## **Professional Academic Responsibility and Office Hours**

SOHA PPS 02.03.01

Effective Date 5/1/2022

Review Date: 04/2022

Next review date: 04/02/2027 (E5Y) Sr. Reviewer: SOHA Director

1. **POLICY STATEMENT**

SOHA is committed to our students, and we take our responsibilities to impart knowledge seriously. In the spirit of that intent, we make ourselves available to students in a variety of ways: in person, virtually, and by appointment. Additional information on this policy:

01.01 [AA/PPS 02.03.01 (Conduct and Planning of Classes)](https://policies.txstate.edu/division-policies/academic-affairs/02-03-01.html) and [AA/PPS 02.03.02 (Conduct of Classes)](https://policies.txstate.edu/division-policies/academic-affairs/02-03-02.html) give an overview of faculty members’ professional responsibilities as teachers. All faculty, but especially those new to the School, are encouraged to review this PPS, which covers the following topics:

a.    Role of the Instructor Attendance policies Course descriptions

b.    Core curriculum courses & Grades Grade changes

c.    Students with disabilities

d.    Independent study, topics, and problems courses Retention of records

e.    Student evaluations Syllabi

f.     Exams, papers, essays, and other graded assignments Final examinations

g.    Punctual return

h.    Textbooks

**02.      CONDUCT AND PLANNING OF COURSES**

02.01 Course Subject Matter

So long as the content of a course remains relevant to its overall purpose, the faculty member has full academic freedom in choosing materials and topics for classroom use and discussion.

02.02 Course Syllabi

University policy requires that faculty provide a syllabus for every course they teach. Faculty must post their undergraduate course syllabi on the university’s HB 2504 website early each semester and should keep in mind that all information posted on the site is available to the general public. This process is usually performed by our administrative staff.

02.03 Textbook Selection and Adoption

Textbook selection for all courses is left to the discretion of the individual instructor and approved by the faculty. All textbook selections are subject to the final approval of the Director and must meet all accreditation standards.

02.04 Student Class Attendance and Withdrawal Policies

a.    In all classes, faculty members determine their own attendance policies. All attendance policies are to be distributed to students in writing during the first week of class and included in syllabi.

b.    Procedures for withdrawals and drops are described in detail in [AA/PPS 02.02.20](https://policies.txstate.edu/division-policies/academic-affairs/02-02-20.html). Before a date established by university policy, a student may withdraw from a course regardless of absences or academic standing at that time. An automatic “W” is assigned in such cases. Drops after the automatic “W” date are allowed only in rare cases and require documentation (usually medical) and permission from the Director. Students may also appeal to the dean for an administrative (retroactive) “W” after the semester has ended and a grade has been assigned. Reasons for the withdrawal must be formally documented and approved by the dean.

02.05 Meeting Classes

a.    Although unscheduled university holidays are sometimes announced by the president and occasional meetings of classes may take place other than in the classroom, as a general rule faculty members meet all classes as officially scheduled and personally supervise all examinations and in-class writing assignments. If the university or Director approves a faculty member’s request for absence from the campus, the faculty member arranges for qualified substitutes or develops alternate class meeting format to meet all missed classes and submits those persons’ names or alternate plan to the Director. For every semester, an absence or alternate meeting format can be conducted for no more than 2 Graduate classes, or 6 Undergraduate courses per semester, unless extenuating circumstances arise. The Director provides university-required leave forms for this purpose.

b.    A faculty member who becomes ill or faces a personal emergency notifies the Director or School staff immediately. Then the Director sees that appropriate substitutes meet classes for the absent faculty member, or alternate meeting format is approved. For such emergency leave and sick leave, the faculty member obtains official forms from the Administrative

c.    Assistants, fills them out, and submits them to the School as soon as possible after returning to campus.

02.06 Office Hours

Faculty list office hours in their syllabi and report the hours each semester to the School staff on a form provided. Ordinarily, faculty keep a minimum of five office hour per week, and post these outside their office doors. These hours must be spread across at least 2 days and can be a mixture of physical and virtual hours, proportional to the modality of courses taught that semester. Faculty are expected to check their Texas State official email at least once daily, and to respond to any requests within one business day.

02.07 Collegiality and Availability in the Office

One of the key components of being in an academic setting, is collegiality and collaboration with your fellow faculty; not only in SOHA, but the College and University as well (see the SOHA T&P Policy for more detail on collegiality). All faculty are expected to keep office hours, conduct their classes, and attend all required meetings. At a **minimum**, all full-time faculty, tenure-track and tenured, are required to be on campus a minimum of two days a week to ensure availability to their peers and the School Director and to meet their academic requirements. Non-tenure line and part-time faculty are required to meet their academic requirements, but do not have a specific minimum of days on-campus. There will continue to be flexibility in negotiations with the chair for variation in scheduling of the two days at the chair’s discretion. For example, if research necessitates time out of the office; if there is an extensive project requiring periods of uninterrupted work time; or for assignments from the Chair or Dean. Faculty are expected to be flexible with scheduling their productivity day to ensure that the work of the department is a priority. There is no expectation for how long one is expected to be in attendance each day, however, it should be sufficient to meet the needs of the individual, the collective faculty and department, the chair, and the staff. Collectively, faculty should ensure that adequate coverage exists in the office Monday through Friday.

02.08 Attire

SOHA does not maintain a dress code, and the leadership believes common sense should prevail in this regard. The attire most expected in our healthcare environments is “business professional” and “business casual.” Visit the website from [Indeed.com](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.indeed.com%2Fcareer-advice%2Fstarting-new-job%2Fbusiness-professional-attire&data=04%7C01%7Cscottkruse%40txstate.edu%7C2b98ef06f31f4c1b425a08d8efa28e46%7Cb19c134a14c94d4caf65c420f94c8cbb%7C0%7C0%7C637522828736831668%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=%2FFIJF6szSeCL6Ddo0wvmWw2KNoJaHdO8Wjdve21E51E%3D&reserved=0) for additional details. The academic environment generally follows “business casual” attire. A website from [Stylishlyme.com](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fstylishlyme.com%2Fwhat-to-wear%2Fbusiness-casual-attire-for-women%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cscottkruse%40txstate.edu%7C2b98ef06f31f4c1b425a08d8efa28e46%7Cb19c134a14c94d4caf65c420f94c8cbb%7C0%7C0%7C637522828736841628%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=SnCqEwmW9lZOYEIAABSJZ3NYmDsK4W5bmSufx9KRgJA%3D&reserved=0) provides details on this for women. Here is a website from [restartyourstyle.com](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Frestartyourstyle.com%2F3786%2Fbusiness-casual-for-men%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cscottkruse%40txstate.edu%7C2b98ef06f31f4c1b425a08d8efa28e46%7Cb19c134a14c94d4caf65c420f94c8cbb%7C0%7C0%7C637522828736851581%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=t3bLBxu%2BK%2FlYHTQxMGcGnSqy1JGUyMYLZO1q2QhCQk8%3D&reserved=0) for men. On occasion, during special events at SOHA or higher, business professional would be more appropriate. On Texas State University Spirit Days, a Texas State University golf shirt and jeans (without holes) are acceptable. When on campus on days when there are no classes, for office hours or meetings, or when not in front of students, a range from business casual to Friday casual is appropriate. There has been great discussion about whether jeans or other denim are appropriate for the office. Fashion trends have introduced wide variation in the quality of jeans and impressions they may portray. As a result, we will not dictate in this regard; however, we ask that faculty and staff use their discretion to ensure we are projecting a proper impression to our students and peers.

02.09 Final Examination

a.    In undergraduate courses, faculty must follow the policy on final examinations spelled out in the Texas State *Faculty Handbook*. Final examinations will be given by all faculty and taken by all students unless the Director and the faculty member concur on an alternate method of evaluation. Finals will be administered according to the published schedule. Individual students with conflicts or serious problems may take a final at an alternate time if they secure permission from their instructor, Director, and school dean. Faculty who wish to change the time of a final for an entire class may do so with permission from their Director, school dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

b.    In graduate courses, faculty may elect to require a paper, a take-home final, or other means of evaluation in lieu of a final exam. In such cases, the scheduled exam period may be used as an additional class meeting.

02.10 Student Complaints

University policy provides information for student complaints on a range of specific issues: see UPPS 07.10.06. For complaints about conduct of classes, the College of Health Professions and School of Health Administration follow procedures outlined in UPPS 07.10.06.03 for “non-academic” student complaints. If informal consultation with a faculty member proves unsatisfactory, a student may submit a more formal complaint to the Director of the School. Unless immediate action is required as for matters of safety, students are to bring formal complaints to the Director in writing. The Director conducts a review of the complaint and as needed confers with faculty. A faculty member may respond to a formal complaint in writing and, if so, the response will be filed with the complaint. The Director responds to the student in a timely way, usually within ten days of the formal complaint. The Director is to maintain a log of student complaints.

02.11 Grade Appeals

a.    Students who believe that they have been awarded an inaccurate or unfair grade at the end of a course may initiate a grade appeal with the Director, following procedures outlined in CHP 04.01, but only after they have attempted to resolve the issue directly with the faculty

b.    member. In any grade appeal, “the burden of proof is on the student. The student must demonstrate that the grade is inaccurate or was determined unfairly.” The policy further states that the Director will review the entire course work for that student, and has the option to raise the grade, leave the grade unchanged, or in some cases even lower the grade. The Director’s decision can be appealed the Dean, CHP, whose decision is final.

02.12 Incomplete Grades and Change-of-Grade Policies

Only in exceptional cases do faculty give “I” grades for incomplete work in a course. An “I” automatically becomes an “F” after one year unless the faculty member requests an extension. Faculty members who, for justifiable reason, must give an “I” in an undergraduate course file with the School office an account of the work that the student must complete before receiving a definitive grade. Faculty must also indicate on the change-of-grade form why the student took the “I.” If a student otherwise passing a course must miss a final examination for valid reason, the instructor gives a make-up examination. Infrequently, a faculty member may need to change a final grade already reported to the Registrar. In these exceptional cases, the faculty member fills out a change-of-grade card for School and Dean’s approval, reporting the reason for the change.