorities.

Research Accolades and Awards

SHSU is on track for yet another record year for external funding, this time exceeding \$30 million in research awards. SHSU faculty have boldly embraced our R2 Carnegie designation. Congratulations and thank you for your hard work.

In many cases, internal seed funds allow faculty to complete preliminary research that enhances their competitiveness for external funds. For example, last year, SHSU offered [BRIDGE](#) seed grants to four interdisciplinary research teams comprised of [23 faculty](#). We invested \$500,000 in one-time funds which, to date, have resulted in six external grant submissions for a total of \$3.2 million and two external grant

awards for \$1.8 million. In light of this success, I am offering another round of BRIDGE funds this year. Details from ORSP will follow later this semester.

Record Enrollment in High Impact Experience Courses

As a strong proponent of high-impact experiences, I am delighted to report record enrollment of over 5,400 students in ACE courses this fall. Dr. Joyce McCauley, executive director of the Center for Community Engagement (CCE), told me that SHSU is offering over 300 sections of ACE courses this fall, a 15% increase over last year. This is great news as Joyce, Dr. Lee Miller, director of the CCE, and the CCE team prepare for reaccreditation of our Carnegie-engaged designation.

Additionally, over 1,700 freshmen are enrolled in a section of UNIV 1101-Bearkat U this fall. Dr. Kay Angrove, executive director of the First-Gen Center and the First-Year Experience, and her team continue their incredible work as this represents an enrollment increase of 36% from last fall.

President & Provost Visits to the Colleges

I am pleased that President White will join me in meeting with the academic units again this fall. This year, we will meet with faculty and staff in COBA, COSET, CHSS, and NGL on Friday, Oct. 11 at 2 p.m. The meeting with COHS and COM will be at The Woodlands Center on Friday, Oct. 18 at 1 p.m. Finally, we will meet with COCJ, CAM, and COE on Thursday, Oct. 31 at 2 p.m.

Dean Searches

We are conducting two dean searches this year. Dr. Tom Mohr is chairing the search for a new dean of the College of Health Sciences, and Dr. Shar Self is chairing the search for the new dean of the College of Arts & Media. The goal is to have the searches completed by spring so that the new deans are in place by summer 2025.

Professional Development Opportunities

Mark your calendars for the 2024 ORSP [Pitch Competition and Innovation Day](#) scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 25, SHSU Online's [13th Annual SHSU Digital Education Summit](#) on Friday, Sept. 27, and our Artificial Intelligence working group's session on syllabi and best practices for the classroom experience on Thursday, Oct. 24. Details on all of these to follow in the Academic Affairs Newsletter.

SACSCOC Interim Report.

Dr. Somer Franklin, associate vice president for academic affairs, is leading a team of faculty and staff in preparing our SACSCOC fifth-year interim report, which is due March 2025. This is an important benchmark for us, so thank you in advance for assisting with your program assessments.

I hope your fall 2024 semester is nothing short of outstanding. Thank you for your commitment to our students and to SHSU.

With all best wishes,



Michael T. Stephenson

Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

This email is being sent to faculty and staff in the Division of Academic Affairs.



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